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## The Representation of Moriscos in Ildefonso Falcones' *The Hand of Fatima*

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### Abstract

The fall of Granada not only marks the end of the Muslim rule of Spain but also denotes the beginning of a time of religious intolerance. Moriscos, Muslims who were forced to become baptized Christians after the fall of Granada in 1492, had to face either expulsion or imprisonment and death if found secretly practicing their religion. This paper attempts to analyze the representation of Moriscos, their ordeal, internal conflicts, and their rebellion in *The Hand of Fatima* (2009) written by Ildefonso Falcones, a Spanish writer and one of Spain's best-selling authors. The novel presents a historical narrative that is colored by the author's perspective and culture, and therefore, the methodology of this paper is to apply concepts of New Historicism to analyze the representation of Moriscos in the novel. Therefore, the portrayal of Moriscos in *The Hand of Fatima* (2009) is examined and contrasted with other historical and cultural works to highlight how Ildefonso's cultural background influences the representation of Moriscos in the novel

**Keywords:** Moriscos, New Historicism, representation

The aim of this paper is to examine how Moriscos' lives are depicted in Ildefonso Falcones' *The Hand of Fatima* (2009) and to highlight to what extent the author accurately captures the lives of Moriscos after the fall of Granada, their internal strife and rebellion. Moreover, the paper attempts to answer the question of whether the author's cultural background influences his description of Moriscos' internal conflicts. Through using the concepts of New Historicists like Stephen Greenblatt, Catherine Gallagher and Louis Montrose the analysis of the novel is conducted in relation to its historical and cultural settings. New Historicism establishes links and relationships between literary works and their sociocultural settings. It has also "established new ways of studying history and a new awareness of how history and culture define each other.... [and] has given scholars new opportunities to cross the boundaries separating history, anthropology, art, politics, literature, and economics" (Veese, 1994, pp. xiii, ix). The "doctrine of noninterference" that prevented humanists from interfering with concerns of politics, power, and other facets of peoples' lives is demolished by New Historicism, which presents a unique opportunity to "cross the boundaries" separating various genres (Veseer, 1994, p. xii). The representation of Moriscos in *The Hand of Fatima* (2009) is, thus, analyzed, contrasted, and compared with other historical and cultural texts like, for instance, Núñez Muley's *Memorandum for the President of the Royal Audiencia and Chancery Court of the City and Kingdom of Granada* (1567) which is one of the key texts in the history of Moriscos in the Iberian Peninsula, according to Vincent Barletta (2013).

The term 'Morisco,' which is a derogatory term that comes from the Spanish word 'Moro' meaning 'Moor,' refers to Muslims who were compelled to convert to Christianity after the fall of Granada in 1492 and when the Castilians forbade the practice of Islam in the sixteenth century. The year 1492, as Leonard Harvey (2005) explains, is a "landmark year" in the history of Spain as it marked the fall of Granada which was "the last bastion of political autonomy for Muslims in the peninsula" (p. 14). Under the authority of Christian Monarchs, Muslims had the freedom to adhere to their faith until the end of 1499 and "had a secure and accepted place in Spanish life" (Harvey, 2005, p. vii). After Granada fell in 1492, this liberal approach was quickly abandoned, and in 1502 Moriscos were presented with the choice of either becoming Christians or being expelled. One interpretation for this is that

“Christian Spain viewed the expulsion or conversion...as a victory of true faith over infidels, and this sense of triumph was nurtured...by clerical and secular authorities, who promoted the view that Spain was a morally and physically purer nation as a result of the 1492 catharsis” (Ingram, 2009, p. 1). Additionally, Mary Elizabeth Perry (2005) explains how Spanish authorities still saw Moriscos as fraudulent converts, suspicious outsiders, and internal adversaries, notably those in Granada. According to Kevin Ingram (2009), the option of conversion or expulsion was only offered "in theory," as the conditions for Muslims to depart the Iberian Peninsula were so arduous that few chose to do so (p. 12). For more than a hundred years, then, the Moriscos lived “a precarious existence in the middle of a Christian society that demanded the eradication of their religious and cultural traditions and persecuted them when they proved unwilling or unable to fulfill these demands” (Carr, 2009, p. iv).

Ildefonso Falcones de Sierra is a Spanish author and attorney born in Barcelona in 1958. Falcones began writing his first historical novel in 2002 and sent the manuscript to six publishing houses, only to be rejected by all of them, claiming that they were uninterested in his text (Steenmeijer, 2010). However, Falcones was able to edit and publish his first novel *Cathedral of the Sea* (2006) with the aid of a group of friends and a literary agent, which then gained international acclaim. Falcones, a voracious reader of history, made the decision to keep writing historical novels, especially in light of the success of his debut book. His second novel, *La Mano de Fatima* (The Hand of Fatima), which was published in 2009 to coincide with the 400th anniversary of the expulsion of the Moriscos from Valencia, is set in the 16th century and depicts the conflict between the Moriscos and their Christian rulers following the fall of Granada (Kemntiz, 2015). The title of the novel alludes to Fatima, one of the characters, as well as to a symbol that was outlawed in 1526 under the pretext that it is an Islamic religious emblem. Despite being forbidden as a symbol, the hand of Fatima was depicted on the flag of the Muslim rebellion several years following the fall of Granada (Kemntiz, 2015).

*The Hand of Fatima* (2009) is set in 1564 in Alpujarra region right before the upsurge of the Moriscos’ rebellion. Hernando, the protagonist, experiences an identity crisis as he is born into disgrace to a Morisco woman who was raped by a Christian priest. As a result, he is shunned by the Morisco community, forced to spend the night in the stables with the mules, and is frequently referred

to as the "Nazarine" by his stepfather. However, Hamid, who is revered among Moriscos as a man of religion, is the sole Morisco who embraces Hernando and accepts the burden of teaching him Muslim prayers and the Quran. Hamid's sole motive, however, is to "compete with the sacristan," who is "determined to teach Hernando Christian prayers" (Falcons, p. 28). Torn between two cultures, Hernando decides to support the Moriscos during their rebellion, but he is the only Morisco who abstains from killing and torturing Christians. Instead, he aids a Christian man and girl in escaping the Moriscos' camp. Hernando spends years secretly copying the Quran, risking his life in the process, only to have his work questioned by his fellow Moriscos, who eventually abandon him. Hernando's heart is shattered twice: once after Brahim, his stepfather, marries Fatima, the love of his life and the second time after he is informed of her murder by a Morisco bandit.

Since Catherine Gallagher and Stephen Greenblatt (2020) argue that in the "analysis of the larger cultural field, canonical works of art are brought into relation not only with works judged as minor, but also with texts that are not by anyone's standard literary," it is crucial to analyze *The Hand of Fatima* (2009) with reference to Muley's Memorandum (1567), a substantial document that reflects the conditions under which Moriscos lived after the fall of Granada (p. 10). The Memorandum was reportedly written in 1567 following the passing of a royal decree by the Royal Council in Madrid that put unprecedented pressure on Moriscos as it banned all practices relevant to Islam as well as outlawed speaking the Arabic language. In his *Memorandum*, originally written in 1567, Muley (2013) criticized the decree's terms stressing out how absurd and degrading they are. One of the decrees banned women from wearing their veils, something Muley vehemently disagreed with since he believes it will expose them to harassment. Muley (2013) also disputes other laws, such as the one requiring Muslims to leave their doors open on Fridays, Sundays, and festival days, by stating that the majority of them do not have servants, making it sort of an "invitation to thieves" (p. 81). Muley (2013) further disputes the decision outlawing the Arabic language, claiming that speaking it is not incompatible with "the Holy Catholic faith" because Christian priests and intellectuals who reside in the Arab world also speak it (p. 92). In addition, he expresses his fears of the consequences of issuing those decrees:

Since this kingdom cost Their Highnesses so dearly, it seems right that they should wish to examine and reexamine what they spent and what it cost them, and it also seems logical not to risk losing in so little time everything that they won by carrying out what is stipulated in the aforementioned decree, because in no way can the natives of this kingdom comply with it. (Muley, 2013, p. 89)

Therefore, Muley's letter captures the hardships Moriscos had experienced on daily basis. Additionally, it demonstrates how they were denied the right to conduct any practice that would have preserved their identity, including but not limited to keeping their Arabic names. The repercussions of banning simple aspects of Morisco lives, such as bathing and washing garments, is reflected in the opening scene of *The Hand of Fatima* where a Morisco woman is being punished for washing a garment in spring water by being forced to cling to the top of a ladder hanging against a church wall until she finally becomes "numb, and terrified" (Falcones, p. 12). The Morisco woman, therefore, is left in the open to endure the bitter winter weather while "Moriscos slipped into the church without casting a glance at their sister in faith" (Falcones, p. 17). Falcones also mentions in *The Hand of Fatima* that Moriscos have been forced to "profess Christianity" and go to church on Sundays as well as on "all holy days of obligation" due to the King's orders (p. 14). Moreover, they were obliged to memorize "the Lord's prayer, the Hail Mary, the Creed, the Hymn to the Virgin Mary and the Ten Commandments" in Spanish whereas most of them did not speak the language (p. 15).

The Morisco community forms a crypto life of its own in *The Hand of Fatima* where they lead a double life. In such a community, Moriscos are only allowed to pray at night because it is the only time of day when they can do so "with any degree of safety...because Christians are asleep" (Falcones, pp. 16-17). When they attend church services and receive holy Communion, they "keep the wafer of wheat in their mouths until they could spit it out at home" and wash out "any crumbs that were left" (Falcones, p. 28). The inner turmoil and emotional state of Moriscos are barely described whereas the focus of the narrative is Hernando's identity crisis as he struggles from the start to decide which side to support, particularly when the Moriscos' rebellion starts to spread over Alpujarras:

Hernando surveyed the crowd of Muslims and Christians in front of him. What was he? Andres had always paid more attention to him than to any of the other village boys. The sacristan treated him better than his stepfather.... Yet Hamid had also taken care of him, and in the fields and his hovel had patiently taught him the Muslim prayers and doctrine. (Falcons, p. 42)

On the other hand, the portrayal of Moriscos' agony and hopelessness is only described after their rebellion is defeated:

While they awaited the Prince's decision, the Moriscos finally gave way to despair. Disarmed and subjugated, imprisoned on lands that had once been theirs, they finally appreciated the magnitude of their defeat. Where would they be banished? What would they live on? They were constantly assailed by fears for their future in distant, hostile kingdoms ruled by Christians who made no secret of their hatred for the vanquished. (Falcons, p. 270)

Thus, Hernando's mental turmoil is what Falcons seeks to emphasize particularly that he is born to a Morisco woman and an anonymous Christian priest. As Gallagher and Greenblatt explain, "the writers we love did not spring up from nowhere and that their achievements must draw upon a whole life-world and that this life-world has undoubtedly left other traces of itself," Falcons' narration is somehow influenced by the cultural background which shaped his identity (pp. 12-13). This is also evident in the fact that most Morisco male characters in the novel are featured as vulgar and abusive while female Morisco characters in the novel are described as helpless and submissive. For instance, Hernando's stepfather, Brahim, abuses his mother and pursues Fatima, the girl Hernando adores:

Fatima turned and saw by the firelight how Brahim was slapping Aisha. His hand on the hilt of his scimitar, Hernando took a couple of steps towards them, then came to a halt. When Brahim looked up and stared at her, Fatima realized why Aisha had grimaced: she had been trying to warn her. If Fatima went anywhere near Hernando, she would be the one to face consequences. (Falcons, p. 166)

Throughout the entire novel, Brahim uses his wife as a threat against Hernando to keep him away from Fatima. Additionally, Brahim abuses his position of



authority in the Morisco community by taking Fatima as his second wife in a ceremony that emphasizes her oppression and submission:

Her tattooed feet were all that could be seen of Fatima as she rode the white mule. Covered from head to foot in a white tunic, she sat side-saddle.... Applauded and encouraged by thousands of Moriscos.... When she arrived, she went straight up to Brahim's bedroom. There, as *Muslim tradition ordained*, she was silently covered with a white sheet, under which she was to lie with her eyes closed.... Fatima could sense the comings and goings of dozens of people in the room.... The music and dancing...from the streets of Laujar rang in Fatima's ears all through an endless night during which Brahim took his pleasure with her time and time again. Fatima *bore it silently*. Fatima *obeyed silently*. Fatima *submitted silently*. (Falcons, pp. 223, 225; emphasis added)

Falcons' description of the Morisco wedding reveals how women are obsequious in a negative way and how Fatima is an oppressed, vulnerable Morisco woman without a will of her own. It is noteworthy that Falcons' description of the wedding as a "Muslim tradition" where the bride submissively and silently lies on the bed, covered with the bedsheet with the presence of "dozens of people" to witness her is largely faulty as such rituals are extraneous to Islam. On the other hand, it is Morisco women who wash the "holy oils" from newborns following their baptism and dress them in "clean clothes" for a celebration where the baby is "held pointing in the direction of Mecca," and is given "the gold hand of Fatima," to be "put around his neck" as "prayers" are "recited in his ears" (Falcons, p. 361). Additionally, Morisco women, like Fatima, bear the responsibility of covertly teaching Arabic and Islamic principles to their children. It should be noted, however, that Fatima is only able to act freely and become an active member of the Morisco society, where she secretly teaches women and children the Quran, when she gets divorced and marries Hernando later on. This reveals the extent to which Falcons misrepresents Morisco women, like Fatima, who are abused and forced to be silent and submissive by Morisco Muslim men only to be freed by the half-Morisco half-Christian protagonist.

*The Hand of Fatima* has a significant section on the Alpujarra rebellion and war. Men are described as "recruiting" others and "waiting to launch the

assault” from the very beginning of the novel when news of the revolt first begins to spread (Falcones, p. 30). Many reasons had led to the Morisco rebellion according to historical resources. First, the assimilating strategies, which had been advocated ever since the widespread conversion of Moriscos in 1501, were finally put into effect during the 1560s. Moreover, a crisis in the silk business, which was the backbone of the Morisco economy, the expropriation of Morisco property, and continued religious persecution were other factors that ignited the spark of the rebellion (Green-Mercado, 2020). What was truly “at stake,” however, and what the Morisco rebels were essentially aiming at, was a “new social order”, or at worst “the restoration of an idealized past” in which their community's existence had been secured (Green-Mercado, 2020, p. 65). According to Green-Mercado (2020), the Alpujarras rebellion was essentially “an attempt by a group of Granadan Moriscos to define and unify the Morisco community” (p. 66). A conflict on power, thus, emerged and as John Brannigan (1998) explains in his *New Historicism and Cultural Materialism*, “[p]ower can only define itself in relation to subversion, to what is alien or other, and at the heart of power is therefore the production and subsequent confinement of subversion” (p. 64). Such conflict on power is evident in Falcones’ novel where Christians soldiers and leaders attempt to subvert the Morisco rebellion and as a result atrocities are committed on both sides.

Images of torture, savagery, and death are prevalent as *The Hand of Fatima* primarily focuses on depicting the time of the Moriscos’ rebellion and the war between the Christians and Moriscos. First, Moriscos are portrayed as vicious individuals who solely want to exact the most heinous forms of vengeance on Christians. Even Morisco women and children participate in the terrible slaughter alongside men who knife and rip out the throbbing hearts of common Christians:

The outlaws, youths and Morisco villagers flung themselves on the Christians, wielding harquebuses, lances, swords, daggers and even farming tools.... Morisco women and youths held back the Christian women and forced them to witness the massacre. Naked and overwhelmed by the enraged mob, their men could do nothing to defend themselves. Some of them knelt down, making the sign of the cross. Others tried to protect their sons in their arms.... [T]wo priests were martyred with crossbow bolts fired at them

until their bodies bristled with arrows; still others were hacked to pieces before they expired.... A Morisco ran over to the captive Christian women brandishing a head on a pole, then he danced about, waving it in their faces. Eventually, the shrieking turned into chants of celebration at the cruel massacre. (Falcones, pp. 61-62)

The only Morisco horrified by those massacres is Hernando, who stands as a terrified spectator. He observes his mother killing a priest, ferociously stabbing him until his body is reduced to "nothing more than a bloody mass," as though "with each blow" she atones for "part of the fate that the other priest had condemned her to many years before" (Falcones, p. 82). Moreover, the way Moriscos are portrayed is largely repulsive. According to Falcones' narrative, Moriscos have been dipping the tips of their arrows in a deadly flower from "old times" to cause terrible deaths and "foaming at the mouth" to those who are struck by them (Falcones, p. 125). In addition, more atrocities are also described as Moriscos make vain attempts to convert Christians. Around eighty Christians are "dragged out of the church with shouts and blows" on Christmas Day, leaving women and children in tears and others gazing up at the heavens and praying (Falcones, p. 53). The Morisco leader then commands all men and boys over the age of ten to strip naked, which they do in humiliation and disgrace after one of them is killed for disobeying:

They were naked and barefoot, shivering from the cold, and had their hands tied behind their backs. Their terrified women and Christian children under ten brought up the rear, together with the twenty or so mules carrying the booty.... Scattered among the others were the village lads who had decided to join the uprising. They cursed the Christians, and threatened them with a thousand horrific tortures if they did not renounce their faith and convert to Islam. (Falcones, p. 54)

It is noteworthy that in his notes to the novel, Falcones states that many of the incidents of his narrative are based on the accounts of two chronicles of the time, namely: *Historia Del Rebelion Y Castigo De Los Moriscos Del Reyno De Granada* (History of the Rebellion and Punishment of the Moriscos of the Kingdom of Granada 1600) by Luis del Marmol Carvajal and *Guerra de Granada* (The War of Granada 1627). Ortiz and Vincent (1984), however, highlight that both chronicles on which Falcones bases his narration are

exaggerated despite the fact that they are significant sources for these turbulent times. For instance, they clarify that the number of rebellious Moriscos in Granada is overstated to 150,000 in the chronicles, even though the city's population at the time never amounted to that number (Ortiz and Vincent, 1984). In addition, Falcones' descriptions of the horrors committed during the Alpujarras war closely resemble those of Luis del Marmol, a Spanish historian, and the author of *Historia de la rebelión y castigo de los Moriscos del Reino de Granada* (1600). However, because Marmol's book was published one year after his death, many of its claims lack credibility. Moreover, Professor Gamal Abdel Rahman, in his introductory notes to Marmol's book, comments that the book lacks the humanitarian perspective of the incidents pertaining to the rebellion. In addition, Professor Abdel Rahman argues that if Marmol's descriptions are scrutinized, any reader will realize that many statements are repetitive which indicates that he was either generalizing single incidents or exaggerating them. Another critical point which Professor Abdel Rahman highlights is that the book was published in 1600, a time when the Morisco dispute was at its peak and, therefore, it is possible that a certain party sought its publication at that moment to support an imminent decision (Marmol, 2012). However, other contemporary sources refer to several documents that describe other details that Marmol leaves out. For instance, Kevin Ingram (2009) mentions a Morisco testimony indicating that Castilians took "exceptional security measures" as soon as the news of an impending rebellion spread (p. 221). As a result of this intense situation, about twenty Moriscos were detained under the pretext that they had killed some Castilians while, in reality, they were simply farmers returning from the fields. However, "the hysteria had reached such a pitch that the villagers ran out onto the streets shouting "Moors, Moors"" (Ingram, 2009, p. 221). Ingram (2009) also comments that "[f]ear of the uprising" heightened to a level where "even cities where the rebellion was not supposed to reach adopted precautionary measures" (p. 222). Carr (2009) also argues that Christians were not always killed during the war; instead, the majority were "imprisoned" or "kept as hostages," and there were times when they were helped to flee by their Morisco neighbours and friends (pp. 144-145).

There are some instances, however, where Falcones depicts the violence and killings committed by Christian soldiers. After the rebels are defeated,

Christian soldiers imprison Morisco women and children inside the church, and when the soldiers hear a loud cry, a massacre takes place:

Although the army captains were ordering their men to stop firing, the soldiers paid no attention. They were *so afraid and furious* that they went on slaughtering anyone they ran into. *No one could halt the killing*. . . . That night, more than a thousand women and children were killed in the church square at Juviles.... The Marquis of Mondejar launched an investigation into the mutiny, which concluded with the execution of three soldiers who, under cover of darkness, had attempted to rape a woman: it was her cries that had caused the confusion that sparked the massacre. (Falcones, pp. 106-108; emphasis added)

This incident is mentioned by Abdel Wahid Taha (2004) who illustrates the harshness of the Spanish authorities during the two-year Alpujarras war and how all efforts towards peace were unsuccessful. Taha (2004) further explains that this horrible incident occurred in Juviles, a town that was taken by the Marquis of Mondejar, who promised Moriscos security and instructed them to take refuge in the church once they had surrendered. However, a few women, children, and senior citizens were left outside under the supervision of Spanish soldiers as the church's capacity was insufficient to accommodate everyone (Taha, 2004). After that, one of the Christian soldiers tried to assault an Arab girl, so an Arab killed him. The troops became alarmed as a result, and the Christian soldiers killed all the women, children, and senior citizens who were standing outside the church doors (Taha, 2004, p. 64). Taha (2004) also asserts that there is insufficient information about these uprisings in primary Arabic sources, with the exception of two books, *Nafh Al Tayyeb [The Breath of Perfume]* and *Nabzat Al Asr fi Akhbar Muluk Bani Nasr [A Brief History of the Times of Bani Nasr Kings]*, which only briefly mention them. The sources that are readily available for additional information about these uprisings are those of the Castilians. Furthermore, it is noted that these texts exclusively describe the events from the perspective of Castilians (Taha, 2004):

In a recent reference to the atrocities committed by Christian soldiers, Carr (2009) explains that, despite the Morisco pleas, Christian soldiers killed hundreds of men, women, and children right away or threw them into the nearby ravines. Moreover, Perez de Hita (1998), a soldier in the Christian army,

makes the following observation about the brutality and callousness of the Christian warriors in *La Guerra de los Moriscos*: "Oh terrible Christian cruelty, never seen in the Spanish nation! What infernal fury caused you to show such cruelty and so little mercy?" (pp. 70-80). According to Pérez de Hita (1998), the soldiers under Mondéjar's command were "the worst thieves in the world, destroyers and robbers who thought of nothing... but robbing, looting, and sacking the Morisco towns" (p. 80). In spite of this, Falcones chooses to excuse the soldiers' hostility who are described to have acted against their commander's orders "lusting for blood and plunder" as they were "sick and tired of the way their captain-general pardoned all the heretics and murderers who laid down their arms" (Falcones, p. 122).

On the other hand, *The Hand of Fatima* describes some of the torture that was used during the interrogation of the Moriscos by the Inquisition office. Hernando witnesses the torturing and interrogation of Karim, his Morisco friend who was apprehended with copies of the Quran, two continuous days by the Inquisition office while having his face propped up on a "rack," his arms crossed behind him, and his thumbs tied together with a stronger rope that "ran up to a winch suspended from the ceiling and back down again" (Falcones, p. 498):

Hernando was forced to witness all the barbarity.... It was his name that Karim was so tenaciously keeping to himself! Only two paces away from him, Karim was being savagely tortured. Hernando could smell his blood and his urine; he gazed at the convulsions of his muscles, contorted with the intense pain; listened to his muted cries, worse than the most terrible screams, and his gasps and sobs when they stopped to rest. (Falcones, p. 504)

Falcones' description reveals one side of the atrocities Moriscos had to endure. During these turbulent times, hundreds of Moriscos were detained, questioned, and tortured until they admitted to taking part in the scheme to overthrow the King.

Although "atrocities" were committed by both sides, according to Falcones', Moriscos' atrocities are the ones that are "better known" because of the "incomplete nature of the Christian accounts" (p. 963). Additionally, Falcones acknowledges that the accounts of Moriscos after the fall of Granada

are marked by “many episodes of xenophobia” in Spanish history; nevertheless, for the description of the “conflicts and conditions within the rebel camp” he admits that he primarily relies on the accounts of the “chroniclers of the time” which were written by the Castilians (Falcones, pp. 963-964). This Spanish phobia is also explained by Edward Said (1979) who emphasizes the tense relationships between Europe and the Ottoman Empire during this period as the “Ottoman peril,” which “lurked alongside Europe,” represented a persistent threat to the Christian civilization up to the end of the seventeenth century (p. 60). Over time, such “peril and its lore” became “woven into the fabric of life” and this ongoing apprehension of the Ottoman Empire was a major factor in fostering similar apprehensions about the Moriscos and potential Ottoman plots (Said, 1979, p. 60). It is, thus, evident that claiming the authenticity of narration of a specific author is, therefore, almost impossible as “we can have no access to a full and authentic past, a lived material existence, unmediated by the surviving textual traces of the society in question” (Montrose, 1994, p. 242). Moreover, those societal ‘textual traces’ are “subject to subsequent textual mediations when they are construed as the 'documents' upon which historians ground their own texts” (Montrose, 1994 p. 242). In spite of this, *The Hand of Fatima* has received a wide acclaim, was translated into several languages and became a best seller in Spain which reflects the readers’ “fascination with the Morisco revolt” on one hand, and the “broader phenomenon of Spain’s boom in historical novels since the last decades of the Twentieth century” on the other (Civantos, 2022, p. 53).

In conclusion, it is clear that in his attempt to present Moriscos’ lives during a very turbulent period of time, Falcones’ representation was impacted by the barbaric image of Moriscos propagated by the Castilian chronicles of the time which he chose as a reference for narration. Moreover, as previously highlighted, since people’s interpretation of the past is always influenced by their historical, social, and institutional views, it is eventually impossible to have an accurate record of any historical event. Therefore, it is inevitable that Ildefonso Falcones’ cultural background and his Spanish origin determine how Moriscos are portrayed, how certain aspects of their ordeal and their double lives are described, how the internal conflict of the protagonist who is only half Morisco is foregrounded, and finally how the Morisco rebellion is delineated.

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## تصوير الموريسكيين في رواية كف فاطيمة لايلدفونسو فالكونز

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### المستخلص:

يعد سقوط غرناطة علامة فارقة في تاريخ المسلمين والعرب، ليس لأنه يعني نهاية حكم المسلمين للأندلس فحسب ولكن لأنه كان بداية لعصر جديد من الاضطهاد الديني. واجه الموريسكيون -وهو اللقب الذي أطلق على مسلمي الأندلس الذين ارغموا على التنصر بعد سقوط غرناطة آخر ممالك المسلمين في الأندلس عام 1492- الإضطهاد حيث أُجبروا على التهجير أو الحبس والتعذيب حتى الموت في حالة ممارسة أي من شعائر الإسلام. ويعد سقوط غرناطة نقطة تحول فارقة في حياة مسلمي الأندلس حيث نقض بعدها الاسبان عهدهم وبدأت ممارسات الاضطهاد والعنف واستباحة الحرمات. ويقدم البحث دراسة لتصوير الموريسكيين في رواية كف فاطيمة (2009) للكاتب الإسباني ايلدفونسو فالكونز وتحليل لمعاناة الموريسكيين وصراعاتهم الداخلية وثورتهم. كما سنتشكل نظريات مذهب التاريخية الجديد الإطار النقدي للبحث حيث تتلون رواية كف فاطيمة (2009) برؤية وخلفية الكاتب الشخصية والثقافية. وستشكل أيضا بعض المراجع التاريخية والثقافية مرجعية هامة لتحليل تصوير الموريسكيين في الرواية وشرح تأثير الخلفية الثقافية للكاتب على تصوير الموريسكيين وسرد حياتهم ومعاناتهم.

الكلمات الدالة: الموريسكيون، مذهب التاريخية الجديد، تمثيل الواقع