

# References to the Cinderella fairy tale in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* and Assia Djébar's *Femmes d'Alger dans Leur Appartement*

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## الملخص

تسعى المقاربات المتنوعة للأدب بما توفره للقارئ وللنقد الأدبي على حد سواء لاسيما الأدب المقارن إلى الكشف عن أوجه التشابه والتقارب في الرؤى والخواطر لدى الكتّاب في ظل الاشتغال على جملة العناصر التقليدية المعتمدة في أعمالهم السردية. وتروم هذه المقالة مقارنة امتزاج عناصر القصة الخرافية بالعناصر الخيالية في رواية (جاين آر) "لشارلوت برونتي"، بالمقارنة مع (نساء الجزائر في الشقة) "لآسيا جبار" وتحديدًا القصة القصيرة المعنونة ب (ليلة حكاية فاطمة). ولعل المرجعية الأساسية للعملين المذكورين تستند إلى القصة الخرافية (ساندريلا)، والسؤال المطروح ماهي الأسباب و الأهداف التي حدت بكلتا الكاتبتين إلى استدعاء هذه القصة التراثية وتوظيفها ؟ ، ثم ما الذي كان يجول بخاطر الكاتبتين أثناء كتابة العملين الأدبيين موضوع الدراسة ؟. ومن الأهمية بمكان تذكير القارئ في سياق النقد الأدبي أن هذه الدراسة التحليلية تعنى بعملين أدبيين لبئتين مختلفتين ، وضمن حقبتين متباينتين للوقوف على التشابه والاشتراك في ذات الحالات الموظفة في كلا العملين بالاستناد إلى القصة الخرافية المذكورة سلفا.

الكلمات المفتاحية: آسيا جبار ، شارلوت برونتي ، ساندريلا ، الأدب المقارن ، تنوع اللغات ، التربية ، التأثيرات.

## Abstract

In the variety of approaches that literature offers to the reader and to the literary critic, comparative literature reveals parallels in how writers work out traditional literary elements that they blend in their narratives. This article approaches instances of fairy tale elements that are blended with fictional elements in Charlotte Brontë's novel entitled *Jane Eyre* and in Assia Djébar's *Femmes d'Alger Dans Leur Appartement*, more specifically the short story entitled *La Nuit du Récit de Fatima*. The reference to the same fairy tale Cinderella questions the reasons and the purposes for which both writers have used such a traditional story. What did the writers have in mind when writing their works? It is pertinent to remind readers and literary critics that this analysis concerns two different countries and two distinct epochs in a parallel use of shared instances from the same fairy tale.

**Keywords:** Assia Djébar, Charlotte Brontë, Cinderella, comparative literature, different languages, education, influences.

## Résumé

Dans la multitude des approches que la littérature offre au lecteur et au critique littéraire, la littérature comparée révèle des parallèles dans la façon dont des écrivains utilisent des éléments littéraires traditionnels qu'ils mélangent dans leurs narrations. Cet article propose des instances de conte de fées qui sont mélangées à des éléments fictionnels dans le roman intitulé *Jane Eyre* de Charlotte Brontë et dans la nouvelle intitulée *La Nuit du Récit de Fatima* dans *Femmes d'Alger Dans Leur Appartement* d'Assia Djébar. La référence au même conte de Cendrillon questionne les raisons et les buts pour lesquels ces deux écrivaines ont utilisé une telle histoire traditionnelle. Qu'avaient les écrivaines à l'esprit lors de l'écriture de leurs œuvres ? Il est pertinent de rappeler au lecteur et aux critiques littéraires que cette analyse concerne deux pays différents et deux époques distinctes dans une utilisation parallèle d'instances partagées provenant du même conte de fées.

**Mots clés:** Assia Djébar, Charlotte Brontë, Cendrillon, littérature comparée, différentes langues, éducation, influences.

### **Introduction:**

The precise and ambiguous definition of what a novel is, what a short story is or what any other genre is remains difficult to achieve in literature. Therefore, it is pertinent to consider the declaration of the literary critic Ulrich Weisstein. He states that 'The student who considers literature from a comparative point of view will find that, like the notions of period, current, and movement, the concept of genre offers an extremely fruitful field of investigation.'<sup>1</sup> This is the case when narratives from different writers reveal parallels which are rich of possible explanations. This article considers the case of Charlotte Brontë in her eponymous *Jane Eyre* when compared with Assia Djébar's *Femmes d'Alger dans leur Appartement*, more precisely the short story entitled *La Nuit du Récit de Fatima*. Such a comparison reveals that both writers have been influenced by fairy tales, especially the one of Cinderella that they refer to in their narratives.

According to Weisstein, a close observation of what is displayed in literary texts is fruitful from a comparative point of view. Actually, it allows for the uprooting of parallel influences. Weinstein states that 'At the same time, he [ the student of comparative literature] must endeavor to operate descriptively rather than prescriptively, for due to the relativity of all things historical a clear cut and unambiguous delimitation of genres is practically unattainable, so that no true atomic model of genealogy is likely ever to emerge.'<sup>2</sup> Thus, for Charlotte Brontë, representative of a nineteenth century British novelist who writes in English and for Assia Djébar, representative of a twentieth and twenty first centuries Algerian novelist who writes in French, the

allusion to the familiar fairy figure of Cinderella is illustrative of what Weisstein refers to in terms of a literary genre that remains difficult to define. Both Charlotte Brontë and Assia Djébar integrate in their narratives aspects that belong to another genre which is the fairy tale.

For these writers, who produced narratives at different times and who used different languages in their contribution to literature, the parallel reference to the fairy tale of Cinderella raises the questioning of what has influenced the writers. The ambiguity in precisely defining what has driven Charlotte Brontë and Assia Djébar to integrate the same fairy tale is at the core of the problematic of this article.

In terms of analyzing the influence of fairy tales in the works of Charlotte Brontë and those of Assia Djébar, there are no records of any analysis done so far. The only comparative study which involves these two writers is entitled *Patriarchal attitudes, A Comparative study of Assia Djébar and Charlotte Brontë*. No comparative analysis has been attempted so far that deals with any Victorian writer and Assia Djébar or any other Algerian writer.

In order to approach possible explanations for the parallel use of Cinderella by both writers, this article uses two famous versions of the Cinderella tale by the famous French writer Charles Perrault and by the Grimm Brothers from Germany. A biographical theoretical approach in the first part of this analysis is followed by a psychoanalytical one in the second part. This enables to fully explore the possible explanations for Charlotte Brontë and Assia Djébar to refer to that famous tale. The conclusion considers other possible theoretical approaches of these two works.

It is relevant to mention that it is highly dubious that an influence from one writer upon the other should be a possible explanation in the use of the same fairy figure of Cinderella. Actually, Assia Djebar and Charlotte Brontë belong to different epochs reflected in the nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first centuries. They also come from different countries in terms of England, Algeria and France. In addition, they use different languages to write that is English, French and Arabic. What has influenced Charlotte Brontë and Assia Djebar to refer to traditional elements from the fairy tale Cinderella leads to the analysis of possibilities other than an influence of one writer upon the other.

In reading the works of Charlotte Brontë and Assia Djebar, the reader and the critic are both exposed to two worlds of imagination: the fantasy world of Cinderella within the imaginary one of each writer's fiction. In *Jane Eyre* which is her most famous novel, Charlotte Brontë clearly identifies the protagonist to the fairy character Cinderella. Just like the meaning of the name 'Cinderella' refers to the ashes left in a fireplace, Jane Eyre, the protagonist of the novel describes the sadness of her lonely state in the first person narrator:

I [then] sat with my doll on my knee, till the fire got low, glancing round occasionally, to make sure that nothing worse than myself haunted the shadowy room; and when the embers sank to dull red, I undressed hastily, tugging at knots and strings as I best might, and sought shelter from cold and darkness in my crib<sup>3</sup>.

The allusion to the fairy character Cinderella is obvious as the fire that extinguishes is remindful of the fairy character whose very name comes from the

noun 'cinder' to mean ashes. The brothers Grimm version of the tale informs the reader that 'In the evening when she [Cinderella] had worked till she was weary she had no bed to go to, but had to sleep by the fireside in the ashes. And as on that account she always looked dusty and dirty, they called her Cinderella.'<sup>4</sup> Bruno Bettelheim, an Austrian-born American psychoanalyst, explains that "'to live among the ashes' was an expression that applied symbolically to the one, (male or female), who held a lower position in relation to one's brothers and sisters"<sup>5</sup> In addition to the references to the ashes, what the protagonist is wearing in terms of tugging at knots and strings rather than mentioning clothes, is remindful of Cinderella whose clothes were miserable ones due to the neglectful treatment by her step mother. Cinderella, in the Perrault's version of the tale refers to her outfit in terms of 'villains habits'<sup>6</sup>; the brothers Grimm version mentions that the wicked stepmother and her two daughters 'took her [Cinderella's] pretty clothes away from her, put an old grey bed-gown on her, and gave her wooden shoes.'<sup>7</sup> Norman Sherry, an English born American novelist, states that the parallel and the resemblances are obvious as

Jane is a Cinderella figure to begin with, without the beauty of a Cinderella, but with all the sympathy such a figure draws through being pushed aside, ill-treated and ignored. And her story, with its gradual recognition of her virtues and strengths, is the romantic tale of Cinderella who marries her prince. ... This basis in Romantic folk-tale and the novel of seduction gives the story a great deal of its fascination<sup>8</sup>.

As for Rebecca West, in her literary criticism, she mentions that regarding Charlotte Brontë, 'It is true that the subject-matter of all her work is, under one disguise or another, the Cinderella theme which is the stand-by of the sub-artist in fiction and the theatre, all the world over and in any age'<sup>9</sup>. To stress the universality and timelessness of the theme is an element that is supported by the fact that Cinderella is present in the work of Assia Djébar, a writer who is representative of Algeria and who wrote in the twentieth and twenty first centuries.

In *Les Femmes d'Alger dans leur Appartement*, Assia Djébar devises Arbia as a young girl whose life is characteristic of Cinderella's life. It is the character named Fatima, Arbia's daughter, who relates the story of her mother with an allusion to Cinderella. Fatima tells her daughter: 'Cinderella, my darling, Arbia did not know, like me before learning to read, that Cinderella existed in French stories ...'<sup>10</sup>. The direct reference to the name is used to strengthen the analogy between the fictional character of Assia Djébar and the fairy character of the tale. French stories and the fact that one should be able to read to access them is directly alluded to by the daughter of Arbia. Knowledge of the fairy tale is presented as being partly the result of education that leads to an eventual exposure to literary genres and more particularly to fairy tales. Such an instance is particularly true at the times when Charlotte Brontë and Assia Djébar grew up with an education that reflects a wide range of reading.

To consider the place that education holds in the allusion to the fairy tale, in the first place, it is significant that a biographical theoretical approach of the works of both novelists reveals that studying for

both writers has exposed them to literary dimensions within which the fairy tale is a genre that has left some prints. Cinderella is a figure that appears to belong to the educational and cultural backgrounds of both writers. Charlotte Brontë had access to numerous works as her father encouraged his children to read. He would bring them newspapers and books to keep them busy and to enable them to widen their knowledge. Charlotte Brontë mentions, in her correspondence, the wide range of books she had access to thanks to her friend Ellen Nussey who would send her all the books she had read<sup>11</sup>. The two friends would also share their impressions about their reading. The influences of imaginary tales regarding Charlotte Brontë are equally recognizable in *The tales of Angria* that she wrote and in which she created warriors out of imagination. As for Assia Djébar, the French oriented education that she acquired in her youth and throughout her life is a direct consequence of the colonization of Algeria by France. Two kinds of schools need to be mentioned regarding Algeria during colonization: schooling was done in French in modern schools created by the French. Arabic was not part of the program and was learnt mainly at the local mosques through the teaching of the Holy Koran. In addition, it is relevant to mention that Assia Djébar's father had been taught and trained in modern French schools in favor of the French language and culture and that he was the first person to have exposed his daughter to the French language and its culture as he insisted on making his daughter join the classes he taught. Assia Djébar was the only girl in her father's class composed of fifty three boys<sup>12</sup>. She excelled in French and ended up being the first Algerian and Muslim female student to have access to the 'Ecole

Normale Supérieure' in Sevres<sup>13</sup> in France in 1956. The novels of the eminent writer reflect her contact with French literature. She mentions several writers in her works and more particularly in her novel *Nulle Part Dans la Maison de Mon Père* in which the protagonist Fatima cries when she reads the misfortunes of the protagonist of 'Sans Famille'<sup>14</sup> that she mentions alongside the name of the author, Hector Malot<sup>15</sup>.

It is clear that for both Charlotte Brontë and Assia Djebar, a biographical approach is revelatory of direct contact with literary works among which the fairy tale of Cinderella must have left an impression to be later used in the compositions of the narratives of the writers. The celebrity of the tale is acknowledged by the famous psychoanalyst Bruno Bettelheim in his book entitled *Psychanalyse des Contes de Fées* in which he states that 'in everyone's opinion, 'Cinderella' is the best-known, and probably most loved, fairy tale'<sup>16</sup> He justifies his declaration with the support of a reference to the *Funk and Wagnalls Dictionary of Folklore* edited in New York in 1950 by Maria Leach as well as the work entitled 'Adult Reactions to Preferred Childhood Stories in Child Development' written by Mary Collier and Eugene Gaier in Volume number 29, in 1959. Such fame for the tale is reinforced as it needed to be translated in many languages.

In observing the requirements stated by Weisstein, the analysis of the productions of Charlotte Brontë and Assia Djebar questions the concerns and the reasons for which the character of Cinderella seems to impose its magnetism in the works of these widely apart writers. Therefore, in addition to the educational background of the writers

as a possible source of knowledge of the tale, it is necessary to explore the content of this tale and its psychological impact. Cinderella as an imaginative fairy character is a girl who grows up to embody psychological dimensions of good versus evil. She reflects the moral teaching of the victory of goodness over evil. In fact, 'Cinderella, like all other fairy tales, ends well.'<sup>17</sup> Consequently, based on an instance of familiarity that knowledge of the tale of Cinderella brings, optimism is provided, and the reader is comforted, an instance that cannot be neglected. According to the mythical theoretical approach, archetypal figures instruct the horizon of expectations that readers experience in a narrative. Thus, through their reference to the famous character of Cinderella in their works, Charlotte Brontë and Assia Djebar integrate an aspect of familiarity and identification. Through recognizable patterns of previously encountered experience, the reader is comforted that goodness will be victorious over evil.

On a psychological level, when Charlotte Brontë and Assia Djebar assimilate the main character of their narratives to the fairy figure of Cinderella, the instance enables an association with the well-known pattern of the orphan who first leads a miserable life and whose patience is later rewarded by a better life. Both Jane Eyre and Arbia are characters who are orphans in a parallel way to Cinderella. After a collapse due to bad treatment, Jane Eyre explains to the doctor who has come to examine her that her parents both died. She tells Doctor Lloyd: 'I have no father or mother, brothers or sisters.'<sup>18</sup> She suffers from not belonging to a family. In the short story of Assia Djebar, Arbia suffers from the fact that her father died and she repeats the word orphan,

“‘Itima, je suis l’itima!’”-“Orpheline, je suis orpheline!”<sup>19</sup> in French and in Algerian Arabic.

In addition to the state of orphanage, the bad treatments that all of Cinderella, *Jane Eyre* and Arbia undergo bring resemblance in their misery. Cinderella in both Charles Perrault and The brothers Grimm versions reflects an exploited girl. Because her mother died, Cinderella's father remarries. The trouble comes from the stepmother<sup>20</sup> who dislikes Cinderella because she is beautiful and kind unlike her two daughters from a previous marriage. In *Jane Eyre*, the two step-sisters of Cinderella and her wicked father's wife are reflected in the Reed family. In addition, *Jane Eyre* is ill-treated by her cousin John. His two sisters, Georgiana and Eliza, do not defend the orphan who gets repeatedly hit and accused of wrong doings she did not commit. *Jane Eyre* is also despised by the Reeds children because they think and feel that *Jane Eyre* takes advantage of their well-being. Mrs. Reed does not like the girl either and eventually tells her: ‘I disliked you so fixedly and thoroughly ever to lend a hand in lifting you to prosperity’<sup>21</sup>. Mrs. Reed never sides with *Jane Eyre* but rather punishes her severely and gets rid of her by sending her to an orphanage, making the young girl believe that she is going to an educational institution.

Regarding Arbia, she is a victim of her condition. Her two sisters in law replace Cinderella's step-sisters. In a parallel treatment, Arbia is exploited by the wives of her brothers who overload Arbia with chores that are demanding and make Arbia tired and depressed. The narrator gives the precision that Arbia ‘travaillait de l’aube au couchant très durement’<sup>22</sup>. In the mean time the two sisters in law ‘only had to rock

their babies’<sup>23</sup>. The mothers constantly require to be served and Arbia who turns out to be ‘the servant of her two sisters-in-law’<sup>24</sup> complains to her powerless mother who witnesses the unfair treatment but cannot interfere. The young girl is depicted as a powerless character as she is dependent on her brothers for her living. The sisters-in-law do not hesitate to make her pay back in an indirect way for the food and the shelter that she benefits from by living with her brothers.

From a psychological description, even though the state of the main character in the works of Charlotte Brontë and Assia Djébar is presented as gloomy and depressing, there is hope for better times. In the prospect that is allowed through the allusion to Cinderella, final reward of a good marriage and a happy life for the heroines is an expected result.

In the fairy tale, Cinderella benefits from magic happenings as her godmother interferes with the bad treatment inflicted to the young woman. When the stepmother and her daughters go to attend the ball given by the king they know that ‘the king appointed a festival that was to last three days ... in order that his son might choose himself a bride’<sup>25</sup>. Cinderella is denied attendance to the party by her wicked and envious relatives. She is left home with more chores to perform. In Charles Perrault's version, the fairy godmother uses magic touches to change the miserable clothes worn by Cinderella. Charles Perrault narrates that : ‘Her godmother only touched her with her wand, and at the same time her clothes were changed into gold and silver clothes, all adorned with jewels.’<sup>26</sup>. Cinderella can attend the ball given by the prince who falls in love with her. In The brothers Grimm version, it is a tree on the grave of

her mother that provides magic happenings. When Cinderella cries due to the harsh treatment she is inflicted with, her tears water the tree that she has planted for her mother and through magic words, birds make her get what she asks for. Cinderella says:

‘Shiver and quiver, little tree,

Silver and gold throw down over me .....the bird threw a gold and silver dress down to her and slippers embroidered with silk and silver’<sup>27</sup>.

In the case of Jane Eyre for Charlotte Brontë and that of Arbia, for Assia Djebar, the characters are not in fairy tales. How can magic-like happenings take place to enhance the plight of the young girls? What are the devices that the novelists use in their novels to make up for the godmother and magic touches which are not a component of novels and short stories?

Regarding the case of Jane Eyre, Charlotte Brontë creates Miss Temple, a character who cares to make orphans feel happy. One of the orphans describes her by saying: ‘Miss Temple is full of goodness, it pains her to be severe to any one...’<sup>28</sup> In the orphanage where Jane Eyre is first uncomfortable, Miss Temple appears as a young woman who understands and shares the misfortunes of the little girl. By trusting Jane Eyre not to be a liar contrary to what Mrs. Reed has entrusted Mr. Brokleyhurst, the headmaster of the orphanage, to believe and to declare for all the orphans not to befriend Jane Eyre, Miss Temple brings support to the young girl. She enables Jane Eyre to fully develop into a competent teacher by proving how good and honest she is. Miss Temple has got a different magic touch from Cinderella’s godmother, yet her kindness and

understanding are equal to the transformation applied to Cinderella; Jane Eyre who is first a rebellious child seeking to be loved ends up being a fully grown up young lady who can face life with the power that love has taught her. What about the case of Arbia in *Femmes d'Alger dans Leur Appartement*? Assia Djebar does not use the supernatural touch of the fairy tale either. Arbia, in her daily chores of filling buckets of water meets a young soldier back from the battlefield after having been injured. When he sees her, he decides to marry her. He benefits from enough money given to him in recognition for his heroic deed because he transported his unconscious superior from the battlefield to safety. The hero of war becomes the hero that Arbia looks forward to marrying. In obedience and respect for the Algerian custom of asking the protectors of Arbia for her hand, Toumi, the young man, addresses Arbia’s two brothers and proposes in a long-established and conventional manner; but he is turned down. Arbia wants to marry the young Toumi who devises a plan for the couple to elope. The expectation of Arbia is to finally get rid of the exploitation by her two sisters-in-law and live happily. Assia Djebar makes the powerless mother of Arbia trust her daughter. In Arbia’s talks to her mother, approval for the elopement is granted by the mother on condition that the two lovers legally marry before they live together. Arbia’s mother does not have a magic touch in the same way as Cinderella’s godmother but she replaces that magic touch by trusting her daughter’s honesty in following a legal procedure in her elopement. The mother wants her daughter to be happily married and by consenting to the elopement, she enables her daughter to become independent and to live contentedly with Toumi.

Another decisive parallel for the characters of Jane Eyre, Arbia and Cinderella lies in the fact that in the fairy tale, because Cinderella is a kind person, she does not hold a grudge against her wicked step-sisters<sup>29</sup>. After Cinderella gets married to the prince, she even provides each one of her step-sisters with a respectable young man; the half-sisters get happily married thanks to Cinderella. Forgiveness is present as a moral teaching. How is such an aspect paralleled in the works of Charlotte Brontë and Assia Djebar for Jane Eyre and Arbia not to feel resentment?

In the case of Jane Eyre, after a long separation from the Reed family with whom she was entrusted to live by her dying uncle, the heroine goes back to visit them on a request from her dying aunt. Jane Eyre explains to the old woman who is on her death bed that she forgives her for the bad treatment that was inflicted to her person. Jane Eyre also forgives her cousins; she feels no bitterness for the wicked and selfish John Reed who died in a disgraceful way and partly caused pain that his mother never recovered from. Jane Eyre gently listens to Georgiana whose only goal is to marry comfortably after failing to elope with a well off young man who deeply loved her; his family did not approve of their union and her sister sabotaged the plan. The two sisters do not talk to one another. Jane Eyre also approves of the youngest sister to become a nun as such is her desire. She parts with them on good terms. No bitterness is left among them after the death of Mrs. Reed.

In addition, Charlotte Brontë creates a situation in which Jane Eyre finds that she has three other cousins, Saint John, Diana, and Mary to the happiness of all of them. After a difficult life in an orphanage that she first believed to be a school and a

hard life as a governess and as a teacher, unexpected inheritance from a rich uncle who made Jane Eyre his only heir makes the young woman rich. She shares her money with her three cousins and marries her former master Mr. Rochester. The two female cousins are able to marry thanks to Jane Eyre's kindness as the money they get enables them to stop working for a living and to become possible matches for well off gentlemen. As for Saint John he can use his money on a missionary project he looked forward to by going to India. They all live happily hereafter and even when Saint John dies, peace is present as he had wanted to die as a missionary.

Regarding Arbia and her angry brothers at the elopement, the element of forgiveness is inserted after one of the brothers' wife dies at childbirth. Arbia, whose brothers have denied any visit, because of her acts, end up changing their attitude. They seek help from her. Arbia has only one daughter and has not given birth to any other child despite her willingness to have a son. Arbia tells her brother: [D]es mois ont passé, Ô mon frère! Aujourd'hui, c'est toi qui viens à moi; je le vois et je t'en remercie.<sup>30</sup> The narrator adds that '...C'est ainsi ... que Arbia, fut si heureuse d'élever Ali, mon cousin, enfin, mon frère!'<sup>31</sup> Arbia benefits her brother's unfortunate circumstances, and she agrees to take care of her brother's son. The family is re-united with regular visits from Arbia's aging mother who can visit her daughter after having been separated from her in abidance to the required conventional attitude against a girl who elopes and despite the secret blessing she gave her. No resentment is left among the family members. Ultimately, in *La Nuit du Recit de Fatima* in *Femmes d'Alger Dans Leur Appartement*, a positive result is

achieved just as it was overshadowed by the parallels with the fairy tale in which all is well that ends well.

The psychoanalyst Bruno Bettelheim explains that many tales start with a hero who is badly treated and who can overcome wickedness to be the winner<sup>32</sup>. For Cinderella, *Jane Eyre* and *Arbia*, the pattern of 'all is well that ends well' is reminded of in the tale, in the novel and in the short story. A mythical element is introduced in the belief that unjust oppression and exploitation reflected in all the characters eventually end in triumphant reward. What is taught in the tale that has existed for centuries is revealed to impact writers of different times and different countries. The biographical approach intended in this article is closely linked to the psychological explanation displayed in an attempt to trace back the origin of the influence of Cinderella in the works of Charlotte Brontë and Assia Djebar. In fact, the education of the writers has impacted them with a positive and hopeful reproduction of hope and values that have been held for a long time and that are transmitted in tales.

Much more could be analyzed in terms of archetypes and close parallels between the characters

of the tale of Cinderella, those of Charlotte Brontë's novel and Assia Djebar's short story. The male characters of Mr. Rochester in *Jane Eyre* and that of Toumi in *La Nuit du Récit de Fatima* in *Femmes d'Alger Dans Leur Appartement* could be paralleled with the prince who marries Cinderella. Literary texts also provide readers with a bounty which is acquired through recognizable and familiar universal patterns. On a moral level, benefit is acquired by sharing the experience of hardships of a character who can pathetically hope for better times. On a real level, these stories seem to teach patience and forgiveness. Positive moral attributes are displayed in a victory over negative ones which fail to persist. Literature transmits universal ideas that are often conveyed through parallel and shared patterns. The additional identity pertaining to a specific culture and to a specific country can only make a work richer and more pleasant both for the reader and for the literary critic.

In the end, what Weisstein states in terms of observation in comparative literature can surely lead to many more possibilities to approach more works from different writers

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12. Calle-Gruber, Mireille, ASSIA DJEBAR, adpf, Paris, 2006, planche no 2, à la fin de l'ouvrage et dernière page, explication no 2,
13. Zimra Clarisse informs that in 1956 'Assia Djebar was attending the prestigious Ecole Normale Supérieure de Sèvres as the first Algerian whose grades had been high enough for admission' Zimra, Clarisse - Writing Woman, The novels of Assia Djebar, Substance, Volume 21 no 69, 1992, p. 68
14. In terms of literary works, Assia Djebar was familiar with Baudelaire, Alain Fournier, Jacques Riviere, Hector Malot, André Gide and Arthur Rimbeau among other writers. She read French novels very passionately and was familiar with most of the classics of her time. She mentions these works in her novel entitled *Nulle Part dans la Maison de mon Père* in which the protagonist states: 'Lectrice de tant de romans, de poèmes, de chroniques en langue française – celle-ci, ma langue silencieuse... je continuais à lire de nuit, et même à quatorze ou quinze ans, la lampe de poche sous le drap, au dortoir' in *Nulle Part Dans la Maison de Mon Père*, Alger, Editions Sedia, 2008, p. 284
15. 'Je suis saisie – par la vie si proche, si palpable d'un autre être, le héros de sans famille imagine par Hector Malot, in Djebar's *Nulle Part Dans la Maison de Mon Père*, op.cit., p. 21
16. translation of the author from '[D]e l'avis de tout le monde, 'Cendrillon' est le conte de fées le plus connu, et probablement le plus aimé', Bruno Bettelheim, op.cit, p. 296
17. translation of the author from 'Cendrillon, comme tous les autres contes de fées, se termine bien', Bruno Bettelheim, op.cit p. 301
18. Brontë, Jane Eyre, op.cit., p. 23
19. Djebar, Femmes D'Alger dans leur Appartement, op.cit., p. 19
20. Dans le monde occidental, l'histoire de Cendrillon ... nous raconte qu'un prince devenu veuf aimait tellement sa fille 'qu'il ne pouvait voir qu'avec ses yeux'. Ce prince épouse une méchante femme qui déteste sa belle-fille on peut supposer que c'est par jalousie...' Bettelheim, op.cit., p. 304
21. 21. Brontë, *Jane Eyre*, op.cit., p. 224
22. Djebar, *Femmes D'Alger dans leur Appartement*, op.cit., p. 19
23. Translated by author from 'n'avaient qu'à bercer leurs bébés' idem
24. Translated by the author from 'la servante de ses deux belles sœurs' idem, p. 18
25. Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, The complete fairy tales of the brothers Grimm,, Wordsworth Library Collection, 2009, Great Britain, p. 122
26. translation of the author from ' Sa marraine ne fit que la toucher avec sa baguette, et en même temps ses habits furent changés en des habits de drap d'or et d'argent tout chamarrés de pierreries', Charles Perrault, Contes, Larousse, Paris, 2009, p. 81
27. Grimm brothers, op.cit., p. 123-124
28. Brontë, *Jane Eyre*, op.cit., p. 53
29. 'La version de Perrault ne fait pas la différence entre les bons et les méchants. Les belles-sœurs sont beaucoup plus dures envers Cendrillon que celle des frères Grimm ; et pourtant, à la fin de l'histoire, Cendrillon embrasse ses bourreaux et leur dit qu'elle les aime de tout son cœur et les prie 'de l'aimer bien toujours'. Après tout ce qui s'est passé, ce comportement demeure incompréhensible, comme le sont les dernières lignes du conte :

...et peu de jours après ( le mariage) Cendrillon, qui était aussi bonne que belle, fit loger ses deux sœurs au palais, et les maria des le jour même a deux grands seigneurs de la cour.''' Bruno Bettelheim, op.cit, p. 314

30. Djebar, Femmes D'Alger dans leur Appartement, op.cit., p. 25

31. idem, p. 29

32. 'Au début du conte de fées, le héro est à la merci de ceux qui ont une piètre opinion de lui et de ses possibilités, qui le maltraitent et menacent même sa vie .... A la fin du conte, le héros a triomphe de toutes les épreuves...', Bruno Bettelheim, op.cit, p. 168