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### **The limitations of studying comparative literature as an independent discipline in Iran**

In this article I am going to discuss the limitations of practicing comparative literature in Iran as a discipline. The absence of an independent comparative literature department in Iranian universities has led to confusion of scholars of this field. Among Iranian literary scholars, comparative literature is often considered as a subcategory of world literature, and world literature to them is English or rarely French literature.

This narrow definition originates from the fact that the foreign languages departments in Iran are isolated departments with national formation structure. These separate sections insist on sufficiency of having national perspective and each of them only focus on one language or literature such as English, Arabic, French, etc. Nevertheless, these are languages with transnational status which cannot be looked at as detached units. As a consequence, there is no opportunity neither to study literature of other languages nor to look at them from a comparative viewpoint.

This restricted scope in defining these broad terms and excluding the transnational scope from their studies is one of the reasons why comparative literature has not found its proper place in the country's academic circles. Comparative literature, for Iranian literary scholars, is limited to comparing an Iranian author's work with one by an English or American author and to find their similarities and differences. However, the most important part of this effort which is reaching a conclusion from this comparison is most of the times ignored.

Moreover, comparative literature, an interdisciplinary field in nature, requires the collaboration of different academic departments such as literature, art, psychology, sociology, history, etc. However, in Iran this collaboration does not happen easily or lasts for a long time.

Addressing these problems and obstacles which has blocked the path of comparative literature in Iran and suggesting solutions will be effective in growth of this discipline.