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### **Comparing or Translating? Who is Afraid of Comparative Literature in the Classroom?**

English literary scholars in Korea are asked to approach the canonical literatures written in English from Western canonized perspectives, which the scholars are expected to acquire from major Western works of criticism. However, the same scholars are also bound to approach the English literatures from their own Korean cultural perspectives and backgrounds as they are not English native speakers. This might inherently differentiate them from Western English literary scholars, which might justify a tangible space for a comparative approach with a claim that all the Korean scholars of foreign literatures are obliged to become literary comparatists. Nevertheless, the discipline of 'comparative literature' has not been successfully established in Korea as an academic field even without a single academic department of comparative literature in colleges for the past 60 years despite the historically early and pioneering establishment of the 'Korean Comparative Literature Association' in 1959, one of the first academic associations in the field of humanities in Korea. While a literary translation of foreign literatures into Korean has a long history in the practice of literary study in Korean academics, the discipline of comparative literature which is inseparable from the practice of literary and cultural translation has been much alienated in the Korean academic setting for diverse reasons including the resistance of the Korean scholars of foreign national literatures. This paper intends to examine the status of 'comparative literature' in college classrooms in Korea and how the interdisciplinary nature of 'crossing – over' of comparative literature has been wary of a potential threat or contamination in the context of the vested rights of foreign national literatures over comparative literature. (265 words)