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## **Modern Narratology and Comparative Literature**

Personally, my original purpose for being a doctoral student in Comparative Literature is to better understand literary works from home and abroad by establishing connections and a shared context. However, afterwards, I realized that there are too many arguments about what comparative literature is at the first stage of this discipline, and then as most students in this field, I am familiarized with a range of studies comparing different topics, themes, media of arts, cultural phenomenon and political ideologies etc. In other words, the focus of comparative literature seems to be located only within the questions of “what do the stories tell?” and “why are they told?”, while the question of “how are they told?” has not yet been answered sufficiently. Regarding this, we may make better use of modern narratology which has witnessed great development in recent years. By comparing the ways stories from different cultures and times are told, we may grasp the mechanism of understanding and do not have to draw from others’ conclusion anymore. To illustrate this idea, this paper will take two ancient “love” stories from East and West as an example, the story of *Weisheng* (“尾生抱柱”) in Chinese literature and the story of *Hero and Leandro* in western counterpart. Both stories are about dating, waiting and dying in water, and have been written and rewritten through long history in both cultures, while this paper will try to expound these two stories using narratological device, to see how they are told differently crossing cultures and times, so as to develop a better understanding of both. No matter for world literature or comparative literature, I believe the ultimate aim and achievement lie right in the word “understanding”.