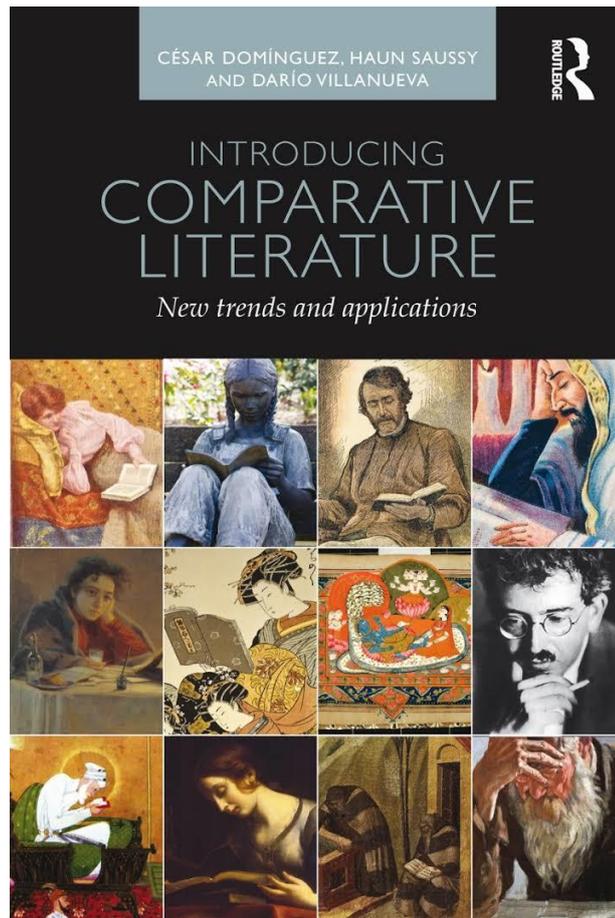


Essential Comparative Literature

A. Logeshwaran and Mrs. Sridevi



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Abstract

Comparative literature is the study of the interrelationship of the literatures of two or more national cultures, usually of differing languages and especially of the influences of one upon the other. Sometimes informal study of literary works in translation is also considered study of comparative literature. Majors in comparative literature focus on two different literary traditions through the study of literary works in their original language. Comparative Literature students can also double major with disciplines beyond the Faculty of Languages and Linguistics, such as business, government, philosophy and many others. The comparative method is often used in the early stages of the development of a branch of science. It can help

the researcher to ascend from the initial level of exploratory case studies to a more advanced level of general theoretical models, invariances, such as causality or evolution.

Introduction

Comparative literature is an academic field dealing with the study of literature and cultural expression across linguistic, national, and disciplinary boundaries. Comparative literature "performs a role similar to that of the study of international relations, but works with languages and artistic traditions, so as to understand cultures 'from the inside'".^[1] While most frequently practiced with works of different languages, comparative literature may also be performed on works of the same language if the works originate from different nations or cultures among which that language is spoken.

Intercultural Comparative Literature

The characteristically intercultural and transnational field of comparative literature concerns itself with the relation between literature, broadly defined, and other spheres of human activity, including history, politics, philosophy, art, and science. Unlike other forms of literary study, comparative literature places its emphasis on the interdisciplinary analysis of social and cultural production within the "economy, political dynamics, cultural movements, historical shifts, religious differences, the urban environment, international relations, public policy, and the sciences. The terms *comparative literature* and *world literature* are often used to designate a similar course of study and scholarship. Comparative Literature is the more widely used term in the United States, with many universities having Comparative Literature departments or Comparative Literature programs.

An Interdisciplinary Field

Comparative literature is an interdisciplinary field whose practitioners study literature across national borders, across time periods, across languages, across genres, across boundaries between literature and the other arts (music, painting, dance, film, etc.), across disciplines (literature and psychology, philosophy, science, history, architecture, sociology, politics, etc.). Defined most broadly, comparative literature is the study of "literature without borders". Scholarship in comparative literature include, for example, studying literacy and social status in the Americas, studying medieval epic and romance, studying the links of literature to folklore and mythology, studying colonial and postcolonial writings in different parts of the world, asking fundamental questions about definitions of literature itself.^[4] What scholars in comparative literature share is a desire to study literature beyond national boundaries and an interest in languages so that they can read foreign texts in their original form. Many comparatists also share the desire to integrate literary experience with other cultural phenomena such as historical change, philosophical concepts, and social movements.

Scholarly Associations

The discipline of comparative literature has scholarly associations such as the ICLA: International Comparative Literature Association and comparative literature associations exists in many countries: for a list of such see BCLA: British Comparative Literature Association; for the US, see ACLA: American Comparative Literature Association. There are many learned journals that publish scholarship in comparative literature: see "Selected Comparative Literature and Comparative Humanities Journals"^[5] and for a list of books in comparative literature see "Bibliography of (Text) Books in Comparative Literature".
the Term Comparative Literature?

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Multidimensional Features

Basically, “*Comparative Literature*” is critical to explain because it incorporates two or even more literature at a same time. Even it is difficult for comparatist to compare multi-dimensional features of comparative literature like religion, historical factors, social and cultural norms of diverse societies. In simple words, in order to understand comparative literature, one needs to understand Nomenclature. Comparative literature actually refers to some literary work or the work that we compared with some other literary work. It is the study of inter-relationship between two different works of literature.

Comparative Literature – Comparison Between Different Literatures

While comparing two different literatures, your focus should be on Themes, Social or Religious Movements, Myths, Artistic Tactics and forms. For a comparatist, it is easy to critical analyze the two different texts of literature having similarities or dissimilarities. However, his/her approach should be unprejudiced while comparing the two different literatures to find out the truth. It is just his sincere and genuine methodology which will yield the exposed truth or regular results and this truly is the motivation behind similar study. Taken comprehensively, Comparative Literature is a thorough term. Its extension incorporates the totality of human encounters into its grip, and along these lines all inside human connections among the different parts of the world are acknowledged, through the basic way to deal with literary works under near study.

Famous Works of Comparative Literature

It serves vanishing narrow national and worldwide limits and set up of that all-inclusiveness of human connections develops out. In this manner the term similar writing incorporates relative investigation of territorial writings, national written works, and global writings. On the other hand, there are some over-lapping terms in this worry, for example,

Universal Literature, International Literature, General Literature and World writing.

Over and again, we can specify here that Comparative Literature incorporates encounters of human life and conduct all in all. As explained over, the comparative study is not the same as a basic methodology of a specific writing aside from the way that here we manage two or more than two literary works one next to the other. Thusly, the topic gets to be vaster and viewpoint more extensive. Limits of similar writing must be reached out to envelop the total of human life and encounters in one’s grip.

Examples for Comparative Literature

George Orwell’s *Animal Farm* and *1984* comparison;

Animal Farm vs. **1984** Similarities Government Characters Themes/Plots Themes
Boxer and The Parsons Napoleon and Big Brother Squealer and Winston Classes in Society
Both books contain a world full of three classes: high, middle, and low. **Animal Farm** was based on Stalin and the Russian Revolution.

Comparison between Languages

American English	British English
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Color	colour
Behaviour	behaviour
Theatre	theatre
Behaviour	behaviour

The differences below are only a general rule. American speech has influenced Britain via pop culture, and vice versa. Therefore, some prepositional differences are not as pronounced as they once were.

American English	British English
I'm going to a party on the weekend.	I'm going to a party at the weekend.
What are you doing on Christmas?	What are you doing at Christmas?
Monday through Friday.	Monday to Friday.
It's different from/than the others.	It's different from/to the others.

Translation and World Literature

With such a broad scope, it's no surprise that comparative literature is closely tied to world literature, or the way in which literary works circulate around the globe and across time. World literature asks things like: Why do people continue to read Dante centuries after his death? What happens when Shakespeare is read in China? Is *Harry Potter* in Swahili the same as *Harry Potter* in English? Works dealing with comparative and world literature have titles like:

What is World Literature? (David Damrosch, 2003)

Chinese Shakespeares: Two Centuries of Cultural Exchange (Alexander Huang, 2008)

Since moving literature around the world means moving it across languages, comparative literature is also frequently concerned with issues of translation. The field considers what is both lost and gained as texts are recreated in different languages. In other words, comparative literature is interested in things like the fact that to read Shakespeare in Chinese is to find some kind of connection to the Great Bard's major themes, but at the same time, to read quite a different text than those in England do.

Indian Comparative Literature

In Indian comparative methodology, the Sanskrit faultfinders developed out during the 6th century A.D. It is clear from the analyses on Kalidasa's *Meghduta* and *Abhijnanasakuntala*. After that the pundits like Kuntaka and Abhinavagupta with their subjective methodology prepared for present day comparatators. R.S. Pathak, giving the chronicled advancement of the new train, near writing, says: Mathew Arnold made important endeavors in the English world and underscored emphatically the criticalness of the relative ways to deal with abstract works. He wrote in a letter in 1848, "Each commentator ought to

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attempt and have one incredible writing in any event other than his own and more the not at all like his own, the better.”

Thus, he spearheaded the similar feedback in England and offered motivation to different commentators to take a shot at this new train. It is hereby recommended that the comparatist ought to embrace the showstoppers of inventive essayists, whose works have cosmopolitan status in abstract fields. That is the reason Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot required a feedback of verse on parameters of general world-verse, or the works of greatest fabulousness. This sort of methodology will coordinate near investigation of writing towards universal level.

Conclusion

Comparative Literature’s approach to translation, from the time when the use of translations was considered a necessary evil (which was caused by an unblemished conviction that their status was necessarily lower than that of the original texts), going through the progressive expiry of such caution (as a result of the expansion of the materials of study and a multicultural decentralisation of the canon), to the final conviction that translation not only allows access to literary works that would otherwise be opaque to us, but that their analysis can provide very important information about intercultural contacts and the dynamics of development of different receiving literary traditions, since, at the end of the day, translations are organically related to the target literature and are in tune with it, when they do not determine it. This process has had much to do with the consolidation of Translation Studies as a full independent discipline.

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