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UGC NET Paper 2

Comparative Literature (072)
Complete revision notes — all 10 units

10 units | Tables & formulas | Key revision points

01 Concept of Comparative Literature
02 Schools of Comparative Literature
03 Influence and Reception
04 Thematology and Genology
05 Translation Studies
06 Indian Literature as a Concept
07 Literary Historiography
08 Interdisciplinary Approaches
09 Postcolonial and World Literature Debates
10 Methods of Comparison

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Edition: November 2026

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Ten units of focused revision notes. Each unit ends with a box of key revision points.

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How to use these notes

- Read one unit at a time, then test yourself with its key revision points.
- Make your own short notes on topics you find difficult.
- Units follow the main areas of the official syllabus — the exact unit list can change between sessions.
- Always check the latest syllabus and notices on the official UGC NET portal: **ugcnet.nta.ac.in**.

UNIT 01

Concept of Comparative Literature

Origins and definitions of the discipline.

- Goethe's idea of *Weltliteratur* (world literature), 1827.
- Henry Remak (1961): comparison of literatures across nations and with other fields of knowledge.
- In India: first department at Jadavpur University (1956, Buddhadeva Bose).

★ Key revision points

- Weltliteratur = Goethe (1827).
- Remak's broad definition (1961).
- Jadavpur: first Indian department (1956).
- Comparison crosses languages and disciplines.

UNIT 02

Schools of Comparative Literature

French, American and later approaches.

School	Focus
French	Influence studies; historical, factual links (rapports de fait)
American	Parallel studies; interdisciplinarity (René Wellek, 'The Crisis of Comparative Literature', 1958)
Eastern European / Russian	Typological similarities (Zhirmunsky)

★ Key revision points

- French school = influence studies.
- American school = parallel studies.
- 'Crisis of Comparative Literature' = Wellek (1958).
- Typological approach = Zhirmunsky.

UNIT 03

Influence and Reception

Influence, imitation and reception theory.

- Influence vs imitation vs analogy.
- **Reception theory** — Hans Robert Jauss: 'horizon of expectations'; Wolfgang Iser.
- Intertextuality — Julia Kristeva (from Bakhtin's dialogism).

★ Key revision points

- Horizon of expectations = Jauss.
- Intertextuality = Kristeva.
- Dialogism = Bakhtin.
- Influence differs from analogy.

UNIT 04

Thematology and Genology

Study of themes, motifs and genres across literatures.

- Thematology: themes, motifs, myths (e.g. Faust, Prometheus across literatures).
- Genology: study of genres and their migration (epic, novel, ghazal, sonnet).

★ Key revision points

- Thematology = study of themes.
- Genology = study of genres.
- Motifs recur across texts.
- Genres travel between cultures.

UNIT 05

Translation Studies

Theories of translation.

Theorist	Idea
Eugene Nida	Formal vs dynamic equivalence
Roman Jakobson	Intralingual, interlingual, intersemiotic translation
Lawrence Venuti	Domestication vs foreignisation; translator's invisibility
André Lefevere	Translation as rewriting
Itamar Even-Zohar	Polysystem theory
Susan Bassnett	Cultural turn in translation studies

★ Key revision points

- Dynamic equivalence = Nida.
- Three types of translation = Jakobson.
- Foreignisation = Venuti.
- Polysystem = Even-Zohar.

UNIT 06

Indian Literature as a Concept

Ideas of Indian literature as one literature in many languages.

- Sahitya Akademi's idea: Indian literature is one, though written in many languages.
- Sisir Kumar Das — *A History of Indian Literature*; Amiya Dev; K. Ayyappa Paniker.
- Bhasha literatures and translation between Indian languages.

★ Key revision points

- *A History of Indian Literature* = Sisir Kumar Das.
- One literature in many languages.
- Bhasha = Indian-language literatures.
- Translation links Indian literatures.

UNIT 07

Literary Historiography

Writing literary history comparatively.

- Periodisation; national vs comparative literary history.
- Oral and written traditions in literary history.
- Canon formation and its critique.

★ Key revision points

- Periodisation divides literary history.
- Canon = accepted body of works.
- Oral traditions are part of literary history.
- Comparative history crosses nations.

UNIT 08

Interdisciplinary Approaches

Literature and other arts and disciplines.

- Literature and painting, music, film (adaptation studies).
- Literature and philosophy, psychology, history.
- Ekphrasis — writing about visual art.

★ Key revision points

- Adaptation studies: literature and film.
- Ekphrasis = describing visual art.
- Interdisciplinarity = American school.
- Literature and music share forms.

UNIT 09

Postcolonial and World Literature Debates

Contemporary debates in the discipline.

- Susan Bassnett — *Comparative Literature: A Critical Introduction* (1993).
- Gayatri Spivak — *Death of a Discipline* (2003).
- David Damrosch — *What Is World Literature?* (2003); Franco Moretti — distant reading.

★ Key revision points

- *Death of a Discipline* = Spivak (2003).
- *What Is World Literature?* = Damrosch.
- Distant reading = Moretti.
- Bassnett's critical introduction (1993).

UNIT 10

Methods of Comparison

Practical methods for comparative study.

- Choose a basis of comparison: theme, genre, influence, period, movement.
- Read originals where possible; note translation effects.
- Avoid ranking literatures; focus on relations and differences.

★ Key revision points

- Define the basis of comparison.
- Account for translation.
- Compare relations, not rankings.
- Use primary texts where possible.

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