

Finding Articles on Spanish Literary Criticism

Step One: If you already have a citation to a journal article, go to the library homepage:

<http://www.lib.auburn.edu/>

Suppose you wish to find:

Guerra Cunningham, Lucía: "[Retextualizaciones del cuerpo en la poesía de Ana María Rodas](#)" *Explicación de Textos Literarios*, (31:2), 2002-2003, 31-42. (2002-2003)

We are looking for volume 31, number 2, of the journal called "Explicación de Textos Literarios." So we just insert the name of the journal in the search box where it says "Search catalog" and change the dropdown box from "Title" to "Journal Title." This makes the search more precise, though we would still retrieve the journal under "Title." This search gives us the catalog record, and we find out that *Explicación de Textos Literarios* is on the third floor under PQ 6014 .E9 and that we have volumes 1 through 32. So you can get the article in our library.

Step Two: More commonly, you do not have a specific citation, but you have an author or a topic or a literary theme in mind. Where can you find critical articles that will help your research?

Go here <http://www.lib.auburn.edu/hum/humweb/flpage.htm>

That is the subject guide that I have placed on the Library website for doing research in Foreign Languages and Literatures. Note that my email address and office phone number appear at the top and all students should feel free to use those contacts at any time. I read my email daily, even on weekends.

As you scroll down the page, you will see various reference works listed, a link to *MLA Directory of Periodicals*, which you would NOT want to use normally. Then you will see a listing of call number ranges, indicating that Spanish Literature (including Spanish American) is in the range PQ 6001-PQ 8929.

MOST IMPORTANT for finding articles are the links to the databases that follow below.

Of these links, the single most useful is MLA Bibliography

http://collections.chadwyck.com/home/home_mla.jsp

If you are off campus, you will probably have to log in with user name and password. But from anywhere on campus that link should take you directly into the database.

From the homepage, click SEARCH, and then examine what comes up:

In the Standard Search, you can put in KEYWORDS, TITLE KEYWORDS, or SUBJECT terms. While it is often useful in all databases to try the keyword search, I recommend the SUBJECT search. Note that you can browse the Thesaurus to find the proper subject terms.

For example, if I want to find articles about **Guatemalan poetry**, I can click on “Select from Thesaurus” next to the “Subject—All” search box. By entering the first few letters of Guatemala (GUAT...), and then clicking LOOK FOR, I will retrieve a list of Thesaurus terms that include Guatemala and Guatemalan... I would probably want to put a check in the box next to “Guatemalan literature” and then click SELECT. I can then choose to repeat this process and look for the word “poetry” as a subject. If I select that term, it is placed in the subject box next to “Guatemalan literature.” However, the default links these two subjects with OR. Logically, we want to combine the two terms, therefore we have to change OR to AND. We want to search for “Guatemalan literature” AND “poetry.” When I click SEARCH, I get 65 results. Some are journal articles, some are dissertations, and some are articles/chapters from books. I have the choice to LIMIT to articles or dissertations, but I left the default to ALL. Suppose you prefer to search by KEYWORD and just put “Guatemalan poetry” in the search box for keyword(s). You might be lucky or you might be disappointed. Generally speaking, I think you will have more success with the SUBJECT search.

Notice that when you actually select an individual result, the display includes a list of subject headings. You can make use of this information to do further searching, either by clicking on an attractive subject heading (such as the name of a poet) or by just noting down the subject for future use. If you click on the name of the poet as a subject heading, you will then have the opportunity of adding this to your current search, or replacing your current search with this new one. (But there are a few steps involved, not addressed here.)

If you prefer to use the ADVANCED SEARCH rather than the STANDARD SEARCH, which is what we have done above, just go back to the search home and change your search to ADVANCED SEARCH. Then you will see many more SUBJECT choices, such as “Literary theme,” “Literary topic,” “Genre,” and others.

Now this is important: MLA Bibliography does not provide full text to articles, but only the citations to the articles (or book chapters). Therefore, at this point, when you have settled on a selection of article citations, you need to follow the original steps for finding a journal in our library. WARNING: most journals cited in MLA are not in our library. If you are lucky, we may have electronic links to some of them. If so, these links will show up in the catalog record. See below.

Here is an example:

Title: The Bilingual review [electronic/print] = La Revista bilinguê.

Library: Auburn University Libraries
Location: AU Electronic Resource

Web Link: Link to resource in Academic Search Premier.

<http://spot.lib.auburn.edu/login?url=http://search.epnet.com/direct.asp?db=aph&jid=%22BLG%22&scope=site>

Notes: Access restrictions may apply.

Available: 1991-1997:Apr., 1998-

Library: Auburn University Libraries
Location: AU Electronic Resource

Web Link: Link to resource in Expanded Academic ASAP.

http://spot.lib.auburn.edu/login?url=http://web1.infotrac.galegroup.com/itw/infomark/549/558/64022694w1/purl=rc18_EAIM_0__Bilingual+Review&dyn=47!jn_s_Bilingual+Review?sw_aep=naal_aub

Notes: Access restrictions may apply.

Available: 1999-2001:Apr.

Library: Auburn University Libraries
Location: Auburn RBD Library (3rd Floor)

Call Number: P 115 .B5
Status: Not Checked Out

Notes: Subscription Cancelled.

Available: v. 1-17 (1974-1992)
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This is an abbreviated catalog record indicating that our paper subscription ended in 1992, but that more recent volumes are available through two of our general databases, often in full-text. If not in full-text, you will have to order through Interlibrary Loan.

While MLA Bibliography is the most recommended database for literary criticism, it is also worth trying the general databases. These include refereed journals, with a fair amount of electronic full-text coverage.

So, a keyword search in Expanded Academic ASAP (Infotrac) can bring up some useful citations. When I did a keyword search for "argentin* and poetry" (asterisk works as truncation), I got citations for 34 articles in refereed journals. Some were actually poems, some were book reviews, and some were critical articles. Over half were in full-text. The very first one, a book review from "Latin American Research Review" was not in full-text in the database. But when I searched the library catalog for the journal, I found that there were several electronic links, one of which was to Project Muse. When I sought the journal there, I found the electronic article in full-text.

LESSON: Don't always click the box next to Full-text only in article databases because you will miss out citations that CAN be found in full-text with a few more clicks, such as this one in LARR.

So use Infotrac and Ebsco (Academic Search Premier). Sometimes one will carry full-text of what the other does not or one will index important journals which the other misses.

Other database sources to consider:

HAPI Online (a resource for Latin American Studies from UCLA, not limited to literature, but offering coverage to some Latin American periodicals that may be missed by other databases. Coverage of social and political and economic issues may be useful in research into the nexus between society and literature. Usually NOT in full-text.)

Handbook of Latin American Studies (maintained by the Library of Congress since 1936) offers citations for books and articles on a wide variety of topics, including literary topics. No full-text. Searchable in English, Spanish, or Portuguese.

Ethnic Newswatch is a database of articles from popular and refereed publications focused on ethnic groups. It can include studies related to Afro-argentine literature, Afro-Cuban, Chicano culture, etc. Lots of full-text articles, but probably narrow in scope.

This is just an attempt to give some pointers on finding research materials, especially for those with little practice.

Feel free to contact me anytime.

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