

## Renaissance and Reformation Renaissance et Réforme



### Suárez, Juan-Luis, project dir. The Baroque Art Project: A Data Collection of Hispanic Baroque Painters and Paintings from 1550 to 1850. Other.

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Spaces of Power of the Spanish Nobility (1480–1715)  
Les espaces de pouvoir de la noblesse espagnole (1480–1715)

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of *Hispanic Studies* and *Anales Cervantinos*, but not any of the other forty or more reviews I have published in those two journals. My Dialnet webpage lists only three of my ten authored books but provides a link to my author page on the Library of Congress webpage where seven of my books are listed. Taking my own Dialnet author page as an example, Dialnet reveals certain limitations. Although authors may write to Dialnet to express any issues related to their documents shown there, Dialnet will only show documents housed in their partner libraries.

While Dialnet is far and away the finest Spanish bibliographical database in the humanities and social sciences, it is somewhat limited by its regional focus on Spanish-speaking countries and by the fact that it does not show all documents available in their partner libraries. Notwithstanding, it is still the best bibliographical database for Spanish researchers, and its development has been an outstanding accomplishment.

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### **Suárez, Juan-Luis, project dir.**

#### **The Baroque Art Project: A Data Collection of Hispanic Baroque Painters and Paintings from 1550 to 1850. Other.**

Ontario: Western University, CulturePlex Lab, 2007. Accessed 24 April 2020. [baroqueart.cultureplex.ca](http://baroqueart.cultureplex.ca).

The Baroque Art Project: A Data Collection of Hispanic Baroque Painters and Paintings from 1550 to 1850 is one of the projects carried out in the CulturePlex Lab, an initiative of Western University, Ontario. Before delving further, it is necessary to give a brief explanation of the CulturePlex Lab to understand the context in which the project was created.

With the support of the Canada Foundation for Innovation, the Government of Ontario, Western University, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, and the Ontario Centres of Excellence, the CulturePlex Lab provides different services related to culture, humanities, and digital innovation. Juan-Luis Suárez heads the work team, which is made up

of researchers and students. The multidisciplinary nature of the team allows it to implement the CulturePlex Lab's general aims, which include detecting and establishing the common elements in the baroque; identifying different relationships between them; and creating tools, techniques, and systems for pertinent research in the digital sphere.

The main aim of the Baroque Art Project itself, as indicated in the title, is to record all baroque artwork from the Spanish Empire from 1550 to 1850. This covers a broad chronological span with different artistic styles, and a wide geographical span considering the far reach of the Spanish Empire. The project was designed for students, researchers, and scholars; however, its user-friendliness invites interested members of the general public to explore the resource.

The project uses an open-source model, provided on the page itself. It works properly with both Windows and Mac, as well as with cell phones and tablets, including Android operating systems. As for licensing, copyright, and reuse, the website indicates that it is in the public domain, and that the images' copyright belongs to the holders. The technical specifications also state that the files are presented in .json and .csv formats. The Baroque Art Project's webpage indicates that the information is open for reuse in order to help researchers.

The Hispanic Baroque Art Database has been continually expanded since it was set up in 2007. It has a clear, simple, and user-friendly interface. The landing page is divided into four sections: Creators, Artworks, Series, and Map. "Creators" gives access to a list of artists' surnames in alphabetical order. This section contains biographical data such as each artist's date of birth and death, place of birth, and the number of artworks created. Each page has ten entries, and the entire section has a total of 166 pages. For each artist there is a list of their works' titles, also in alphabetical order. Each artwork has a profile that provides more detailed information with different descriptors: temporal annotation and classification by theme (e.g., religious), type (e.g., painting), and physical properties in terms of materials, technique, and size. Where a picture of the work is provided, it can be downloaded, taking into account the aforementioned copyright considerations. The artwork's current location is also included. For this information, a small window pops up, containing the map location of the institution that houses the work. If the work is part of a series, there is also a link to that.

The “Artworks” and “Series” sections are organized in the same way. They can be accessed from one section to another, as explained above in the description of how the “Creators” section works. This interconnection between the database’s different sections streamlines the search and hence makes it easier to find information and results. All of this is of great help for research, since a single piece of data (e.g., the artist’s name) takes the user to the rest of the content in the database.

The fourth section, “Map,” is organized differently due to its nature. In this section, a map of the world opens up with two controls to narrow down the search: a time bar in the upper left corner that enables the user to choose and restrict the period of time, and in the upper right a drop-down option to search for the original or current location. Once the desired options have been chosen, an icon appears over each country showing the number of artworks they house or have housed. When zooming in on a country, the different locations and institutions that house the works appear, with a window that can be opened by clicking on the location to show the name of the institution, the title of the work, and the artist’s name. The user can then click on the latter two items, which lead to the other aforementioned sections of the database. The map search is thus connected to the other sections.

There is also an “Advanced Search” section which can be used to narrow down the search by specifying the parameters considered in the different sections, and a space for users to log into the website. However, on attempting to log in, a notification appears saying that this option is not yet available; it is therefore impossible to know what functions and possibilities are given to people who log in.

Following the above explanation of how the database works, we can now answer the question about possibilities for research provided by the tool and its usefulness. To begin, the database includes entries with data missing, which means that any gaps in the information about a topic are visible. This may encourage research to fill the gaps in certain topics. As it is an ongoing project, it fosters the research process and its dissemination in two ways: 1) by raising awareness about the lack of data, it may encourage new lines of research to be opened up; 2) finding such missing data and uploading it to the website will help disseminate the results, which may also cast light on other lines of research in progress. Another significant possibility for this database is offered by the map section, which raises students’ awareness about the geographic

and chronological breadth of art known as Hispanic baroque at a glance. The project may also be helpful for studies related to museographic matters such as transporting, acquiring, and purchasing works of art created in certain locations but currently housed in others.

Despite all of these advantages, there are two interrelated aspects with room for improvement. Although the creators indicate that they have used 1,434 bibliographic sources to create the database, only one general bibliography has been provided (on the main page); it can be consulted only by exiting specific sections, which slows access to that information. Another aspect that could improve the quality of the database would be to create a link to the website of the institution that houses the artwork. Adding this option would also partly solve the lack of a direct bibliography, since many museums and galleries that house works of art include not only information about them but also a bibliographical list that would be useful for researchers.

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### **López Poza, Sagrario, project dir.**

**Biblioteca Digital de Emblemática Hispánica (Digital library of Hispanic emblematica). Other.**

A Coruña: Universidade da Coruña, Seminario Interdisciplinar para el Estudio de la Literatura Áurea Española (SIELAE; Interdisciplinary seminar for the study of literature of the Spanish Golden Age), 2001. Accessed 24 May 2020. [bidiso.es/EmblematicaHispanica](http://bidiso.es/EmblematicaHispanica).

The constant development of technologies for digital collections—with a flurry of novel tools to find, visualize, and annotate digitized content—has imposed a logic of obsolescence that does not always keep pace with scholarship in the humanities. The eyes of the reader, more and more used to finding what they need in a quick search, can easily be seduced by beautiful reading environments created to disguise poor scholarship, while major intellectual accomplishments—now held hostage to the old-fashioned UX design of their birth—fade into the background of Google logarithms. The latter is precisely