

editing and proofreading that are sometimes lacking here. Nonetheless, both sites demonstrate great potential.

One learns on the website for the *Advancing Women Artists Foundation* that Jane Fortune has served on many boards of cultural institutions, including the Indianapolis Museum of Art, the National Museum of Women in the Arts, and the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. We learn, too, that Fortune is “also known for her work in making art accessible to people with disabilities,” work for which she was recognized by the Indianapolis Museum of Art. In addition to these positions, Dr. Fortune is the co-founder (with her life partner, Dr. Robert Hesse) not only of the Indianapolis City Ballet, but also of a fine restaurant that specializes in Tuscan cuisine in northern Michigan. Fortune embodies the ideals of an accomplished Renaissance public figure and is, indeed, an individual of many talents and interests. Florence is fortunate to have such an enterprising and dedicated patron.

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BIESES: Bibliografía de escritoras españolas
[Bibliography of Spanish Women Writers]
www.bieses.net

A little more than a decade ago, researchers who focused on women in the fields of Spanish medieval and early modern literature and history lacked an essential tool: an up-to-date bibliography of women writers from the Middle Ages to 1800. That eminently useful resource now exists in the form of a comprehensive online database, thanks in great part to Nieves Baranda Leturio, Professor of Spanish Literature at the Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (UNED) in Madrid. Since 2004, Baranda has led and coordinated the website *BIESES*, a project that advances knowledge vital to a wide-ranging understanding of Hispanic women’s literary texts and cultural production.

According to the explanation offered on the site, *BIESES* was created and designed to fulfill the need for a comprehensive and systematic study of women’s literary production, and it aims to do so with open access for the entire academic community. The goal of the site is to answer fundamental questions, such as how many women writers were active, who they were and where they came from, their

styles and preferred genres, where their works were published, and who their readers were, while also providing digitized literary texts for scholarly analysis. Baranda and the *BIESES* team have in mind the desirable ideal of completeness in their efforts to recover and unite existing sources of all types, many of which were scattered, as yet undiscovered, or difficult to access, even if known.

Researchers and the public have full access to the site, currently financed by Spain's Ministerio de Economía y Competitividad (Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness). It features an extensive searchable database, including biographical data and complete literary texts, based on a list of over 450 authors developed by Baranda and an international team of scholars expert in the field. This team includes Anne J. Cruz, Helena Establier Pérez, Mercedes Marcos Sánchez, María Carmen Marín Pina, María Dolores Martos Pérez, Inmaculada Osuna Rodríguez, Isabelle Poutrin, Jacobo Sanz Hermida, and Blanca Vizán Rico, with past participation by Emilio Blanco Gómez, Emilio Palacios Fernández, Gimena del Río Riande, and Leticia Sánchez Hernández. It provides a model for how humanities researchers can collaborate to use digital formats to generate knowledge and to increase dissemination through facilitating open access.

The homepage features a tab bar with six content headings, the first of which, "Conoce Bieses" (About Bieses), introduces the site, delineates its purposes and use, details the project's objectives, explains that it is intended for the public in addition to specialists, and offers information on the team members as well as a history of the site's institutional funding. The second content heading, "Proyecto Bieses" (Project Bieses), provides access to the main tools of the project — the database and list of authors — with a section of helpful advice on how to launch a successful search. Tabs for resources (*Recursos Bieses*), news (*Noticias*), links (*Enlaces*), and contact information (*Contacto*) follow.

Also available on the homepage is "Autoras desde el umbral" (Authors from the threshold) which leads to a rich collection of paratexts for over one hundred published works by Spanish women writers from the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries. This corpus is the fruit and the basis of the newest investigative work by the *BIESES* team, which focuses on the publication and reception of women's texts over roughly four centuries. Because of the scarcity of primary sources, questions of a sociological nature surrounding the interpretation of Spanish women's texts, for example, or contexts for material production and works' circulation and regulation in the market, have long been understudied. By creating this corpus the

team provides scholars with both systematically collected source materials and new insights based on a substantial body of evidence.

Before the existence of the *BIESES* database, Manuel Serrano y Sanz's *Apuntes para una biblioteca de escritoras españolas desde el año 1401 al 1833* (1903–5) offered the most authoritative list and bibliography of Spanish women writers. Rather than superseding Serrano y Sanz's century-old and still valuable work, the team has built upon and expanded the foundations it provided, and corrected its errors by meticulously sifting through and integrating the subsequent decades of archival work and innovative scholarship, including the booming field of feminist analyses of medieval and early modern writing. For researchers in Spanish women's studies, *BIESES* has conveniently digitized Serrano y Sanz's two original volumes and made them available on the website, searchable by author name. The site also provides users with access to more recent specialized bibliographies by Emilio Palacios Fernández on the eighteenth century; Isabel Barbeito Carneiro on seventeenth-century women authors from Madrid; Jesús Rebollo Prieto on women writers of Castile and León, 1400–1800; and Manuel Diego Sánchez on Teresa of Ávila.

There are many ways to utilize *BIESES*. Conducting a search for an author in the database leads to biographical data from the most recent and reliable sources, primary source material relevant to the author's life, editions of the author's works that might include complete books, manuscripts, poems, or letters, and relevant scholarly studies of the author's works, as well as modern editions. Even the most minor extant documents are included, such as references to the author or her works in other sources, thus providing a comprehensive groundwork necessary for reconstructing women's lost stories.

Users can also search the database using chosen terms, or click through the authors list and see all the resources available for each writer. Alternatively, on the resources tab, users can browse additional digitized editions of works by women writers available through other scholarly online sites, such as the *Biblioteca Cervantes Virtual* or the *Biblioteca Digital Hispánica*. In this section, authors are listed alphabetically with citations of their works and links to sites where the digitized editions are available. Another set of items in the resources section under the subheading "Recursos didácticos" (Teaching resources) includes the delightful and informative online quiz created in 2014 "Desafío BIESES: ¿Qué sabes de escritoras?" (BIESES Challenge: How much do you know about women writers?) a teaching tool that can be used to great effect with students. In addition, the



Figure 1. BIESES homepage.

site provides current information useful to scholars, such as announcements of conferences, seminars, links, and recent publications of interest to academic users.

Since 2004, the site has included more than 11,000 primary and secondary references on Spanish women writers from the Middle Ages to 1800. This corpus constitutes a trove of material still awaiting scholarly attention. Baranda and the BIESES team have regularly revamped and improved the site since its inception in 2004. Their invitation to other scholars in the field to collaborate admirably encourages intellectual openness and exchange. The one noticeable impediment for users of BIESES, which in its original Spanish is clear and easy to use, is the web application's automatic English translation, at times clunky and confusing. Despite this small caveat, BIESES is an essential resource for the study of women's writing in the fields of medieval and early modern Spanish literature and history.

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