



GEDIS Summer School: Old engravings — reflecting on gender roles throughout history

This open educational resource (OER) proposes the analysis of visual and textual elements found in two 18th-century engravings held at the CRAI Rare Book Library of the University of Barcelona. The goal is to promote reflection from a gender perspective on the role of gender in the early modern period.

1. Engravings as a source of historical analysis

The Valencian engraver **Baltasar Talamantes** created two well-known engravings in the 18th century, one dedicated to men and one to women, on the stages of life. These are **allegorical** works in which, through texts and images, the transience of human life and worldly goods is shown.



The iconography representing the stages of life in an ascending/descending scale was very popular in European engravings of the 18th century

Visual culture became an ideal instrument for **spreading Christian doctrine** and served as an **educational tool** throughout the early modern period.

2. Reflect and Discuss

- Choose one stage of life and compare **the virtues** defined in the texts for men's and women's roles, as well as the visual attributes shown in the figures for that specific stage.
- From a general view of all the stages, what is expected from the role of the man? And from the woman? How would you define the **cultural “ideal” of the time**?
- From a general view of all the stages, focus on one specific age.

- Which indications or visual attributes **related to work** define the roles of men and women?
- Which indications or visual attributes **related to family** define the roles of men and women?

Target audience: 🎓 Students

GEDIS project context

This resource is part of the European project GEDIS (Gender Diversity in Information Science), which promotes open educational tools to tackle gender inequalities in higher education, with an emphasis on disciplines related to Information and Library Science.

GEDIS - Gender Diversity in Information Science: Challenges in Higher Education. <https://ub.edu/gedis>

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