One of the characteristics of societies undergoing industrialization is the opening up of various sectors to women and the defining of their professional capabilities. There are those professions which are seen as extensions of caring role (teachers, nurses, midwives, social workers, personal secretaries, paediatricians), and, as well as, the activities for which women were preferred because of the combination of physical and psychological qualities considered typically feminine—patience, caring nature, being used to repetitive work, greater adaptability and kindness.

I expose the results of researches about women working in Società Metallurgica Italiana (copper and alloys, munitions), and women clerks in telephonic bureau. In both cases, they come to be employed precisely because they are women. In SMI’s factories, the workwomen are assigned to producing metallic articles and copper wire, and small and medium calibre munitions, because they are more patient and careful; thus, the telephone exchanges are solely staffed by women, because they are more patient and polite.

The female employment’s history is essentially history of fatigues, underpayment, scanty social recognition. Young age of most of workwomen, employment’s brevity and precariousness did very difficult to recognise the actual transformations, produced by working experience in lives and thinking of Italian women.

Nevertheless, in examined cases, the work’s experience becomes favourite place to acquire self-consciousness, by the test of their cleverness and the experience of new ways of relations and solidarity. The employed women are a model for others girls, because the modern and fine behaviours grow within them.

As regards the social and domestic relations, workwomen’s life emphasised adaptations and resistances of patriarchal structures to the modernity brought from industrialisation. The most relevant changes concern young women’s relations with their parents, which grant, progressively, their self-government’s spaces. Within the married couple, the friendly marriage brings most tenderness, but less engraves on domestic roles.