

3: Emancipation

In this wall cabinet we show you three items: a lipstick, an embroidery hoop, and a typewriter. These objects are to help us illustrate the situation of women in the initial decades of the 20th century. The lipstick reminds us of the transformation in the area of mores and culture that occurred at the time. It is a time when women start to reap the fruits of emancipation, when they increasingly often go to universities, begin to work professionally, and when their appearance changes. They are wearing shorter, more comfortable dresses, and they use makeup freely.

The second object, the embroidery hoop, is connected to the traditional role of a woman: caring for the household and taking care of fabrics or ceramics, were activities traditionally ascribed to women. In the late 19th century, when the development of applied arts was encouraged and craftsmanship was appreciated, they were also domains that helped women earn money, provide for themselves and their families.

The final object is a typewriter, Erika type, very popular in the offices in the 1930s and 40s. It reminds us of the phenomenon of a glass ceiling, which means that regardless of the growing number of educated and working women, they remained a minority among the managing personnel. And even though numerous women achieved spectacular success in various disciplines like business, science, sports or art, they were still a minority and when press described them, they would use a tone that suggested it was a rare, unusual or downright peculiar occurrence.