3. Writing for Women at the beginning of the Seventeenth Century: Hugh Platt’s Delightes for Ladies

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Abstract

This article analyses the books of secrets and recipes written for women in the early modern period, taking as a case study Hugh Platt’s Delightes for Ladies. By comparing this book with the more famous The Jewell House of Art and Nature composed by the same author for a general audience, several conclusions can be drawn concerning the way in which women’s interest and capacities were perceived by their male contemporaries. Shortly, the elements concerning the theoretical and philosophical aspects of some phenomena and the queries for further investigation of nature are removed from the books written from women. While women were expected to put the recipes into practice, men were assumed to be interested in various other aspects of transforming nature, not only the very practical one.

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of reformation and struggle against Catholicity and this fact has its reflection in the literature and art of that period also. The beginning of the seventeenth century was a complicated period in the world history. It was the reformation in its full swing, old dogmata which seemed immutable, were overthrown without any respect. The process of reformation divided not only European countries, it divided layers of society in each country, and, sometimes, it divided people in the same family. The reformation was not only a clergy process, it reflected also a natur