

## Renaissance and Reformation Renaissance et Réforme



Flore, Jeanne. *Tales and Trials of Love: A Bilingual Edition and Study*. Ed. and trans. Kelly Digby Peebles, with poems trans. Marta Rijn Finch

Brenda M. Hosington

Volume 38, Number 4, Fall 2015

URI: <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1087355ar>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33137/rr.v38i4.26387>

[See table of contents](#)

Publisher(s)

Iter Press

ISSN

0034-429X (print)

2293-7374 (digital)

[Explore this journal](#)

Cite this review

Hosington, B. (2015). Review of [Flore, Jeanne. *Tales and Trials of Love: A Bilingual Edition and Study*. Ed. and trans. Kelly Digby Peebles, with poems trans. Marta Rijn Finch]. *Renaissance and Reformation / Renaissance et Réforme*, 38(4), 188–190. <https://doi.org/10.33137/rr.v38i4.26387>

© Canadian Society for Renaissance Studies / Société canadienne d'études de la Renaissance; Pacific Northwest Renaissance Society; Toronto Renaissance and Reformation Colloquium; Victoria University Centre for Renaissance and Reformation Studies, 2016

This document is protected by copyright law. Use of the services of Érudit (including reproduction) is subject to its terms and conditions, which can be viewed online.

<https://apropos.erudit.org/en/users/policy-on-use/>

érudit

This article is disseminated and preserved by Érudit.

Érudit is a non-profit inter-university consortium of the Université de Montréal, Université Laval, and the Université du Québec à Montréal. Its mission is to promote and disseminate research.

<https://www.erudit.org/en/>

**Flore, Jeanne.**

***Tales and Trials of Love: A Bilingual Edition and Study.* Ed. and trans. Kelly Digby Peebles, with poems trans. Marta Rijn Finch.**

The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe: The Toronto Series 33. Toronto: Iter Inc. / Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2014. Pp. xiv, 342. ISBN 978-0-7727-2166-2 (paperback) \$39.95.

Kelly Digby Peebles's edition and translation of Jeanne Flore's *Comptes amoureux par Madame Ieanne Flore, touchant la punition que faict Venus de ceulx qui contemnent & mesprisent le vray Amour* is a welcome addition to the Other Voice in Early Modern Europe series. Her base text is that of the 1542 *editio princeps* published by the Lyon printer Denys de Harsy and used by the two previous editors of the work, Gabriel-André Pérouse in 1980 and Régine Reynolds-Cornell in 2005. Peebles explains her inclusion of the French text by saying she felt "strongly" that it should be available for comparison with her translation, that Pérouse's had long been out of print, and that over the past three decades developments in early modern gender, book history, and print culture studies have brought new light to bear on works of this nature (50). While the first and third reasons are perfectly valid, the second is rather curious given the availability of the Reynolds-Cornell edition, which replaced Pérouse's but is not mentioned here, although it does appear in the bibliography.

The substantial introduction (fifty-nine pages) to the *Tales and Trials of Love by Madame Jeanne Flore Concerning Venus's Punishment of Those Who Scorn True Love and Denounce Cupid's Sovereignty* covers a large amount of territory, from providing a detailed and often perceptive analysis of the original work to explaining the editing principles and translating practices employed. Perhaps the greatest strength of this introduction, however, is its placement of the *Comptes amoureux* within the contexts of early modern views on women and marriage, informed by current gender studies, and of print culture, with a particular focus on sixteenth-century Lyon where the work first appeared. Peebles gives a succinct account of the *querelle des femmes* and less familiar *querelle des Amyes*, as well as of humanist writings on marriage, works such as book 3 of Rabelais's *Tiers Livre*, and examples of the *roman sentimental* of which, she claims, the *Comptes amoureux* constitutes a hybrid version. Convincingly, she demonstrates the links between gender and print culture: printers saw works about women as money-spinners; those in Lyon had as their patron the goddess

Minerva, whose namesake features in the work as dedicatee, poet, and participant; writings by women (or purporting to be by women, as in the case of Jeanne Flore's *Comptes amoureux*) were controversial and this too made them marketable; the mystery surrounding Jeanne Flore's identity raises questions of authorship; finally, the frame narrative structure, presenting a group of women telling one another tales of love, addresses the subject of readership and reading practices. This concern with print culture extends to the material features of the original text: Peebles indicates folio numbers in both her French and English texts, woodcut placements in the former, and new gatherings in her notes to the translation, while also reproducing title pages and others in two rather splendid appendices.

Unfortunately, her comments on her translation are rather disappointing. It would have been preferable to omit any reference to influential works on translating strategies than to mention Sandor Hervey and Ian Higgins's undergraduate manual for professional translators (*Thinking French Translation: A Course in Translation Method: French to English* (New York: 2002), hardly appropriate for translating sixteenth-century French works of literature. After all, the body of writings on literary translation is substantial. On a more positive note, she rightly recognizes—and indeed admirably respects—the need to preserve the original's oral tone: asides, addresses to the reader, expressions of camaraderie, markers like “or” (translated as “mind you” or “now”).

The translation notes are also disappointing. It is difficult to imagine for whom they are intended. Does the reader of a sixteenth-century text really need to be told who Apollo, the Cyclops, and Hercules are, or Petrarch for that matter? While all seven notes to Jeanne Flore's “Epistle” are informative, sixty out of the ninety-five in tale one are, frankly, superfluous and this pattern is repeated in the following tales. More linguistic and critical commentary would have made for a richer and more useful apparatus.

The translation itself is on the whole commendable. As mentioned above, the original's oral tone is reproduced. The content and meaning are also respected: there are no serious mistranslations, additions, omissions, or textual changes. The text is fluidly dynamic, offering Anglophone readers the same sense of fun and creating for them the same ambiguities. There are a few missed chances to convey puns and plays on words. The most notable is the fairly frequent manipulation of the word “comptes,” sometimes used alone, sometimes in set phrases. Although Peebles mentions its polysemous nature as discussed

by Claude La Charité in “Le problème du genre dans *Les Comptes amoureux* de Jeanne Flore: l’ambivalence du terme ‘compte’” (*Actualité de Jeanne Flore*, ed. Diane Desrosiers-Bonin, Eliane Viennot and Regine Reynolds-Cornell [Paris: 2004], 209–25), she fails to replicate it in English; the same linguistic manipulation of “account” would have been possible. The translation of the few poems in the text by Marta Rijn Finch, who also explains her translating strategies in the introduction, is successful in terms of conveying the original’s varied patterns of rhyme and metre, although as Pope long ago said, these can be a hard task master; inevitably, meaning is at times sacrificed for form.

In 1542, the *Comptes amoureux* made a significant contribution to the debate surrounding the “woman question”; four-and-a-half centuries later, Peebles has extended its significance to a much wider reading public. At a time when critical attention is increasingly being focused on female authorship and on print culture, her edition and eminently readable translation make this text available for the first time to scholars outside the field of sixteenth-century French literature, for which we must be grateful.

BRENDA M. HOSINGTON

Université de Montréal/University of Warwick

### **Goldstein, David B.**

#### ***Eating and Ethics in Shakespeare’s England.***

Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2013. Pp. 280. ISBN 978-1-1070-3906-3 (hardcover) \$99.

An analysis of Annibale Carracci’s painting *The Bean Eater* (1580–90) begins David B. Goldstein’s *Eating and Ethics in Shakespeare’s England*. It encapsulates the terms of the book’s broadest argument. The painting, which depicts a solitary peasant about to scoop into his mouth a spoonful of beans, would seem, as Goldstein observes, “the epitome of the individual diner.” But other figures, of course, are present, and the peasant knows it: he catches our eye, “peers suspiciously out at us from underneath the brim of his hat,” and “rests” a “meaty hand” “protectively on a hunk of Bolognese bread,” signaling to us that we would do well not to reach across the table (and so into the canvas) for it (1). This encounter, which is repeated with each viewing, permits Goldstein