

L'amore si nutre di amore: A Turinese Noir

Traci Andrighetti (February 24, 2014)



Inspector Barbara Gillo returns for another intriguing mystery Piedmontese-style.



Rosa Mogliasso (b. 1960, Susa) made her literary debut in 2009 with a work of Turinese noir entitled [L'assassino qualcosa lascia](#) [2] (The Assassin Always Leaves Something Behind) (Salani; TEA, 2014). The novel, which was awarded the Premio Selezione Bancarella in 2010, features the blonde Inspector Barbara Gillo and her love interest, Sicilian Inspector Massimo Zuccalà. Mogliasso has released two additional mysteries in the series, [L'amore si nutre di amore](#) [3] (Love Feeds Off Love) (Salani, 2011) and [La felicità è un muscolo volontario](#) [4] (Happiness is a Voluntary Muscle) (Salani, 2012). Recently, she took a break from noir to write [All'ombra dell'uomo montagna](#) [5] (In the Shadow of the Mountain Man) (Salani, 2013), a children's book about Gulliver's travels.

In *L'amore si nutre di amore*, Inspector Gillo is called to investigate the disappearance of Tanzio Accardi, a young degenerate whose car was found abandoned and loaded with bottles of Vermouth in the Susa Valley. Days later, Sabrina Trassi, the beautiful but brainless wife of a wealthy ship owner, is found dead in the sea near her yacht in Montecarlo. Inexplicably, she's wearing the T-shirt of the missing man. Adding to the confusion, Inspector Gillo and her colleagues discover that the yacht's skipper, Fabio, is seeing a rich prostitute-turned-swindler, but they're not sure what, if any, involvement the femme fatale had in Sabrina's death. As Inspector Gillo struggles to find the link between the cases, she must also endeavor to solve the deepening mystery of her own love life.

The language of *L'amore si nutre di amore* is as intriguing as the plot. Because the novel is set in Turin and Montecarlo, the Piedmontese dialect and, in particular, French are woven into the fabric of the story. But these aren't the only languages in the text: English and *romanesco*, to name just a few, also make an appearance. And because the characters run the gamut of the socioeconomic spectrum, there are numerous varieties of Italian in the book, including neostandard, colloquial and bureaucratic Italian. One of the more interesting linguistic aspects of *L'amore si nutre di amore* is the use of *linguaggio giovanile* (youth language) as it appears in social media.

DIALECT

caudane (Ital. *caldane*; Eng. hot flashes) (piemontese)

...avrebbe giurato di essere preda delle famigerate caudane, le caldane, quelle che avevano fatto passare a zia Luigina intere giornate seduta, le gambe leggermente divaricate, una mano sul ginocchio e l'altra impegnata a sventolare *La Stampa* strategicamente piegata in quattro.

(...she would have sworn she was in the grip of the notorious caudane, or hot flashes, the thing that had caused her aunt Luigina to spend entire days seated, legs slightly spread apart, one hand on her knee and the other busy fanning with *La Stampa*, a Turinese newspaper that had been strategically folded over four times.)

cecagna (Ital. *sonnolenza*; Eng. sleepiness) (*romanesco*)

Ah, non pranzi... Egià, perché a voi torinesi se pranzate vi addormentate abbracciati al monitor, vi prende la cecagna!

(Oh, you're not having lunch... That's right, because if you Turinese eat lunch, you fall asleep hugging your monitors. Sleepiness gets the best of you!)

SLANG

paste (literally, pastries; but slang for *pastiglie*; Eng. pills)

Quali dolciumi, dottoressa, le paste sono le pastiglie, l'acido, l'ecstasy, quella roba lì, no?



(What sweets, dottoressa? 'Paste' are pills, acid, ecstasy, that kind of stuff. You know?)

sgallettate (Eng. bimbos [who travel in packs]. Note: This term is derived from the expression fare il galletto; literally, to do the little rooster, as in to strut about)

"E a chi dovrei pensare se non a me stesso?" domandò Fabio a voce alta a un immaginario pubblico. "Dovrei pensare a loro? A queste sgallettate?"

("And who should I think about if not myself?" Fabio asked an imaginary public in a loud voice. "Should I think about them? These bimbos?")

WORDPLAY

sottoporre (Eng. to subjugate; to subordinate) versus sottoposto (Eng. noun subordinate)

"Che si faceva sottoporre dal sottoposto" intervenne Peruzzi.

("Who subordinated herself to the subordinate," Peruzzi intervened.)

Costa Azzurra (Azure Coast) versus Costa Assurda (Absurd Coast)

Lui però era abbastanza contento, in fondo la pensione anticipata gli avrebbe consentito di dedicare più tempo all'unica cosa che lo facesse stare bene davvero, che lo faceva sentire un 'capo': il piccolo cabinato ormeggiato in Costa Azzurra o Costa Assurda, come la chiamava Tazio, ecco, Tazio dov'era?

(But he was content enough, after all early retirement would allow him to dedicate more time to the one thing that made him really happy, that made him feel like a 'boss:' the little cruiser docked at the Azure Coast or Absurd Coast, as Tazio called it. That's right, Tazio. Where was he?)

BORROWINGS

pas de bullshit (French pas de; Eng. no)

Pas de bullshit, niente stupidaggini, sei tu che paghi il tuo commercialista, no?

(No bullshit, nothing stupid. You're the one who pays your business consultant, right?)

lobby (Eng. used as the gerund lobbying)

Lobby, facevano lobby, raddoppiavano l'effetto, quando entravano loro nella discoteca Pick Up la domenica sera, era come l'apparizione della Madonna, di due Madonne, quello era il concetto di lobby, no?

(Lobbying, they were lobbying. It doubled the effect. When they entered the Pick Up club on Sunday nights, it was like the apparition of the Madonna, of two Madonnas. That was the concept of lobbying, right?)

FOREIGN CONCEPTS

un confronto all'americana (literally, an American-style comparison, meaning a police lineup)

Domani mattina vado riprendermi i sandali, anzi, domani mi faccio accompagnarre da Fabio, e li metto uno davanti all'altra, un confronto all'americana, si dice così, no?

(Tomorrow morning I'll go get my sandals. Even better, I'll have Fabio go with me tomorrow, and I'll bring them face-to-face. A police lineup. That's what you call it, right?)



piatti pronti (literally, ready dishes, meaning premade meals)

Certo, ho vinto la medaglia d'oro alle Olimpiadi dei piatti pronti.

(Of course, I won the gold medal at the Premade Meals Olympics.)

SOCIAL MEDIA

...kanali di informazione ke raccontano kazzate nn dikono la verità su qst'oxa mettono in ginokkio ki nn è d'akkordo, firmato Giovanna85

(...canali di informazione che raccontano cazzate, non dicono la verità su quest' opera, mettono in ginocchio chi non è d'accordo, firmato Giovanna85)

(...information channels that report bullshit; they don't tell the truth about this work; they bring anyone who doesn't agree to their knees, signed Giovanna85)

Note: As indicated in the above example, young Italians tend to use the following in chats and texts:

'k' instead of 'c' and 'ch'

'x' (the multiplication sign) for 'per'

This example also exhibits the loss of:

'o' between double 'n'

the diphthong 'ue' after 'q'

Concluding Remarks: L'amore si nutre di amore isn't just another mystery novel with a female police inspector. Barbara Gillo may be smart and beautiful, but she's hardly one-dimensional. As we see in her relationships with her colleagues and superficial sister, Meri, she has a terrific (and ironic) sense of humor. More importantly, as a woman who must confront her own loneliness and relationship fears, she has a vulnerable side, which makes her easily relatable and that much more appealing to readers.

In Translation: The Inspector Barbara Gillo series is currently unavailable in English. Here's hoping that a talented Italian-to-English translator rectifies this omission, and soon.

On the Internet: Rosa Mogliasso is on [Facebook](#) [6] and on [YouTube](#) [7]. Watch this [cute interview](#) [8] she did with a young student for BookBlog.

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Links

[1] <http://iitaly.org/files/37460l-amore-si-nutre-di-amore1393238507jpg>



- [2] http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/8862561180/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=8862561180&linkCode=as2&tag=italicissima-20
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