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MERLINI Cocaii Apologetica in sui excusationem.

Quisquis es, o tu qui meum hoc grassiloquum perlegendo volumen ridere paras, ride, sed non irride. quia si dementer irridendo rides, alter Marguttus rideas irrisus.

Verum quoniam experientia nos omnes esse medici volumus, sic omnes aut interpretes aut correctores librorum esse presumimus.

Audiant itaque huiusmodi correctores et faciles aliorum emendatores et antequam me corrigant apologeticam istam legere dignentur.

Ars ista poetica nuncupatur ars macaronica a macaronibus derivata, qui macarones sunt quoddam pulmentum farina, caseo, boriro [sic] compaginatam, grossum, rude et rusticanum, ideo macaronices nil nisi grassedinem, ruditatem, et vocabulazzos debet in se continere.

Sed quoniam aliud servandum est in Eglogis, aliud in Elegiis, aliud in heroum gestis diversi mode necessarium est canere, Verbi gratia de rustico Zambello scribens dicam.

O codesella vides illas Tognazze fomennas? Cur sic sberlucent? Stellis incago daverum, Nostrae someiant fomnae tot nempe padellae.

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Merlin Cocaio's Apology in his own Defense

1. Whoever you are, O you who are getting ready to laugh while reading my greasy-sounding book, laugh, but don't ridicule. Because if you laugh while rudely ridiculing, you may laugh like another Margutte ridiculed.<sup>1</sup>
2. In fact, just as we all wish at times to be doctors based on our experience, so too we all presume to be book critics or editors.
3. Therefore, let these so-called editors and clever proofreaders of others' books listen up, and before they correct me let them deign to read this apology.
4. Let this poetic art be proclaimed the Macaronic art, derived from macaroni -- macaroni which are a kind of starter dish concocted with flour, cheese, and butter: big, rough and rustic; likewise Macaronics should not contain anything in it other than greasiness, crudity and big ugly words.
5. Whereas it is proper to phrase things one way in eclogues, it is necessary to phrase them another way in elegies and another in heroic epics; thus for example, writing for the peasant Zambello, I might say:
6. "Oh pox, do you see those women, Tognazzo? Why are they sparkling like that? I really don't give a shit about the stars; truth be told our women are like so many frying pans."

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Iterum de barba Tognazzo.  
Est verum quod nos o cara brigata chilo  
Venimos, ut nobis faciamus scire casonem.

Hoc parlandi genus rusticanum rusticis  
convenit.

Parlatio vero minus grossa Tempestatibus  
maritimis, bellorum descriptionibus, et  
quibusvis rebus non rusticanis applicanda  
est.

Si tamen in aliquibus locis succurrit loqui aut  
de deo, aut de sanctis, indignum et  
vituperabile esset non uti latinitate aliqua,  
non tamen tam alta, quod videatur lapis  
preciosus limo sepultus, et gemma porcis  
anteponita.

Ideo post Musarum macaronicarum  
suffragia, quandoque thaliam invocare ubi  
condecet voluimus.

Mordebor tamen a multis, quod utor  
carminibus nimium incompetentibus,  
maxime, se cagat adossum, passare delaium,  
dicendo nientum, Non erat anchoram, e non  
erat appenam, et innumerabilia quae  
grossolaniter proferre debemus.

Immo veram macaronicen huiusmodi  
vocabula sapiunt, nam quo magis grossiora  
sunt, eo magis macaronicam, adducunt  
elegantiam. et tanto plus intelligibilia quanto  
grossolania.

Ut quidem enim Macaron inventum est?

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7. In like manner, from Uncle Tognazzo, "It's  
true that we, mah fellah citizens, have  
gathered here together so we can make  
the case known."

8. This kind of speaking fits the rusticity of  
rustics.

However, a less crude way of speaking will  
need to be applied to storms at sea, battle  
descriptions and any other non-rustic  
topics.

9. If, moreover, in some places one happens  
to speak of god or of the saints, it would  
be undignified and reprehensible not to  
use Latin to some extent, yet not so  
elevated that a precious stone seems  
buried in mud, and gems cast before  
swine.

10. In keeping with our admiration of the  
Macaronic muses we wished to invoke  
Thalia whenever and wherever it is  
suitable.

11. Yet I am attacked by many people because  
I use verses which are improper,  
especially, "he shits himself," "over  
yonder," "not saying nothing," "it wasn't  
yet," "it hadn't hardly," and innumerable  
phrases which are more gross than we  
ought to mention.

12. Indeed, genuine Macaronics smack of  
these kinds of vocabulary words, because  
the grosser they are, the more they add  
macaronic elegance to it, and the cruder  
they are the more intelligible.

13. How indeed is a given Macaronic word  
invented?

Dicimus se cagat adossum, melius (fateor) dici potuerat timet. Sed cur, inquam, fuit repertum macaronicon?

Sed cur, inquam, fuit repertum Macaronicon?

Causa utique ridendi, Ergo se cagat adossum positum est causa ridendi, et non orandi, nam vulgariter dicimus, El si caga adosso di paura, quando quidem vulgare eloquium, est Macaronicis poetae latinizare.

Sed dicet aliquis, vocabula fingis, o Merline, quibus patria tua solet uti tantummodo, exempli gra., doniare puellas, cimare, tracagnum et cetera, quae tantum aut mantuanice, aut bressanice possunt intelligi.

Respondeo, quod veluti non omnes aut Grecum, aut hebreum, aut arabicum, aut chaldeum, aut denique latinum simul intelligunt, Ita nil mirum si cuncti mantuanicum,

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aut Florentinicum, aut Bergamascum, aut todescum, aut sguizzarum, aut scarpacinum, aut spazzacaminum minime sciunt pariter intelligere.

Ut quid ordinantur Commentatores ac linguarum interpretes? Ut quid translatores?

Procul dubio causa splanandi linguarum incognoventiam. Ergo non fas est meipsum auctorem interpretare.

14. We say, "he shits himself," it would have been better (I confess) to say, "he is frightened."

15. But why then, I ask, was the Macaronic word invented?

16. To promote laughter, of course! Therefore, "he shits himself" is proposed to prompt laughing and not praying, for commonly we say, "he is scared shitless," seeing that vulgar speech is Latinizing of a Macaronic poet.

17. But someone says: "You make up words, O Merlin, which only your native land is accustomed to using, for example, "to womanize girls," "to top-up," "bludgeon," etc. which can only be understood in Manutan or Brescian.

18. I respond that, just as not everyone can understand Greek or Hebrew or Arabic or Chaldean, or indeed even Latin,

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19. it is no surprise that others are equally unable to understand Mantuan or Florentine, or Bergamasque, or German, or Swiss, or Shoeshinese or Chimney-sweepese.

20. Why then are commentators or interpreters of languages appointed? Why are there translators?

21. Without a doubt so that they can explain the mystery of the languages. Thus, it is not fitting that I, the author, explain myself.

Iterum obiurgaris me non sillabarum  
quantitatem observasse, respondeo iterum,  
quod veluti summopere difert orthographia  
vulgaris et toscana latinitati Ciceronis, et  
Vergilii carminibus, Ita Macaronices regula  
difert a latina sicut inferius videbis.

Praeterea si me ignorantem, minime  
doctum, minime poeticum reperis et probas,  
non erras, immo cedo, et fateor id humeris  
meis pondus congruum non fuisse.

Verum qualem cognoscis talem tibi amicum  
accipe.

22. You also chide me for not having observed  
the [vowel] quantity of the syllables; I  
respond again that than just as Tuscan and  
vulgar orthography differ greatly from  
Cicero's Latin and Virgil's verses, just so  
Macaronic rules differ from Latin ones, as  
you will see below.

23. In the meanwhile if you should happen  
upon me and find me to be ignorant,  
minimally learned, and minimally poetic,  
you are not in error -- indeed I cede, and  
confess the weight was not suited to my  
shoulders.

24. But he whom you recognize as such  
embrace as your friend.

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<sup>1</sup> Margutte, the character who laughs to death in Luigi Pulci's *Morgante*.