

Mei's Style of Latin Prose in *On the Modes*

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Girolamo Mei's (1519–94) *On the Modes* (*De modis*; written in 1567–73 and first published in 1991) has so far, despite its vital importance in the histories of music and ideas, been insufficiently discussed by scholars, probably owing to its demanding classical Latin style. This is evident from the contrastingly low frequency of their reference to it as against his letters written in Italian.

Classical style was for Renaissance humanists the medium not only for expressing their thoughts but for demonstrating their philological rigour and stylistic mastery. It was against such a background that some humanists stubbornly adhered to Ciceronian language, while others were rather free in accepting medieval vocabulary and grammar.¹⁾

This essay gauges the classicality of Mei's Latin in *On the Modes* with regard to vocabulary, grammar, and Graecism, aiming also to reveal his attitude as a humanist. Considering the matter dealt with, quotations are left untranslated. The place in which each quoted part appears in *On the Modes* is indicated by the page and line in the 1991 edition.²⁾

Chapter 1. Vocabulary

This chapter quantitatively assesses how classical Mei's Latin is by comparing the vocabulary used in *On the Modes* with that of writings by comparable authors. The following six documents were chosen from the highly reliable text database *Thesaurus musicarum latinarum* (TML).³⁾ Table 1 shows the details of each document.

Gafurius (2) and Glareanus (3) were chosen because they are mentioned many times in *On the Modes* concerning the system of the

Table 1. Examined documents

Author (humanist / non-humanist)	Title	Place, date, and edition	Total words
Boethius	<i>De institutione musica</i>	Around 500 A.D. ed. Friedlein, 1867	35,527
Franchinus Gafurius (quasi-humanist) ⁴	<i>De harmonia musicorum instrumentorum opus</i>	Milan, 1518	53,013
Henricus Glareanus (humanist)	<i>Dodekachordon</i>	Basle, 1547	81,494
Girolamo Mei (humanist)	<i>De modis</i>	Written in 1567–73, ed. Tsugami, 1991	46,546
Giovanni Battista Doni (1595–1647, humanist)	<i>Idea, sive designatio aliquot Operum, quae Ioannes Baptista Donius, partim absolvit, partim incepit</i>	Early 17th century, extant in manuscript in the Museo Internazionale e Biblioteca della Musica, Bologna	1,990
René Descartes (non-humanist)	<i>Compendium musicae</i>	Completed in 1618 and published posthumously in Utrecht in 1650, ed. Adam-Tannery, 1966	9,520

modes, belonging therefore to the same field of research; Boethius (1) because he not only represents late Latinity but also remained the most influential authority in the field of music theory all through the Renaissance; Doni (5) as a humanist deeply interested in Mei in the subsequent period; Descartes (6) for a non-humanist's music theory in the same period as Doni (5).

Comparisons are made in the following method. First, the first 1990 words including *TML* editor's comments attached at the time of inclusion into the database such as [GLADOD2 02GF] (standing for Glareanus, *Dodekachordon*, book 2, graphic file 02) or [Omega] (for ω) are extracted from each document (Table 2, line 1): first 1990 because Doni's text (5) has as many words in total. This procedure may be justified by the fact that the results obtained for *On the Modes* on this basis (Table 2, lines 6 to 9) do not differ much from those for the entire

Table 2. Data for each document

	Boethius		Gafurius		Glareanus		Mei		Doni		Descartes	
	occurrences	ratio (%)	occurrences	ratio (%)	occurrences	ratio (%)	occurrences	ratio (%)	occurrences	ratio (%)	occurrences	ratio (%)
1 Words		1990		1990		1990		1990		1990		1990
2 Lemmas		502		676		518		462		791		431
3 Proper names		3		28		14		7		42		0
4 Vocabulary		499		648		504		455		749		431
5	occurrences	53	ratio (%)	10.6	occurrences	61	ratio (%)	9.4	occurrences	36	ratio (%)	7.1
6 Non-Ciceronian												
		39		7.8		32		4.9		13		2.6
7 Non-Ciceronian and non-Greek												
		19		3.8		22		3.3		10		2.0
8 Unclassical												
		15		3.0		13		2.0		3		0.6
9 Unclassical and non-Greek												
										2		0.4
										61		8.1
										41		5.5
										10		1.3
										2		0.3
										37		8.6
										27		6.3
										18		4.2
										13		3.0

work.⁵⁾ Second, inflected or variant forms of words are put together under their appropriate lemmas (Table 2, line 2). Third, proper names being removed from these (Table 2, line 3), there remains the vocabulary of each document (Table 2, line 4).

Each vocabulary then undergoes two procedures. The first is concerned with Ciceronianism. Cicero, the foremost model for Latin prose among Renaissance humanists, will serve as a touchstone for each author's classical style, especially because they could be conscious of their conformity to Ciceronian vocabulary with the aid of such concordances as Marius Nizolius's *Observationes in Ciceronem*, first published in 1535 and followed by a vast number of new editions or reissues. In our case, Merguet's *Handlexikon*, which covers Cicero's whole vocabulary, is used to pick up non-Ciceronian words in each document.⁶⁾ Table 3, in which the actual forms, not lemmas, are quoted in, where necessary, standardized spelling in minuscule, and the sixth line of Table 2 show the result.

Next, technical terms deriving from Greek such as *diesis* and *hypate*, in which Cicero was not interested, are excluded from the vocabulary of each document. The result is shown in Table 4 and the seventh line of Table 2.

In the second procedure, unclassical words are specified, with the aim of measuring each document's deviation from classical vocabulary, using the *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, which "treat[s] classical Latin from its beginnings to the end of the second century AD".⁷⁾ This results in Table 5 and the eighth line of Table 2.

Next, as in the first procedure, technical terms deriving from Greek such as *heptachordum* and *systema*, whose presence or absence depends on the subject matter rather than the style, are eliminated, except for *chordula* (occurring once in Gafurius), a diminutive form of the classical *chorda* (<χορδή) coined in the Middle Ages and habitually used to mean a string of a musical instrument. Table 6 and the ninth line of Table 2 show the remaining unclassical words.

Turning back to Table 2, the seventh line shows non-Greek-derived

Table 3. Non-Ciceronian words

	Boethius	Gafurius	Glareanus	Mei	Doni	Descartes
1	adnotatur	absimilem	alioqui	adiectione	adnotandum	apparenter
2	adunatum	actuae	apotome	chromate	alioquin	apprehensionem
3	altrinsecus	adstructionibus	characteristicas	chromatici	allaborant	astrolabio
4	armonicis	aequisonas	consonantiam	consonantia	alphabeta	battuta
5	astronomia	alioquin	diatessaron	diapason	anaglypticis	binarium
6	astronomica	alternati	diatonicici	diapente	antiquaria	campanis
7	augmenta	alternationibus	diezeugmenon	diatessaron	apographum	catalogus
8	binarium	anisotoni	dignosceretur	diatoni	autographos	circumquaque
9	centrum	antiphona	essentiales	diatonicum	barbaricarum	combinatae
10	corporalibus	apotome	executionem	diezeugmenon	bibliothecario	conformis
11	cremento	appellantur	figuralem	dinoscerentur	cimelia	consonabit
12	denominatiua	chordularum	finales	disdiapason	confabulando	consonantia
13	deputetur	conformem	hypaton	disseparauit	consistoribus	delectabiles
14	diapason	congruos	hyperbolaeon	diuersitate	delineata	diapason
15	diapente	consonantes	hypotenusam	enharmonii	diffiteor	dispathia
16	diatessaron	consonantia	marginibus	epogdous	distinctiore	dissonantiae
17	disgregata	diapason	mathesis	exresceret	ecclesiae	dissonare
18	epitrita	diapente	mensuralem	heptachordo	escarius	ditonus
19	epogdous	diatessaron	meson	hypaton	geographica	diuersitas

20	genitura	diesis	metaphora	hypate	hypotheses	durationis
21	habitudines	disdiapason	notula	hyperbolaeon	iconum	elegeiographi
22	inaequales	dissona	parallela	impermixtas	idea	exacta
23	incorporea	ditonus	pernotando	indistincta	illustrissimi	huiusdem
24	indeterminatam	eccho	philosophica	meson	immerito	imaginatio
25	inparitas	elegant	phthongos	mese	incepto	immediate
26	interminabilis	entia	practice	nete	indefessam	inaequales
27	modulaminis	extensio	regulata	paramese	innotescunt	incommensurabiles
28	modulatio	harmonica	rhythmis	paranete	lamellis	inspirentur
29	paralleli	hymnis	semitonio	parhypate	lexica	praenotanda
30	paritas	hypatarum	superne	proslambanomene	litterariae	regularis
31	participatione	hypaten	synemmenon	prosmelodos	manipulum	resolutur
32	paruitates	impartiri	systema	prouenit	mansoribus	sclopporum
33	passiones	impatientes	tetrachordum	superadduntur	manuscriptorum	successive
34	peritia	incompraehensibilia	theorice	superbipartientem	mellificare	tertiata
35	pluralitate	incongruus	toni	superne	membranaceum	tympano
36	praecedere	insectorum	uniformis	superparticularem	methodum	unisono
37	primaeva	instrumentalis		synemmenon	nomenclaturis	unitas
38	principalitate	mastigiis		systema	obiter	
39	quantitate	melodia		toniaea	oeconomia	
40	quinarii	modulatione			orchestyca	

41	rotatione	monas			ordinarium
42	saluari	netarum			organa
43	speculatione	nullibi			orthographia
44	Sphericam	paraneten			palatinae
45	subsistentibus	paraphona			papyro
46	substantia	parhypaten			peritiam
47	tetragonus	passione			recensebo
48	tonus	phantasiam			rescire
49	unitas	ptongis			rimandi
50	uariabilis	practici			scalpturarum
51	uariationes	praematurius			scopus
52	uertibilem	praepeditae			sedentariam
53	uiandum	proportionabile			sphragisteriis
54		semiditonus			subinde
55		semitonium			superposui
56		sublimior			symbolas
57		symphona			taedia
58		systema			tineis
59		temperiem			transactionem
60		theorici			transegerunt
61		unisoni			uniuersim

Table 4. Non-Greek-derived non-Ciceronian words

	Boethius	Gafurius	Glareanus	Mei	Doni	Descartes
1	adnotatur	absimilem	alioqui	adiectione	adnotandum	apparenter
2	adunatum	actiuae	dignosceretur	dinoscerentur	alioquin	apprehensionem
3	altrinsecus	adstructionibus	essentiales	disseparauit	allaborant	battuta
4	augmenta	aequisonas	executionem	diuersitate	antiquaria	binarium
5	binarium	alioquin	figuralem	exresceret	barbaricarum	campanis
6	centrum	alternati	marginibus	impermixtas	confabulando	circumquaque
7	corporalibus	alternationibus	mensuralem	indistincta	consistoribus	combinatae
8	cremento	appelliantur	notula	prouenit	delineata	conformis
9	denominatiua	chordularum	pernotando	superadduntur	diffiteor	delectabiles
10	deputetur	conformem	regulata	superbipartientem	distinctiore	dissonantiae
11	disgregata	congruos	semitonio	superne	escarius	diuersitas
12	genitura	elegantier	superne	superparticularem	illustrissimi	durationis
13	habitudines	entia	uniformis		immerito	exacta
14	inaequales	extensio			incepto	huiusdem
15	incorporea	imparti			infefessam	imaginatio
16	indeterminatam	impatientes			innotescunt	immediate
17	inparitas	incomprachensibilia			lamellis	inaequales
18	interminabilis	incongruus			litterariae	incommensurabiles
19	paritas	insectorum			manipulum	inspirentur
20	participatione	instrumentalis			mansoribus	praenotanda

21	paruitates	mastigiis	manuscriptorum	regularis
22	passiones	nullibi	mellificare	resoluitur
23	peritia	passione	membranaceum	sclopporum
24	pluralitate	practici	nomenclaturis	successiue
25	praecedere	praematurius	obiter	tertiata
26	primaeva	praepeditae	ordinarium	unisono
27	principalitate	proportionabile	palatinae	unitas
28	quantitate	semiditonus	peritiam	
29	quinarii	semitonium	recensebo	
30	rotatione	sublimior	rescire	
31	saluari	temperiem	rimandi	
32	speculatione	unisoni	sculpturatum	
33	subsistentibus		scopus	
34	substantia		sedentariam	
35	unitas		subinde	
36	uariabilis		superposui	
37	uariationes		taedia	
38	uertibilem		fineis	
39	uiandum		transactionem	
40			transegerunt	
41			uniuersim	

Table 5. Unclassical words

	Boethius	Gafurius	Glareanus	Mei	Doni	Descartes
1	adunatum	adstructombus	apotome	enharmonii	alphabeta	apparenter
2	astronomica	aequisonas	characteristicas	epogdous	anaglypticis	apprehensionem
3	binarium	anisotoni	essentiales	heptachordo	apographum	astrolabio
4	denominatiua	antiphona	mathesis	prosmelodos	cimelia	battuta
5	disgregata	apotome	notula	superbipartientem	iconum	binarium
6	epogdous	chordularum	philosophica	superparticularem	lexica	catalogus
7	indeterminatam	ditonus	regulata	synemmenon	mansoribus	circumquaque
8	inparitas	elegantier	synemmenon	systema	manuscriptorum	combinatae
9	interminabilis	entia	systema	toniaca	orchestica	conformis
10	paritas	hymnis	theorice		sphragisteriis	dispathia
11	pluralitate	impartiri				dissonantiae
12	principalitate	incongruus				ditonus
13	saluari	instrumentalis				durationis
14	speculatione	monas				elegeiographi
15	sphericam	nullibi				huiusdem
16	tetragonus	paraphona				incommensurabiles
17	uariabilis	proportionabile				successiue
18	ueritibilem	semiditonus				unisono
19	uiandum	semitonium				
20		systema				
21		theorici				
22		unisoni				

Table 6. Non-Greek-derived unclassical words

	Boethius	Gafurius	Glareanus	Mei	Doni	Descartes
1	adunatum	adstructionibus	essentials	superbipartientem	mansoribus	apparenter
2	binarium	aequisonas	notula	superparticularem	manuscriptorum	apprehensionem
3	denominatiua	chordularum	regulata			battuta
4	disgregata	elegantier				binarium
5	indeterminatam	entia				circumquaque
6	inparitas	impartiri				combinatae
7	interminabilis	incongruus				conformis
8	paritas	instrumentalis				dissonantiae
9	pluralitate	nullibi				durationis
10	principalitate	proportionabile				huiusdem
11	saluari	semiditonus				incommensurabiles
12	speculatione	semitonium				successiue
13	uariabilis	unisoni				unisono
14	uertibilem					
15	uiandum					

non-Ciceronian vocabulary in each document: 7.8% for Boethius, 4.9% for Gafurius, 2.6% for Glareanus, 2.6% for Mei, 5.5% for Doni, and 6.3% for Descartes. The humanists Glareanus and Mei use distinctly lower ratios of such words than the non- or quasi-humanists Boethius, Gafurius, and Descartes. In Doni's case, the purpose of the document seems to have caused the unexpectedly high rate for a humanist: namely presenting his projects, past and future. It is therefore no wonder if he resorts to non-Ciceronian language in talking of modern ideas and institutions. On the other hand, the existence of 12 such words in Mei, who must have been more or less aware of this, whether or not using a Cicero concordance, makes visible his detachedness from stubborn Ciceronianists.

Next, the ninth line of Table 2 statistically shows each author's departure from classicality: 3.0% of Boethius' vocabulary are unclassical, 2.0% Gafurius', 0.6% Glareanus', 0.4% Mei's, 0.3% Doni's, and 3.0% Descartes'. All the humanists, Glareanus, Mei, and Doni, have less than 1%, whereas the non- or quasi-humanists have more than 2%. This sharp contrast agrees with the general view of the humanist as a devotee of classical style.

To enter into the occurrences of non-Greek-derived unclassical words in each humanist (Table 6), Glareanus' all three words, *essentiales*, *notula*, *regulata*, are labelled as L(ate) L(atin) in the *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources*, just like Mei's *superbipartientem* and *superparticularem* and Doni's *mansoribus*.⁸⁾ Doni's *manuscriptorum*, labelled as M(edieval) L(atin) in the same dictionary, can be regarded as classical if written separately as (*librorum*) *manu scriptorum*.

Under close observation of the individual usages, Glareanus' *essentiales* in *claves quas essentiales uocant*, technically denotes natural, not sharpened or flatted notes in medieval music theory. This use of the word is indispensable for an explanation of the musical system, whereas his *notula* to specifically refer to a "musical note" in distinction from the polysemous *nota* may have been done without by, say, qualifying *nota*. This is more or less true of his *regulata* and Doni's *mansoribus*. By

contrast, Mei's *superparticularem*, a translation of the Greek επιμόριος, cannot be replaced with another term. Something similar is the case with *superbipartientem*. Seen in this way, Mei's departure from the classical usage must be evaluated even smaller than the figures show.

From these data and considerations we can safely conclude that Mei's vocabulary in *On the Modes* is Ciceronian to a moderately high level and classical to the highest.

Chapter 2. Syntax

This section is devoted to comparison of *On the Modes* with other music theories regarding syntax, with the aim of valuing Mei's classicality in using the vocabulary. We shall be based on the observations made by Leofranc Holford-Strevens, who has pointed out a series of syntactical peculiarities found in nineteen music theorists from Philippe de Vitry (1291-1361) to Johann Joseph Fux (1660-1741) by quoting representative passages.⁹⁾ This study offers an ideal point of departure for our investigation, because not only of its equal objective and similar scope including Gafurius and Glareanus but also of the author's unfailing reliability in Latinity. The following fourteen points have been taken up from his descriptions. The number in parentheses in the first line of each item indicates the page in which the relevant observation is made in Holford-Strevens' 2014 essay, except for the last two points, which derive from his 2001 essay.

1. "the *quod* clause instead of accusative and infinitive" (505)

The following seven relevant instances have been detected out of 458 occurrences of *quod* in *On the Modes*. (1) *Vt uerbi gratia in diatessarōn dicimus extimos sonitus sesquiterciam rationem custodire, tresque tantum inter illos eas esse, quae totam constituent, postremo quod ipsarum differentiae sunt eiusmodi.* (57,33-5); (2) *nam quod ... ea locetur, dubitare nullo pacto possumus* (74,21-2); (3) *Quod ... nostri ... diuersa ... ratione sint usi ac ueteres omnes ..., ex illis ... perspici potuit* (92,24-7); (4) *quod Ptolemaici ... statuerint, ex eo liquet* (94,5); (5) *De Aristoxeneis ... conicere*

licet, quod eos Ptolemaeus ... accuset (94,9-10); (6) *Quod ... dorius ac phrygius ... sint ... legendi uel accipiendi ... quae ... traduntur, ... testificantur.* (111,8-11); (7) *quod prisci ... tonos ... constituere sint soliti ... liquet* (94,13-5).

To briefly comment on individual cases, the *quod* clause in (1) is the last of the three parallel subordinate ones governed by *dicimus*.¹⁰ It is true that (*non*) *dubito, perspicio, liqueo, conicio, testificor* do not classically take a *quod* clause. But their anomaly is mitigated in (2), (3), (4), (6), and (7) by their position before, not after, the verb. It may be added that in all the other similar instances in *On the Modes*, *liqueo* takes *acc. cum inf.*

2. “the placing of verbs before the direct object” (505)

I leave this point unexamined, considering the unpractically vast number of instances.

3. “the gerund with object” (505)

The gerund occurs 192 times, excluding the cases in which the distinction between a gerund and a gerundive is impossible such as in *diligentiae in me docendo* (3,6). In 36 of those instances the gerund has an object such as *locum permutando* (67,23-24;69,10) and *animum oblectandi* (127,1), counting as two when two gerunds share the same object. They include eight collocations (eighteen gerunds) in which two or more gerunds are juxtaposed for contrast or emphasis; *neque sensum ... contemnendo, neque ipsum ... segregando* (9,16-8); *illas [sc. notas] colligendo... cuncta rimando inquirendoque* (79,5-6); *auctoritatem uel dissimulando, uel detrectando, uel condemnando* (94,35); *πάθη et animi commotiones ... eiciendo, eumque ... euacuando* (107,12-13); *numerum augendo ... interuallum ... dissecando* (108,8-9); *purgandi uim ... uel ... animum oblectandi* (127,1); *uim ... indagando, non optando* (124,27-28); *oppositas ... qualitates inducendo ... aut euacuando* (127,36). Eighteen cases remain as simple usages of gerund with objects. They are *tenorem ... diffindendo* (57,29); *tonum permutando* (58,18); *finis assignando* (61,27); *locum permutando* (67,23-4; 69,10); *sedem permutando* (75,14); *ipsam [sc. diapason formam] ... inuertendo* (75, 28); *turbam explicando*

(76,26); *sensum ... aptando* (86,16); *appellationem renouando* (89,10); *medicinam ferendo* (105,29–30); *maerorem ... frangendo* (113,28–9); *ipsos ... reuocando* (117,15); *spiritus reuocando* (117,20); *facta et laudes celebrando* (117,29–30); *duritiem ... molliendo* (118,26–7); *iram altercando* (127,26); *hanc ... concoquendo* (127,28). Such collocations, which are certainly “im allgemeinen archaisch und nachklassisch”, are also found in Cicero, albeit rarely.¹¹⁾

4. “the indicative in indirect questions” (505)

In my counting, *On the Modes* contains 101 indirect questions, of which two have, in contrast to all the others, the indicative: *Quanam ... ratione ac uia ... nerui deprehendi possunt* (34,14–5) and *Quot ... fuere modi musici* (104,1). The latter looks all the more unexpected because in the other instances similar in both substance and construction (3,2; 70,1; 129,1) the subjunctive (*fuertint*) is used. According to Hofmann and Szantyr, similar usages are also found in classical authors including Cicero.¹²⁾

5. “*habeo* with infinitive to express obligation” (505)

Among the 86 occurrences of *habeo* in *On the Modes*, none is the case.

6. “the late antique and medieval plural” in addressing a superior, i.e. *uos* for *tu* (507)

No relevant case is found in *On the modes*.

7. “*fore* ... synonymous ... with *esse*” (509)

In all three instances, *fore* is used in the sense of *futurum esse*.

8. “*sibi* not referring to the subject” (511)

Excluding doubtful cases such as *sibi pro ratione respondentibus animi affectionibus ... idoneos [sc. modos]* (116,21–2), two clearly pertinent ones are found out of 71 occurrences of *sibi*: *quae [sc. spatia] singulos sonitus a singulis sibi proximis dirimunt* (39,25–6); *unumquemque [sc. modum] sibi proximo uel acutiorem uel remissioem constituerunt* (54,25–6). These are akin to the use of *suus* that are “auf den Objektbegriff bezogen”.¹³⁾ In connection with the use of *sibi*, though unrelated to the reference, I may mention here one more instance of late Latinity: *quod sibi ... usurpauit* (96,19). Lewis and Short quotes a similar use of *usurpo* with *sibi* from

Table 7. Occurrences of *atque* and *ac* in *On the Modes*.

	<i>atque</i>	<i>ac</i>	Total occurrences
Before a vowel or <i>h</i>	235 (73.7% of <i>atque</i> ; 76.5% of vowel/ <i>h</i>)	72 (12.8% of <i>ac</i> ; 23.5% of vowel/ <i>h</i>)	307 (100% of vowel/ <i>h</i>)
Before a consonant	84 (26.3% of <i>atque</i> ; 14.7% of consonant)	487 (87.2% of <i>ac</i> ; 85.3% of consonant)	571 (100% of consonant)
Total occurrences	319 (100% of <i>atque</i>)	560 (100% of <i>ac</i>)	877

Digesta Iustiniani (published in 533).¹⁴⁾

9. “common Renaissance error [of] placing *ac* before a vowel” (513)

The *OLD* s.v. *atque* remarks, “*atque* prob[ably] always used before a vowel or ‘h’; both forms are used before consonants.” In *On the Modes*, *atque* occurs 319 times in total and 235 times before a vowel or *h*, whereas *ac* 560 times in total and 72 times before a vowel or *h*. They are shown in numbers and ratios in Table 7.

This clearly shows that Mei is no exception in making “such common Renaissance errors as placing *ac* before a vowel”,¹⁵⁾ though he is well aware of its proper use, as is shown by the small number of *ac* (72 or 23.5%) as against that of *atque* (235 or 76.5%) before a vowel or *h* and the same of *atque* (84 or 14.7%) as against that of *ac* (487 or 85.3%) before a consonant. There is one remarkable fact about *ac* before a vowel or *h*: it occurs 40 times in book 1, 18 in book 2, 8 in book 3, and 6 in book 4. Since it is known that Mei finished the four books of *On the Modes* in the present order, these decreasing numbers represent his progressive stylistic changes or improvements, in which he tried to avoid using *ac* before a vowel or *h*.¹⁶⁾ Among the five authors we chose in the previous chapter for comparison with Mei, Gafurius and Doni obviously conform to the classical rule, whereas Glareanus does not (for Boethius and Descartes, this examination is impossible on account of too few, if any, occurrences of *ac* among the chosen 1990 words).

10. “misusing *nempe* to mean ‘namely’” (513)

In none of its three instances in *On the Modes*, *nempe* is used in this sense.

11. “the use of *scilicet* with a mere enumeration, as opposed to an

elucidation” (515)

No relevant case is found among the 80 occurrences of *scilicet*.

12. “*inquit* [not] accompanying a verbatim quotation” (516)

Of the six instances of *inquit*, three are verbatim quotations (95,24; 120,34; 120,35) and the other three are not (85,17; 85,23; 116,34).

13. “*quod* for *ut* introducing a consecutive clause” (2001, 427)

Amid most classical collocations such as *Quo fit, ut spatium ... absoluatur* (10,9-11), only one relevant case is found among 458 *quod* instances: *Quod uero hic quam ille aptior exstiterit, naturalis ipsa uis effecit* (116,14-5). The position of the *quod* clause before *effecit*, as in the case of 1 (accusative with infinitive), appears to soften this late Latinity.¹⁷⁾

14. “*causas* for *res*” (*le cose*) (2001, 428)

No relevant use is found among 96 occurrences of *causa*.

Additionally, I may cite Mei’s two mutually contradicting orientations. On the one hand, his strong aversion to medievalism is the most visible in his careful way of introducing medieval terms, making clear they are not of his own choice. Since his usage of *fere*, *quasi*, and *ut ita dicam* to apologize for his use of them has already been commented upon elsewhere, we restrict ourselves here to adding two conspicuous cases.¹⁸⁾ First, in the phrase *ipsam [sc. diapason formam] (ut eorum quoque uerbo utamur) inuertendo* (75,28), *quoque* indicates his reluctance to employ the classical term (*uerbo*) *inuerto* in a medieval, purely musical sense of “inverting”, in addition to entering into the medieval modal system, which he despises as deviating from the Greek one. Similarly, his hesitation is obvious when he prefixes *modulationes* used in a medieval musical sense with *ut ita dicam* (108,5-6) in parentheses.

On the other hand, Mei, though very rarely, discloses, *tout malgré soi*, his own unclassical language. One example is *discutio*, meaning “to dash to pieces” in classical Latin, is used in a medieval sense of “considering” in *accurata in rebus discutiendis diligentia* (104,33). Another example concerns the degrees. In *quos [sc. nomos] cum quam firmos ac stabiles percuperent* (115,4-5), the positive degree appears in place of the classical superlative. Hofmann and Szantyr describes this usage as “volks-

und umgangssprachlich”¹⁹⁾ and Stotz as found in “spätantiken Fachschriftstellern”.²⁰⁾ Related to this is the interchanging use of the comparative and the superlative, which Stotz finds of particular interest “weil dies einer Tendenz der Volkssprache entspricht”, thus in *istorum duorum acutissimum tetrachordum* (6,3; I owe this point to Dr. Holford-Strevens) *acutius* would be classical.²¹⁾

From our observations thus far we may conclude that Mei’s grammatical usage is on the whole, if not completely, classical, with occasional minor exceptions.

Chapter 3. Graecism

The most conspicuous instance of Mei’s Graecism is undoubtedly the excerpt from Euripides’ *Medea* in the original at the beginning of book 4. Apart from many individual uses of Greek words in the Greek alphabet,²²⁾ there are 23 Latin transliterations of Greek words such as *magas* (μαγιάς) and *oxyryknos* (ὄξύρυκνος). His amalgamation of the two classical languages goes so far as to incorporate ω into Latinized words such as *diatessarōn* and *harmonikōs* or to change an acute accent to a grave when he quotes a Greek oxytone word followed by a Latin word such as *quam ἀλόων Graeci dicunt* (113,19; in the 1991 edition this is modified into ἀλόον). In *On the Modes* the Latin is thus seamlessly connected to Greek.

For *musica* Mei uses the Greek form *musicē* as well (*musicēs* for the genitive and *musicēn* for the accusative; the same is partly true of *arithmetice*). The fact that he often uses *musica* in books 1 and 2, exclusively *musicē* in book 4, and both forms coincide in book 3 seems likelier to have resulted from his deliberate choice than an uncalculated change of preference, since the Greek form *musicēn* already occurs in book 1 (29,2). He chose the Greek form in the discussion of the Greek practice (*usus*) of music in book 4.

Mei’s Graecism penetrates into Latin syntax as well. In the sentence *Authentae omnes suorum plagiorum acutiores sunt* (75,10; I owe this point

to Dr. Holford-Strevens), the object of comparison is expressed in the Graecizing genitive instead of the standard ablative. As far as this passage is concerned, its derivation from what Hofmann and Szantyr refers to as “vulgäre (nicht gräzisierung) Verwendung” is also conceivable instead of Mei’s own Graecism.²³ In *suarum sint cupiditatum superiores* (126,1), however, a Greek construction is directly imported: Mei appears to be making a verbatim translation of κρείσσων τῶν ἡδονῶν, keeping to the original genitive.

Conclusion

Our analysis of *On the Modes* regarding (1) the vocabulary shows the highest degree of classicality and moderate conformity to Cicero; (2) that of the syntax reveals Mei’s Latin as predominantly classical; and (3) that of Graecism indicates his positive intention and ability to Graecise. All these converge to form the image of a typical humanist capable of expressing himself in a very classical idiom.

I acknowledge my indebtedness to Dr. Leofranc Holford-Strevens, who has read my text and saved me from many errors in both English and Latin.

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Notes

- 1) For a survey of the so-called Ciceronian Quarrel from the late fifteenth to the early seventeenth century, see the Introduction to *Ciceronian Controversy*, ed. by JoAnn DellaNeva, The I Tatti Renaissance Library 26, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007.
- 2) Girolamo Mei, *De modis*, ed. by Tsugami Eske, Tokyo: Keiso Shobo, 1991.
- 3) *Thesaurus Musicarum Latinarum*, <https://chmtl.indiana.edu/tml/>.
- 4) For Gafurius’ aspiration to become a humanist, see Leofranc Holford-

- Stevens, "Classifying the Unclassical: The Challenge of Music Theory" in *Brill's Encyclopedia of the Neo-Latin World*, Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2014, pp.505–517 at 510–2.
- 5) See Tsugami Eske, *Girolamo Mei: A Belated Humanist and Premature Aesthetician*, Tokyo: Keiso Shobo, 2021, p.175.
 - 6) Hugo Merguet, *Handlexikon zu Cicero*, Leipzig, 1905–6.
 - 7) *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, 2nd ed., ed. by P. G. W. Glare, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012, p.viii.
 - 8) *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources*, prep. by R. E. Latham et al., Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975–2013.
 - 9) Leo Franc Holford-Stevens, *op. cit.* Also "Humanism and the language of music treatises", *Renaissance Studies*, vol.15–1, 2001, pp.415–49 by the same author surveys music theorists from Hucbald of Saint-Amand to Athanasius Kircher from the same point of view.
 - 10) For a similar usage already found in Cato, see J. B. Hofmann and Anton Szantyr, *Lateinische Syntax und Stilistik*, Lateinische Grammatik, vol.2, München: C. H. Beck, 1965, p.578.
 - 11) *Ibid.*, p.373.
 - 12) *Ibid.*, p.538.
 - 13) *Ibid.*, p.175.
 - 14) Charlton T. Lewis and Charles Short, *A Latin Dictionary*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1879, s.v. *usurpo*.
 - 15) Holford-Stevens, *op. cit.*, p.513.
 - 16) Mei, *op. cit.*, pp.xix–xxv.
 - 17) Hofmann and Szantyr, *op. cit.*, p.581.
 - 18) Tsugami, *op. cit.*, p.176.
 - 19) Hofmann and Szantyr, *op. cit.*, p.590.
 - 20) Peter Stotz, *Die Formenlehre, Syntax und Stilistik*, Handbuch zur lateinischen Sprache des Mittelalters, vol.5, München: C. H. Beck, 1998, p.298.
 - 21) *Ibid.*, p.299.
 - 22) See *Index graecus* in Mei, *op. cit.*, 243–5.
 - 23) Hofmann and Szantyr, *op. cit.*, p.112.