

Session 3

Adjectives: Declension, Cases, Comparison

Reading

Read the following text. It is a fragment of a parodic Saint's life, narrating the story of Saint Nobody – a mock saint whose existence was only possible due to a very literal interpretation of the Scripture.

Fuit vir in oriente nomine Nemo, et fuit vir ille ut alter Iob magnus inter omnes orientales. Magnus fuit namque in genere et prosapia, magnus in potentia, magnus in scientia, magnus in compassione et clementia. Hec omnia probantur per sacram scripturam. [...] Quarto fuit iste Nemo magnus in compassione et clementia. Solus namque fuit iste sanctus compassus Lazaro mendicanti, iuxta illud: *Nemo illi dabat*. [...] Quinto iste sanctus Nemo fuit magnus in perfectione multimoda. Fuit Nemo activus ut Martha manum ad aratrum mittendo, iuxta ewangelium: *Nemo mittens manum ad aratrum*. Et non solum fuit activus ad aratrum mittendo, unde et otiosos ad laborem conducendo ut in Matheo: *Nemo nos conduxit*. Fuit etiam contemplativus ut Maria, et potest dici de eo quod dicitur de Isaac, Genesis: Ibat proficiens et succrescens et vehementer effectus est magnus.

There was a man in the East named Nobody, and that man was like another Job, great among all the people of the East. For he was great in race and lineage, great in power, great in knowledge, great in compassion and mercy. All these things are shown in Holy Scripture. [...] Fourth, this holy Nobody was great in compassion and mercy. For only this holy Nobody was merciful to Lazarus the beggar, according to the passage: Nobody gave to him. [...] Fifth, this holy Nobody was great in manifold perfection. Nobody was active, like Martha, in putting his hand to the plough, according to the Gospel: Nobody putteth his hand to the plough. And he was not active merely in putting his hand to the plough, but also in leading the idle to labor, as in Matthew: Nobody hath hired us. He was also contemplative, like Mary, and it could be said of him as it was said of Isaac, Genesis: He prospered and grew successful and became exceedingly great.

(Trans. by Martha Bayless)

Task 1: Find all the adjectives in the text. Try to recreate their paradigm of comparison (positive, comparative and superlative) where possible.

Task 2: Identify the following constructions and trace the choice of cases:

- 1) Fuit vir in oriente nomine Nemo
- 2) Magnus inter omnes orientales
- 3) Per sacram scripturam
- 4) Solus [...] fuit iste sanctus compassus Lazaro
- 5) Ad aratrum mittendo
- 6) Otiosos ad laborem conducendo