

Οὐ̃τις in the Cyclops' cave, *Odyssey* 9.360 - 420

Greek has two ways of saying “nobody”.

Syntax determines whether the speaker says  
οὐ̃τις or whether he says μή τις.

Both expressions mean “nobody”.

Odysseus uses a pun to show his cleverness.

The name of Athena's mother, Metis (Greek Μῆτις), is  
is where the pun plays out.

The following slides help explain the pun.

Οὔτις in the Cyclops' cave, *Odyssey* 9.360 - 420

“Οὔτις ἐμοί γ’ ὄνομα· Οὔτιν δέ με κικλήσκουσι  
μήτηρ ἠδὲ πατήρ ἠδ’ ἄλλοι πάντες ἑταῖροι.”

“Ὡς ἐφάμην, ὁ δέ μ’ αὐτικ’ ἀμείβετο νηλεί θυμῷ·

“Οὔτιν ἐγὼ πύματον ἔδομαι μετὰ οἷς ἑτάροισι...”

*Cf.* Shewring *Odyssey* 9.366 ff.

Odysseus: “... My name is **Noman**; **Noman** is what my mother and father call me; so likewise do all my friends.”

‘To these words of mine the savage creature made quick response: “**Noman** then shall come last among those I eat; his friends I will eat first; this is to be my favour to you.”’

Οὔτις in the Cyclops' cave, *Odyssey* 9.360 - 420

“Τίπτε τόσον, Πολύφημ', ἀρημένος ὧδε ἐβόησας  
νύκτα δι' ἀμβροσίην, καὶ ἀύπνους ἄμμε τίθησθα;

ἢ μή τίς σευ μῆλα βροτῶν ἀέκοντος ἐλαύνει;

ἢ μή τίς σ' αὐτὸν κτείνει δόλω ἢ ἐ βίηφιν;”

Τοὺς δ' αὖτ' ἐξ ἄντρου προσέφη κρατερὸς Πολύφημος·

“ὦ φίλοι, Οὔτις με κτείνει δόλω οὐδὲ βίηφιν.”

*Cf. After Shewring Odyssey 9.403ff.*

The other Cyclopes respond: “Polyphemus, what dire affliction has come upon you?  
... Surely **no human** creature driving away your flocks? Surely **no one** is threatening  
death to yourself by craft or by violence?”

‘From inside the cave the giant answered: “Friends, it is **Noman's** craft and no  
violence that is threatening death to me.”’

Οὐ̃τις in the Cyclops' cave, *Odyssey* 9.360 - 420

Οἱ δ' ἀπαμειβόμενοι ἔπεα πτερόεντ' ἀγόρευον·  
“εἰ μὲν δὴ μή τις σε βιάζεται οἶον ἔόντα,  
νοῦσον γ' οὐ πῶς ἔστι Διὸς μεγάλου ἀλέασθαι,  
ἀλλὰ σύ γ' εὐχέο πατρὶ Ποσειδάωνι ἄνακτι.”

*Cf.* Shewring *Odyssey* 9.409ff.

‘Swiftly their words were borne back to him: “If **no man** is doing you violence — if you are alone — then this is a malady sent by mighty Zeus from which there is no escape; you had best say a prayer to your father, Lord Poseidon.”’

Οὔτις in the Cyclops' cave

“Ὡς ἄρ' ἔφρασαν ἀπιόντες, ἐμὸν δ' ἐγέλασσε φίλον κῆρ,  
ὡς ὄνομ' ἐξαπάτησεν ἐμὸν καὶ μῆτις ἀμύμων.

*Cf. Shewring Odysseey 9.413 ff.*

“With these words they left him again, while my own heart laughed within me to think how the name I gave and my **ready wit** snared him.”

Οὔτις in the Cyclops' cave

Οὔτις, ὃν οὐ πῶ φημι πεπφυγμένον ἔμμεν ὄλεθρον. ...

Τῷ κέ οἱ ἐγκέφαλός γε διὰ σπέος, ἄλλυδις ἄλλη  
θεινομένου ραίοιτο πρὸς οὔδει, κὰδ δέ κ' ἐμόν κῆρ  
λωφήσειε κακῶν, τὰ μοι οὔτιδαν' ἔπορεν Οὔτις.

*Cf. Shewring Odysseey 9.455ff*

“You are grieving, surely, over your master’s eye, which malicious **Noman** quite put out, with his evil friends, after overmastering my wits with wine; but I swear he has still not escaped destruction. If only your thoughts were like my own, if only you had the gift of words to tell me where he is hiding from my fury! Then he would be hurled to the ground and his brains dashed hither and thither across the cave; then my heart would find some relief from the tribulations he has brought me, unmanly **Noman**.”