

19.463—*Odysseus . . . / the Son of Pain, a name he'll earn in full:* The name “Odysseus” may be associated with the Greek verb *odussomai*—to feel anger toward, to rage or hate. The verb, however, appears to function in the middle voice, a cross between the active and the passive, implying that Odysseus is not only an agent of rage or hatred but its target too. Particularly to the point are the discussions by John Peradotto (pp. 29–34) and George Dimock (pp. 257–60), who suggest that Odysseus suffers for making others suffer, not as an end in itself but, insofar as *odussomai* brings to mind the verb *ôdinô*—to suffer pain, especially the pain of labor—as the rigors by which the hero brings his identity to life. Consequently Dimock proposes that we translate “Odysseus” as “man of pain”—active and passive, doing and done to, agent and victim both, inflicting and bearing pain yet somehow born himself in the process. That is the version which this translator adopts and adapts throughout his work. Yet when Homer intends a pun between the root of the hero’s name and the hostility he arouses in others, the translator tries to develop some wordplay, wherever possible, between “Odysseus” and those “dead set” against him. See 1.75, 5.373, 19.317; and, as variations on the theme, 3.106, 4.364, 5.467, 23.349–51, 24.341–42.