

# Odyssey by homer and the aeneid by virgil: a comparison piece on both literary wo...

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Although Influenced by different times, different cultures, and different writers, The Odyssey and the Aeneid, which have their differences, still coincide and relate beyond the influence of the surroundings. Virgil, the author of the Aeneid, undoubtedly influenced by Homer's, the author of the Odyssey, works and Virgil seems to draw themes and events into his story throughout his epic. The cultures around the two authors, although extremely different, had underlying themes that helped in the similarity of these two literary works.

Virgil's Aeneid and Homer's Odyssey and both epics, both giving the story of their heroes in the form of poems. Homer, a wondering muse, seems to always to include ways in his poems to get hospitality from his listeners. One way was his flattery of his audience's ancestry, making them seem brave and important historical figures. Homer also would promote hospitality as a noble endeavor and lift up muses, singers, and poets as honorable and worthy of that hospitality. Virgil also used flattery in his poem to get favors. Caesar Augustus, the Caesar of Rome at the time, was especially praised in Virgil's Aeneid, and Virgil did this for the benefits of Caesar's good favor. Virgil, being a Roman, and Homer, being a Greek, also shared ideas that their societies shared. The Romans had adopted many of the Greek's aspects, such as their gods and goddesses, military tactics, and some of the architectural aspects. Along with these connections, The Greeks put a reputation and glory of oneself on a high pedestal, which is often shown in Homer's writings. Similarly, The Romans strived for the glory, reputation, and

honor of Rome, and this sense of duty and glory is strongly displayed in Virgil's work.

The Odyssey and the Aeneid begin in similar ways: " Tell me, Muse, of the man of many ways, who was driven far journeys, after he sacked Troy's sacred citadel.." (Homer, 27) " I sing of warfare and a man at war. He came to Italy by destiny." (Virgil, 3). They should indeed start by coinciding, sense the story lines are very similar. The Odyssey is a tale of the hardships that befall of a great Greek hero, Odysseus, after the trojan war, and the story of his journey back home. The Aeneid is very similar, it tells the story of a great Trojan hero, Aeneas, after the Trojan war and the hardships he faces on his journey to find a new home. During their adventures, both of the heroes face similar adventures. They are both aided and hindered by different gods and goddesses. Odysseus is aided by Athene, who loves him like a son, and opposed by Poseidon, whereas Aeneas is aided by his mother, Venus, and opposed by Juno. This comes into to play with striking resemblance in the two poems. But Odysseus and Aeneas are beset by fearsome storms sent by the gods opposing them. In addition, one instance in the Aeneid resembles the Odyssey strongly: In the Aeneid, Venus appears to Aeneas in the vise of a young girl, who this disguises the hero with a mist before sending him to the palace of Dido, lest he be recognised and beset on the way and to allow the hero to discover if Dido will we a friend or a foe to the Trojans. There are two similar events in the Odyssey, first at Phaiakia, Athene meets the hero in the form of a little girl and disguises Odysseus with mist so that he will not be beset on his way to the castle.. The second being when Athena disguises

Odysseus when he reaches his home, so he may observe those who are loyal to him, and those who are not.

The events and geographical locations of these ancient works coincide as well. Both Aeneas and Odysseus have an experience with Circe, Aeneas just passing by the sorcerous' island and escaping Odysseus fate there. Aeneas also visits the island of the Cyclopes, hearing the story of Odysseus' adventure from a man stranded on the island. As well as terrifying adventures, the two heroes are intertwined in their romantic intercourse. Aeneas is delayed by Dido, whom Venus has put under the spell of Cupid, making her fall deeply in love with Aeneas, though he leaves her because he is duty bound to go to Italy. Odysseus is likewise detained by Calypso, a lesser goddess, but leaves her because he longs for his family and home. He is also detained by the love of Circe, who Athene helps him seduce so that he can save his men and himself from her spells, yet he leaves her as well. One last striking comparison can be seen in these two epics: The hero's adventure into Hades. Both men give blood to achieve their goal in Hades well in process meeting acquaintances. Odysseus talks to Elpenor while Aeneas with Palinurus, who are both unburied friends of the hero's who beg to be buried. They both have encounters with Agamemnon and Achilles, Odysseus greeting them as friends, while they run from Aeneas in fear of his strength. Along with encounters with friends, Odysseus sees his mother, and tries to hug her three times, but fails. Likewise Aeneas tries to embrace his dead father but, like Odysseus, he can not.

The Odyssey and the Aeneid have many differences, so do the authors who wrote them. But the historical events and cultures of the two writers brought these two memorable works together in an interesting and study-worthy manner, making the two stories even more enthralling. Once you see these similarities, you can realize much about the authors who wrote them and the civilizations in which they take place. With these bridges, you can paint a mental image that can take you on an imaginative eye-opening adventure which has been read and loved throughout the centuries.