

From the cultural views, there are some differences between the Greek and Roman concept of heroes: the Achaeans attach importance to individuality whereas the Romans to community. Unlike the Roman Empire which we know is a kingdom, in the ancient Greece—also called Hellas—there are no countries but only city states scattered around the Balkan Peninsula. In this sense, the Achaeans do not have the notion about collective consciousness or what “country” is, so they tend to possess individual will, and so do the heroes at that time. We can see the evidence in the two works.

On the one hand, in ~~the~~ *Odyssey*, Odysseus constitutes the standard Greek values of heroism: individualism. He mainly concerns if he can go back to Ithaca safely and how to regain his throne; that is, what he cares about is not really related to anyone else but is himself, his life, and his personal purposes. For instance, as a leader of his sailors, the hero Odysseus is proved to be ~~the only~~ survivor coming back to his Ithaca. So we can see that his cleverness and resourcefulness are only applied for his own “individual” survival. On the other hand, the Roman heroism is quite different. Aeneas is burdened with a great responsibility for his sacred mission ordained by Jupiter to found a new land. He concerns about not personal gain or welfare but other people and therefore he is the presentation of “pietas,” possibly the key quality of honorable Romans consisting of a series of dedication toward the family, followers, homeland, and the gods.

Culturally, the Roman, or Virgilian ideology of heroes is distinctly different from that of the Greeks. The chief difference of their model heroism is that the Greek heroes symbolize individual will, glory, and feelings whereas the Roman heroes an ideal nationalistic ruler (Augustus, whom Virgil writes the *Aeneid* for) who with sacrifice, devotion, and duty for his people is regarded as a servant rather than the served.