

# Ideal heroic citizenship essay example

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The Greek myth poetic period was a time when the Greek empire sought to expand itself by conquering all the surrounding lands. In this period the Greeks perceived themselves as superior to all other races similar to the Nazi of Germany in the 1940s who declared their blood pure and superior. In this period the Greeks perceived themselves as visitors in a foreign land who would then conquer the land and make it their own. In this period the ideal heroic citizen was perceived as one who sacrificed everything for king and country, going out to war and seeing his fellow countrymen to victory and the expansion of mother Greece. The ideal heroic citizen was selfless acting not for his own prosperity and flourishment but for the greater good of his country and his countrymen. One might be tempted to call this a period of statesmanship where patriotism was the order of the day and glory to one's country the ultimate sign of a hero (Calame, Claude and Lloyd 231).

The general political atmosphere of the Greek tragic drama was a time where the ruling class was brutal with the strong assuming power for their own benefit at the expense of the weak. During this time the Greeks began to perceive man as prone to suffering and surrounded by this cloud of misfortunes. They introduced a form of acting where human suffering was supposed, in some twisted way, to bring thrill excitement and entertain an on looking audience. This was a form of very emotional acting with the main characters being exposed to extreme suffering and torture much to the thrill of the on looking audience. Men became extremely brutal to one another and the suffering of one man was in its own twisted way entertaining and thrilling to his fellow man. The rising hostilities saw a complete U-turn from the Greek myth poetic era where Greeks were only brutal to non-Greeks to

this new era where the only emotion aroused by fellow countrymen was malice and anger (Gary and Meltzer<sup>139</sup>).

Stoicism was a roman philosophy where a hero had to be composed and in full control of his mental and emotional faculties. Moderation was highly emphasized when dealing with not only fellow man but the universe at large and by extension all of existence. A hero was calm, composed and seemingly at peace with all his surroundings. Errors in judgment were highly frowned upon especially in regard to fellow man and a high standard of intellectuality was maintained. Creation of harmony not only with oneself but with the universe at large was an asset highly sought after by all ideal noble citizens. Man was expected to be in full control of his emotions and exercise caution and care in regard to his fellow man. Indeed a hero was he who maintained order in the cosmos and was very cautious when dealing with his fellow man and in regard to the universe at large. Needless to say the key aspect in this era was complete control of one's emotions and compassion to fellow men and the entire universe or in one word peace.

Throughout these three periods the ideal citizen undergoes numerous changes but also stays the same in more ways than one. We see the evolution of the ideal heroic citizen from a fierce warrior ready to put it all on the line for his country to a mean ruler entertained by the suffering of his people to this peaceful calm man concerned with nothing more than with being at peace with his fellow man and the universe at large exercising caution in all his approaches. Resilience, determination and love for one's country however remain unchanged in this ideal citizenship throughout the three periods. In the end the essence of the heroic ideal is composure and

compassion for fellow man and the universe at large. Maintaining peace and order is highly engraved in our ideal hero (Ivanovitch and Duff 251).

## **Works Cited**

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