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### World Civilizations Analytical Essay

This essay will demonstrate that although man have had a thirst for knowledge, belief in a higher power, practiced religion, and followed patterns of hierarchies, the history of civilizations have come to grow and rise in power due to greed. Through the examination of *The Book of Genesis*, *Popol Vuh*, and the document of Elise Boulding's *Women and the Agricultural Revolution*, Gerda Lerner, *The Urban Revolution: Origins of Patriarchy*, and *A Women in Power; Empress Lu* we see this rise in civilizations.

In order to understand the upbringing of world civilizations, we must first start where man began. God was the first to create and domesticate humans. In *The Book of Genesis*, we see God create Adam from dust and Eve from his rib. God places Adam and Eve in the idyllic garden of Eden, where he encourages them to enjoy the world happily and reproduce. Their only limitation is that they are forbidden to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. While in the garden, Eve comes across a sly serpent who convinces her that she will not suffer a consequence if she was to eat from the tree of knowledge. Thus, she immediately took a fruit from the tree and shared it with Adam. After finishing the fruit, they were ashamed of themselves and felt great remorse, but it was too late. God discovered their disobedience and cursed the serpent for its scheming, then turned and cursed Eve to suffer the pain of childbirth and her husbands authority. Adam was cursed with the task of having to work the ground for

food and lastly they were both banished from Eden. This story of creation allows us to see how the curiosity of man has been prominent from the beginning of time. We seek knowledge. Rather than being contained by simplicity and happiness, we are compelled to find more. In this case, Eve was convinced by a serpent. In everyday human lives, we are convinced by our own thoughts and curiosity. *The Book of Genesis* goes on to explain how humankind grows more and more evil by the day. This evil arises from greed and a thirst for knowledge, power, and superiority. This kind of greed and power is expressed even amongst Gods. For instance, in the creation myth of *Popol Vuh* the Gods created small and large wild animals to be the “guardians of the woods, the spirits of the mountains, the deer, the birds, pumas, jaguars, serpents, snakes, vipers, [and the] guardians of the thickets.” They assigned homes to them all and gave them the freedom to walk, fly, sleep, and reproduce. Once the animals had been created, the creator and maker asked them to praise them, “speak, praise us, your mother, your father.” The animals hissed and squaked and screamed and crackled, but no matter what, they could not speak their language. As a result, when the maker and creator saw that it was impossible for them to speak and praise them, they changed them and their minds. They were now to be killed and eaten. This vengeful and spiteful reaction from the Gods is a result of not being worshiped. This goes to show that Gods themselves wish to be praised and are in need of power. This same nature has been passed on to human kind. The following readings will be explained as proof of humans growth by power.

With that being said, Elise Boulding in her reading of *Women and the Agricultural Revolution* brings up another significant point. For a long time, humans were nomads, living a relatively easy life. The men hunted around 4 days a week, while the women worked around 2 ½ days long gathering food to feed the family for the week. The rest of the time was spent in leisure

visiting, creating, and just living life. When men and women finally settled down, they discovered the use of farming and agriculture. The want for a surplus of food could be argued as an act of greed, rather than necessity due to the revolution. The want for great amounts of food and better tasting food arose in the agricultural revolution. Women were responsible for marking out the field for planting, gathering fruits and nuts, milking the cows and made cheese, as well as, looking after the children and cooking. Men spent their time hunting and involved in the military and designing structures for homes and the civilization. Man learned how to produce a surplus of food, allowing them to feed not only themselves, but non-farming populations as well. They also sold and traded their produce for profit. They domesticated animals, planted, plowed, and made use of water from the land with irrigation. The innovation of irrigation allowed them to water plants efficiently. This was the beginning of every upcoming revolution and enlightenment. This brought the need for slavery and hard manual labor. Which leads into the next document by Gerda Lerner, *The Urban Revolution: Origins of Patriarchy*. During this time men had all the assertion of power and along with that power came greed. Women were subordinate and had no rights. They were divorced, punished, and sold into slavery for adultery, while men were free to do as they pleased. It can be clearly seen that men saved everything for themselves with no regards to women or people of color. They wanted to maintain their power and grow stronger by keeping everyone else under like a order of class. In this revolution we see women begin to get tired of being treated fairly and they start a rebellion. This caused a fight for their freedom and eventually their rising of power. Even in women, a thirst for power is portrayed. Nobody wants to be at the bottom of the pyramid and they will do whatever they need to do in order to reach the top. Even if it means rebellion and others lives in exchange.

The final discussion is the document on Empress Lu. She was the mother to the Emperor and served as his backbone, although she did served in her own favor. The women was deceiving and hungry for power. She manipulated and killed men who were a threat to her rule because she refused to allow the bloodline to end. The Empress kidnapped a baby from one of her ladies in waiting and killed the mother in order to continue her reign, but rumors got to him as he grew older, that his real mother was killed, whom the killer was revealed to the audience as Empress Lu. This caused the Emperor to fall into depression, which led into a drinking problem. He was no longer thinking clearly. When Empress Lü was returning from a sacrifice and was attacked by the blue dog that bit her under her arm, which obviously resulted in her death. This reading just continues to prove how a thirst for power is stronger than any other. She betrayed her own family, even her own children, for her self-interests.

Thus, in the end, more often than not a greed and thirst for power causes great downfall. Constantly throughout the history of man and civilization, we see a common theme of hunger wheather for knowledge, greed, or power. Since the early ages in empires such as Han China, The Roman, and the Ottomans, man has grown from greed, killing, and conquest. Even now in 2017 we see that power is still a huge theme in society. Counties are still at war and even trying to build bigger and better weapons than the opposing side. We still see a hold over minorities and women in today's society. Women are paid less and seen as incompetent in their professional fields of work and everyday life. Black men and women are still victims of racist acts and violence from white supremacists. Gay men and women are still as a disgrace to the human race and were just recently granted the right to marry and express themselves. Till this day we see the same themes in civilizations back then.