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Jack's Ego

Jack develops in many peculiar ways throughout the Lord of the Flies by William Golding. The development of Jack's ego, from beginning to end, affects the people and setting around him. How far will Jack's ego go to identify as the tribal leader? What archetype does Jack identify as?

Jack develops by changing his ego, his ego never has the same qualities. His ego changes from chapter to chapter. A very vain person; Jack only cares for himself. At the inception of this book, Jack shows himself as a bully. On page 21 Jack emphasizes how he chooses a target that would or could have the capabilities of not acting on being bullied. "You're talking too much," said Jack Merridew. "Shut up, Fatty. (p.21)" Some can perceive this as bullying, some may not. Another quote also shows how Jack's not yet bullying, but verbally attacks Piggy to knock him down. To make Piggy feel worthless. "We don't want you," said Jack flatly. "Three's enough. (p.24)" This quote also shows how Jack can attack Piggy verbally, yet no one else except for the perpetrator and the attacked see this as an attack. Jack changes significantly over the course of the book.

Jack; also a very lenient person. Because Jack cannot kill the pig on page 31 he is interpreted as soft.

“I was choosing a place,” said Jack. “I was just waiting for a moment to decide where to stab him.”... “You cut a pig’s throat to let the blood out,” said Jack, “otherwise you can’t eat the meat.”... “why didn’t you---?” They knew very well why he hadn’t: because of the enormity of the knife descending and cutting into living flesh; because of the unbearable blood (P.31).

This shows the difference of Jack from the beginning of the book till the end. When Jack’s first introduced in this book he’s perceived as lenient, and by the end Jack orders the deaths of characters.

Jack takes on the trait of a dictator. Even at the beginning of the book Jack has that Dictator feel. He leads the Choirboys in a strict like fashion. On page 23 a quote emphasizes his dictator characteristics in the inception of the term “chief.” “All right. Who wants Jack for chief?’ With dreary obedience the choir raised their hands.” As human beings, we only do stuff when we want to do something or when forced to. One could emphasize dreary as the mood of the Choirboys under Jacks rule. The Choirboys don’t want to vote for Jack, but they fear that Jack will attack or overrule them. Jack sees a way to overturn Ralph by using the people and place around him.

Midway through the book, Jack sees that he can take away Ralph's authority. Jack sees that Ralph favors Piggy first and that angers Jack. Jack also sees how Ralph leads and how he has the skill set to beat Ralph. Ralph's downfall starts on page 91 where Jack loses his tranquility and starts attacking Ralph in a verbal manner. Attacking everything that Ralph holds secure including Piggy and Ralph's leadership.

Ralph leapt to his feet. "Jack, Jack! You haven't got the conch! Let him speak." Jack's face swam near him. "And you shut up! Who are you, anyway? Sitting there telling people what to do. You can't hunt, you can't sing----" "I'm Chief. I was chosen." "Why should choosing make any difference? I just giving orders that don't make any sense---" "Piggy's got the conch." "That's right--favor Piggy as you always do---." (p.91)

Jack illuminates all of Ralph's weaknesses and uses that to his advantage. Jack sees his way to the top, and he takes it.

Furthermore, Jack learns how to turn people to his side. To make them feel what he feels, to make them want the kill or the thrill of the kill. This quote on page 115 shows how Jack starts to turn Ralph to his side. The setting of this quote takes place when Jack, Ralph, and the Hunters go hunting for the beast. After spotting a boar they act as if Robert portrays that very boar. "Ralph too was fighting to get near, to get a handful of that brown, vulnerable flesh. The desire to squeeze and hurt was over-mastering." (p.115). Jack has the power to take people to his side, and he uses it.

Although Jack comes across as mean and malicious, there's places where he slips up and shows fright or fear. On page 122 he reveals these traits and other people

notice his fear and uncertainty. “‘We’ll go an look.’ For the first time since he had first known Jack, Ralph could feel him hesitate. ‘Now--? (p.122)’” This quote reveals fear and uncertainty to lie just below Jack’s perceived perfect balance. Towards the end Jack’s ego gets the best of him, and starts demoralizing animals and killing people.

Finally Jacks plan starts falling into place and he leaves the tribe or group of people under Ralphs rule. He starts his own tribe and people start joining him. First littluns then bigguns. After awhile only Piggy, Sam and Eric (Samneric) remain with Ralph. This causes big changes to Jack’s ego. The change attacks Ralph mentally, and Piggy physically. While Ralph and Piggy recover from these attacks, Jack makes more plans of attack on the other tribe.

Furthermore, Jack’s first plan involves stealing the fire. By taking the fire he takes away the other tribes only sense of home, and that will crush them. “We’ll raid them and take the fire. There must be four on you; Henry and you, Robert and Maurice. We’ll put on paint and sneak up; Roger can snatch a branch while I say what I want. (P.136)” Inevitably, his plan works and they succeed in taking the fire.

Additionally, Jack’s true colors start appearing as his plan falls into place. Such as, when he paints his face, and when others see him as a King figure. For example when he paints his face for the first time early on in the Lord of the Flies, he has a feeling of “liberation from shame and self-consciousness.” This can tell us that Jack really cares what people think about him, and what type of rank he appears at.

Next, Jack launches another attack on Ralph's tribe, but this time Jack focuses his attack on Piggy. This time Jack aims for Piggy’s glasses, not just the fire, but the

object causing the fire. Again he succeeds, and this crushes Piggy, this attack has a big effect on how Piggy dies.

After Piggy's glasses were taken, throwing Piggy into an irrational thinking area, a big difference from when he had his glasses. He goes, with Ralph's aid, to Jack to get his glasses back. Finally, Jack's done with Piggy and orders the death of Piggy. This challenges the past thought of Jack having a bloodlust. So that he now doesn't have a bloodlust but his ego challenges his rational thinking. So it seems he has a bloodlust, but just has a big substantial ego.

Finally, Piggy dies and Jack goes after Ralph. Sweeping the island like a great wall he searches for his enemy. Evidently, right as he finds Ralph the smoke from the forest burning to find Ralph, signals a nearby ship into rescuing them.

As expressed, the development of Jack's ego does affect the people and place around him. Evidently Jack doesn't have a bloodlust, yet he has an ego. His ego affects everyone around him, he ends up ordering the death of Simon and Piggy. Overlooking the book, one could assign the archetype of mastermind to Jack to manifest how he shapes the island into his own mold of fire and dictatorship.