

THE



AGENCY OF THE ORPHAN

A theoretical inquiry
into the imagination behind
regressive individuation

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THE AGENCY OF THE ORPHAN

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BOOK I

THE HISTORY OF THE ORPHAN

Preface:

This study is an assessment of the inherent perversity in our aspirations to construct unique individualities amidst the complex social fabrics and cultural expectations by which we define ourselves. Over the course of these three books, we will analyze and celebrate this ambition. To do so we will look at history, psychology and ourselves through the lens of a single subject: the Orphan. Peering first into history, we unearth the collective cultural longing that the presence of the Orphan has represented over the past 200 years.

Chapter I - Practical Beginnings

What is an Orphan?

Before we begin our discussion, let us clarify precisely of whom we speak when we use the word *orphan*. It is significant for us to first elucidate that our subject exists in the realm of fiction, not reality.

We apply the word “orphan” with a lower-case “o” when discussing the *real life* circumstance of being an orphan, in contrast to the upper case “O” which we use to identify the subject of our study.

The definition of the Orphan that we are concerned with does not take place exclusively in recognizing a parentless child. To be without mother or father is a life circumstance distinguishing familial structures rather than defining the nature of individuals. Our study is of character not situation. We identify this character as Orphan by observing traits and abilities. Although many of the characters we will be discussing are in fact parentless, this status is more symbolic than essential.

Real Life orphan

However the significance of experiencing parentlessness should not be overlooked, so let us take a moment to examine what that status entails.

To be legally classified as an orphan requires the tragic but straightforward process of losing ones parents by way of abandonment or death.

“..an "orphan" is a child who has no parents because of the death or disappearance of, abandonment or desertion by, or separation or loss from both parents. An orphan is also a child whose sole or surviving parent has forever and irrevocably released him or her for adoption and emigration because that parent cannot properly care for the child..”

In the middle of the Eighteenth century the status of orphanhood was first recognized and a remedy sought. Over the next 100 years, founding hospitals, orphanages and workhouses were instated, taking advantage of the situation by providing care and purpose for these desertions. From their inception, the institutions and their population of orphans decorated the cultural fringes of society.

Un-Real Orphan

For the public at large, this distance cast a haze of unreality upon the orphan. Contemporary authors transformed the tragedy of a life without family to represent for the reader the promise of fantastic opportunity and more authentic existence. Through literature, the mythologizing of the orphan's life was reified, and the plight of the orphan gained symbolic proportions.

It is at this liminal moment that our subject became thus. The character of the Orphan grew recognizable and familiar to readers. Emblazoned in people's imaginations, the life of the orphan was understood more through fantasy than reality. Scores of narratives were spun, printed as both serial and novel, each penning an Orphan at its center. Thus the distinction between the orphan and the Orphan was born.

Chapter II – Literary Evolution

Where does the Orphan come from?

In the 18th and 19th centuries, the real-life experience of an orphan was tragic and uncertain. There were no expectations projected onto the future of the orphan's life. A child unformed and unclaimed, the Orphan was a tabula rasa: a perfect literary protagonist.

In literature the Orphans were differentiated from the true-life tragedy of abandoned and parentless children by transcending a birthright of struggle and affliction. Extricated from desperate and oppressive contexts the Orphan was isolated in a solitary spotlight.

Each novel of the Orphan begins with hardship and isolation. In "The Secret Garden" Mary Lennox's already negligent parents die and she is forced to live at Misselthwaite Manor, far from the home that she once knew. Abandoned by all other family members, Heidi is thrust into the home of her resentful and reclusive grandfather. Nearly every scenario that Oliver Twist encounters - from the workhouse to the undertaker to the den of thieves - is corruptive and cruel.

The Orphan faces rejection at every turn but perseveres to rise above. Through a combination of ingenuity, charm and good luck the Orphan uncovers a magical escape or wins the hearts of adversaries to land in unforeseen opportunities and accomplish impossible feats.

The triumphs of the Orphan are representative of unique abilities rather than circumstantial luck. It is Mary's perseverance and curiosity that reveals the garden's mystery. It is Heidi's keen perception regarding the motives of others that enables her to navigate unfavorable social scenarios. It is the pathos of Oliver's raw emotion and vulnerability that inspires the guardianship which leads him to safety and affluence.

Through distinctive and resilient personalities, the Orphan manipulates the surroundings to serve rather than abuse, to accommodate rather than hinder. In these narratives, the Orphan moves from the margin to societies center.

Orphan as Genre

The Orphan was initially devised through a variety of imaginations. Fantastical writers like J.M. Barrie, or epic romantics like Charlotte and Emily Bronte, or realists like Charles Dickens and Mark Twain depict Orphans with supernatural abilities, penetrating philosophies, or just keen intuitions that enable triumphant survival.

Peter Pan was so divorced from the construct of adult mentors that he commanded a world exclusively of children, cultivating a separatist philosophy all his own. Similarly Pollyanna made an entire town fall in love with her, transforming the lives of all those around her by preaching a philosophy of "gladness". In "Great Expectations" Pip's unpretentious and accommodating character invited the guidance of benefactors and

philanthropists to raise the bar on his unsuspecting fate. Heathcliff of “Wuthering Heights” had such a keen connection to the tumultuous passions of the nature of the moors that he experiences an unwavering and unparalleled depth of love for Catherine enabling one of the greatest romances of literary history. Jane Eyre’s stoic beliefs and cultural defiance shaped her from a plain, abused and impoverished child into such a powerful presence that she rose to enter the wealthiest society and know true love and partnership by taming the stormy spirit of her eventual husband.

These are only five examples of many more essential characters in 19th century novels. This heroic protagonist has been spotlighted in popular fiction, film and the visual arts for the past 200 years.

In Charlie Chaplin’s “the Kid” the presence of an unwanted child melts the hardened heart of Chaplin’s Tramp, introducing him to a whole new set of enterprising survival skills. Dorothy Gale is only able to discover the magical world of the Oz and Alice Pleasance the magic of Wonderland once they have lost all ability to return to their families. Arnold and Willis Jackson transcended the racial and economic boundaries of the fictional citizens of primetime television by way of losing their parents. Neither Batman nor Robin was able to find an application for their dark passions and unusual skills until each of their parents were brutally murdered. After the courageous death of his parents, Harry Potter is the only person capable of facing the dark lord of whom all wizards live in fear.

As told in novels and films, sitcoms and comics the lives of Orphans reach inhospitable extremes that are eventually resolved in exultation. Even mundane Orphan narratives are characterized by valiant protagonists who live on the margins of societal expectation. The symbolic import of the plight for all Orphans is more or less identical.

Orphan as Symbol

The particularities of each Orphan story may differ, but the heroism of every Orphan character is set in motion by a few essential characteristics. This distinct and consistent form can be identified according to a few basic attributes.

- Age: 3-17
- Negotiating Gender Identity
- Autonomous and self sufficient
- Acute sensitivity to their surroundings
- Charming & resourceful

- Inherently tragic

These attributes are the foundation for how the Orphan became a symbol of some of our most cherished cultural ideals.

Chapter III: Cultural Standard

Orphan as Icon

The evolution of the Orphan took place within the imaginations of 19th century novelists, 20th century writers and filmmakers and the collective psychoses found in the citizens of our culture at large. In the 19th century, placing the Orphan at the center of the novel symbolized the disparity between the individual and society. The popularity of this narrative construction expanded the metaphor and the Orphan came to represent the ideals and desires of the reader as well as the cultural observations of the author. In this way the Orphan was an icon.

The perpetuation of the Orphan into contemporary culture has been the result of historical repetitions and nostalgia. We find ourselves today clinging to the some of the same contradictions that typified the culture of Victorian England where the Orphan first flourished. As we aspire towards bourgeois conformism we hold fast to delusions of a separatist autonomy masquerading as heroic individualism. The Orphan stands as avatar to this quest; a collective cry for an unhindered individuality, a self of endless potential.

Orphan as Other

As a fictional and fantastical construct, the Orphan's life is an ideal, an impossible other. Like all heroic protagonists, the Orphan is a vehicle through which we experience triumphs, hardships, emotional vulnerability and radical trajectories too difficult or painful to pursue in our own lives. However, unlike other types of heroes, the image of the Orphan emerges as authentic emotion and authentic self without the requisite "heroic quest". The genuine experiences of the Orphan are legitimated by the very essence of being Orphan. In the narrative of the Orphan life pain and suffering are immediately justified and inevitably resolved.

Through an empathy with the Orphan we can experience the potential to discover our own unique strengths and estimable weaknesses. We each spend our lifetimes in pursuit for a definitive identity. But this journey can be daunting, challenging and lonely. The Orphan is not dissuaded by the alienation of loss inherent in differentiating oneself from others. The

Orphan is born of loss and transforms the void into agency. Rather than be discouraged by a desperate search, the Orphan never ceases to want.

Orphan as Desire

The Orphan is denied reciprocation of affection. The Orphan's earliest professions of love go unconsummated. It is these formative experiences that enable the characteristic strength and survival skills to qualify them as Orphans.

This experience of absolute lack can be interpreted as the essence of desire. If when we desire what we experience is the *wanting of the object* rather than the *having of it*, then the true meaning of desire is the experience of not having. Whereas most of us can only approximate this deficiency, the Orphan has the unique circumstance of knowing absolute lack.

For this reason, the Orphan is the personification of the insatiability of human desire. Because the Orphan learns to engage the world through not having, desire is transferred from the objective of goal to the engagement with pursuit.

Power of Orphan

The Orphan is able to sustain this charged and vulnerable emotional state because the Orphan does so as both child and adult simultaneously. The Orphan is vulnerable and expressive like a child, but protected and savvy like an adult. The elementary constitution of Orphanhood is this synchronicity of oppositions.

In our practical lives, we emphasize the difference between these two stages of growth. For the Orphan, they coexist in heroic accomplishment. The Orphan is the simultaneous personification of what is most powerful in adulthood and childhood.

What we hold most valuable in the child are the emblems of Orphanhood: freedom of expression, the mercurial state of growing and becoming. Likewise some of the greatest assets of the Orphan are characteristic of adulthood: independence, and the knowledge of oneself as an individual. The Orphan secures the freedoms of our lost childhoods within the domain of adult independence. To be Orphan - in other words to have an enlightened sense of individualism - begins with the autonomous child.

We all have these attributes within ourselves. However, engaging one's adult self in one's child life, or one's child self in one's adult life causes both internal and external conflict. We maintain the impossibility of Orphanhood by the distinguishing of children and adults at respective extremes of a spectrum.

Nonetheless we will not let the Orphan go. The insatiability of our desire to know the Orphan is evident through the persistence of the protagonist in culture. We are stubborn and relentless in our pursuit of Orphanhood, reinventing the story time and again in hopes to one day uncover the seemingly impenetrable mystery of the Orphan's heroism.

BOOK II

THE CASE STUDY OF THE ORPHAN

Foreward:

This study is an analysis of the process by which the Orphan moves from the cultural to the psychological. The pathos of the Orphan originated in the minds of writers as muse and was perpetuated in the imaginations of audiences as model. Although artists have created visual depictions of Orphans and countless actors have performed Orphan characters in film and theatre, the Orphan only truly comes to life in the psyches of an empathic audience.

Chapter I : Orphan Psychology

The Agency

In order to understand the psychological impact of the Orphan, we must consider the Orphan as independent of any single narrative. The unreality of the Orphan must be augmented through a removal of the Orphan from the context of the novel or film into the context of one's own imagination. When isolated from a narrative context, the Orphan is available for a more intimate relationship. In this process, one internalizes the agencies of the Orphan in an attempt to approximate these agencies into one's own life. This interiority of empathic understanding by the individual for the Orphan often intensifies into an obsession. When the

obsession affects growth and self-perception for the individual, it is said that the individual has become *host* to the agencies of the Orphan. This psychological phenomenon is termed *The Agency of the Orphan*.

Agency of Orphan : [ey-juhn-see / uhv / awr-fuhn]

Noun: a common psychological process found in adults and children alike whereby a given individual develops as *an individual* through identification with a fictional child character lacking parents or parental models.

“Once we had diagnosed her syndromes as resultant of the Agency of the Orphan, it became clear how to help her to help herself.”

Abbrev.: **A of O** (colloquial)

In its use of a fictional protagonist as the emblem of a psychological condition the A of O follows the traditions of psychoanalytic theoretical classifications like the Oedipal and Electra Complexes. However, the Agency of the Orphan is a process of active pursuit rather than circumstantial reckoning. The psychological toll of the cultural obsession with the Orphan manifests in the individual exclusively through a process of deliberate action and conscious change.

The Agency of the Orphan should be considered as a process of human development. Unlike puberty or dementia, it does not take place in a logical course of linear time. Nor is the A of O an inevitable stage of growth that will be felt by *all* people. For the millions of people who have been host to the A of O, the experience of identification with the Orphan manifests intermittently throughout an entire lifetime.

The Host

We call a person who develops an over-identification with the Orphan a host. Becoming host is a conscious and calculated developmental process that engages one's intellect and imagination. Although not always fully understood or openly admitted, this process is deliberate and methodical. Distinguishing the cognitive properties of this phenomenon is essential to drafting a comprehensive picture of the anatomy of the A-O.

The Orphan is housed within the psyche of the host through a process of adoption whereby the Orphan serves as a model of behavior for the host.

The performance or mimicking of this model behavior is the enacting of the Agency of the Orphan. The A of O is a manifestation of the agencies of the Orphan: an adaptation of the Orphan's unique abilities, a mimicry of the Orphan's power.

Immersion

Active immersion in the Agency of the Orphan is the arbiter between the real life of the host and the fictional world of the Orphan. The A of O takes place through a continuous alternation between Being and Doing. When a host internalizes Orphan – in other words when they *be* Orphan- it is as a result of *doing* Orphan. An analogy to this process would be that of an actor rehearsing a role or “getting into character” wherein: the Actor = Host and the Character = Agency. When the actor is not acting, the actor is simply herself. Once the actor begins to act, she transforms into the character she is performing. This is also the case with the Agency of the Orphan. When the Host is not internalizing the Orphan, there is no Agency.

For the most part, the A of O exists in a latent state within the mind of the host. Only during performative periods are the effect and import of the Orphan detectable. This is why the symptoms of the A of O have gone unrecognized for so long. However, we can begin a profile of the A of O through an analysis of the Orphan as a model of behavior.

The Archetype

From the perspective of cultural history, the Orphan is an icon because of its symbolic import. In the context of psychology, the Orphan is an archetype because it serves as an emulatory paragon. This is to say that the Orphan illustrates an idealized mode of behavior that can be defined, classified, patterned and emulated by the host.

The Orphan Archetype appears in 3 distinct forms: The Beguiling Orphan, The Dissident Orphan and the Piteous Orphan. Each of these has a set of traits that differentiate them from one another.

THE BEGUILING ORPHAN:

A charmer, one who knows how to manipulate her/his emotional performance for optimal interpersonal results; Charming, Adorable, Savvy, Manipulative, Calculative, A master of disguise

THE DISSIDENT ORPHAN:

The maverick, one who habitually paves her/his own path through every circumstance; Precocious, Self sufficient, An island, Courageous, Autonomous, Jaded, World weary

THE PITEOUS ORPHAN :

One whose social operations take place exclusively in the realm of genuine and heartfelt emotional experience. True pathos, raw emotional presence; Vulnerable, Tragic, Wounded, Borderline pathetic, Always almost but never quite becoming.

This triadic classification is merely a doorway into understanding the characteristics of Orphanhood. Being Orphan is an infinitely more complex endeavor.

Chapter II: Case Studies

Initial Diagnosis

It is difficult to pinpoint which specific traits or experiences affect some to be more inclined towards the Agency of the Orphan. One is not predisposed to being drawn to or influenced by the Orphan. Any individual who experiences an impasse between their child and adult selves might easily find respite in the journeys and faculties the Orphan is afforded. Attraction to the Orphan might also be triggered for persons muddled in the confusing and arduous journey towards self-discovery.

These distinctions may seem broad, but let us not forget that the Orphan is a popular mythology and that initial attractions generally require little more than a modicum of association. The significance of the Agency of the Orphan becomes clearer once the A of O is more fully engaged by the host. The experience of every individual is subjective and case sensitive. However, there does appear to be a trajectory of developmental phases that are experienced by all who have been diagnosed with the A of O.

Phase 1: Orphan as Mirror

In the first stage of identification the sense of affiliation or shared experience is felt by the host. This initial stage is the result of a subconscious empathy with the narratives associated to all Orphans

regardless of their archetypal distinction. The most commonly resonant aspects of these narratives are as follows:

- The experience of a neglect or abandonment.
- Attempts to engage in social acceptance and adaptation while simultaneously embarking on the pursuit of individualism.
- A ceaseless state of desire.

Once this preliminary alliance is felt, the attentions and attractions of the host toward the Orphan are refined through a specific Orphan character. Each Orphan character's distinct traits illustrate at least one of the triadic archetypal classifications.

Phase 2: Character Selection

The Archetypal classifications represent a clear ideal for the host to contemplate and internalize. However, the Host may not be aware of the distinction of an archetype per say. It is the persona of a specific Orphan as a vehicle that guides the Host indirectly to the archetype, acting as a substitute for the archetypal model. An example of how we categorize different Orphan characters according the triadic archetypal classifications is demonstrated in the following chart.

CLASSIFICATION OF ORPHAN CHARACTERS IN ARCHETYPAL CATEGORIES

BEGUILING

ANNIE WARBUCKS
ARNOLD JACKSON
ALICE PLEASANCE
BABE GALLANT PIG
CANDICE WHITE
ARDLAY
CINDERELLA
DAVID MECHA
DOROTHY GALE
DOLORES LOLITA
HAZE
ELOISE
ESTELLA HAVISHAM
HEIDI
JEAN BAPTISTE
GRENOUILLE
KEVIN MCALLISTER
KLEINER MUCK
LILI DAURIER
MARY LENNOX
MOWGLI
OYUKI SNOWBLOOD
PADDINGTON BEAR
PAULETTE DOLLE
PIPPI
LONGSTOCKING
POLLYANNA
WHITTIER
PEARL HARPER
PUNK BREWSTER
RHODA PENMARK
SARA CREWE
SNOW (WHITE)
SPANKY
SUNNY BAUDELAIRE
WEBSTER LONG

PITEOUS

BAMBI
HELEN BURNS
DAVID COPPERFIELD
ESTHER SUMMERSON
FRODO BAGGINS
HELEN BURNS
JAMES HENRY
TROTTER
JOSUE FONTENELE
DE PAIVA
JOAO PIXOTE
HENRIQUE
JIM GRAHAM
KLAUS BAUDELAIRE
KASPER HAUSER
LUKE SKYWALKER
OLIVER TWIST
PAIKEA APIRANA
PIGGY
PHILIP PIR RIP
MICHAEL PONYBOY
CURTIS
PRINCESS LEA
ORGANA
RALPH
SARA WAYBOURNE
SEITA TAKAHATA
SETSUKO TAKAHATA
SNOW WHITE
SATELITE
THE KID
UGLY DUCKLING
VANYA SOLTNYEV
WHITNEY MARSH
WHITE SHIRO

DISSIDENT

ANNE SHIRLEY
ADDIE LOGGINS
ANTOINE DOINEL
AYLA CROMAGNUN
ANNAKIN
SKYWALKER
BRUCE WAYNE
BLACK KURO
DICK GRAYSON
HARRY POTTER
HUCKLEBERRY FINN
HEATHCLIFF
HEATHCLIFF
ISAAC CHRONER
JANE EYRE
JACK MERRIDEW
JAMES BOND
JACK DODGER
DAWKINS
JAMES LOGAN
HOWLETT
JOHN HARPER
LYRA BELACQUA
MIETTE
MATHILDA
NATTY GANN
NICKY MORATTA
OPHELIA PRINCESS
MOANNA
PETER PAN
PETER PARKER
RYNN JACOBS
SHORTROUND
TOM SAWYER
UZAMAKI NARUTO
VIOLET BAUDELAIRE

Phase 3: Adopting the Orphan

There is a behavioral mirroring that is enacted when the Orphan character is first identified with as archetype. The interest of the host in the Orphan can sometimes be identified through a set of common behaviors like costuming, manipulations of speech pattern and accent.

Whether direct impersonation or something more subtly intimated, the influence of the Orphan is enacted as a series of imaginative choices and performative rehearsals over an indeterminate expanse of time. There is however a progression of development within the Agency of the Orphan which takes place as a consistent succession.

- Host sees reflection in Orphan experience
- Associates self to an Orphan character
- Identifies character as archetypal model
- Gradually (and subconsciously) begins to emulate this ideal

Through the medium of the chosen Orphan character, the Host attributes a mirroring dynamic between the host and a given archetype. It is not that the Host wants become aligned *with* Oliver. Although the desire may be subconscious, the host wants to become aligned with *what Oliver represents*.

Phase 4: Identifying the Archetype

What transpires when the host fully adopts a given Orphan character is a splitting in the Host's self image whereby the host becomes two persons: that which they are, and that which they will become (ie Orphanhood). To accomplish this divide, the host further deconstructs and decontextualizes the character of the Orphan.

Through this process an emphasis is placed on the virtues of the Orphan illuminating the archetypal model for the host. The specific Orphan character dissolves and the archetype remains. The host no longer associates the agencies of the given character to the goal of Orphanhood. Instead these virtues are seen independently of the character. At this point the internalization of the agency begins. When one personifies the Orphan, one seeks to locate one's inner agency; experiencing this state as both possessive - in the form of a noun- and as actuated - in the form of a verb.

Thus in the ideal transmission of the Agency of the Orphan, the host moves past the Orphan as a goal. The host mimics the model (archetype) as if

the circumstance and agencies of the Orphan character were already in place. The host does not believe in *being an Orphan*. Rather the host believes in the state of *Orphanhood*: in other words believing in the agency enabled by being Orphan.

Chapter III: The Life Span of Orphanhood

The Allocation of Childhood and Adulthood

For every host the experience of the A of O takes its own unique course of events. It is initiated, takes hold and becomes habitual at different stages in the life of any given host.

The A of O most commonly begins to germinate in the host at a young age and is subsequently adapted into adulthood. However there are known instances where the identification with Orphanhood lies dormant in an individual for years: a repressed desire, a projection onto others, a dream deferred.

The distinction between the experience of the child and that of the adult marks an interesting contrast. They are particularly poignant when considered in the context of the Agency of the Orphan: a phenomenon otherwise suited to bridge the opposition of these two spaces.

For the A of O to take full effect in the development of the self, it must address the stages of both childhood and adulthood in the life of the host. For each of these realms the A of O can mean very different things.

Child Host

When the child first feels empathy with the Orphan, the driving force behind the need belongs exclusively to the realm of childhood. Some of these needs remain in the state of childhood imagination, while others continue to develop over time into a more adult language and acting out.

When the child attaches to the Orphan as archetype, the virtues of the model appear as a mentor who's presence surpasses that of a parent. The Orphan replaces the parent as a model of self-governance. The Orphan is the first non-adult example of such autonomy. Identification with the archetype of Orphan initiates the process of individuation for the child, but sustains the child's identity within the realm of childhood.

Adult Host

Once the host's passage to adulthood is complete, similarities between the Orphan and the adult are less obvious. Because the Orphan always stays the same age, the host must eventually "outgrow" them. However, this is rarely enough cause for the host to abandon the Orphan. The Orphan remains a suitable playmate and mentor for the host into adulthood.

The confluence of child and adult traits in the Orphan's character cast the Orphan as sympathetic to a host at any age. The adult host identifies with the Orphan without evaluations of maturity or life experience. Just as the child host emulates the Orphan's maturity and self-governance, so does the adult host appreciate the freedom and purity of self that is characteristic of the Orphan. This perspective serves as a metaphor for the host to break from the oppression of the host's own internalized boundaries.

It is significant that the Orphan remains a companion for the adult, and not simply a lens to a nostalgic vision of the host's childhood. To live successfully with the A of O, the host must continue to see the Orphan as a guide. The adult host must move beyond the trappings of developmental distinctions and classifications: the split self must be reunited so that the double exposure of self and Orphan can move as one.

The Integration of Childhood and Adulthood

Over the lifespan of the host, the Agency of the Orphan is successfully integrated into identity through a concomitance of childhood and adulthood. This process is extremely gradual taking place over a series of stages.

- Stage 1: Host is established through recognition of an Orphan character
- Stage 2: Mimetic Behavior Commence
- Stage 3: Cultivation of Character: Personalities, Proclivities & Age Range
- Stage 4: Host "grows up" Through mirroring Archetype
- Stage 5: Host "grows past" Archetype
- Stage 6: Regressive Individuation

It is at the sixth stage of regressive individuation that the host fully embodies the Agency of the Orphan. This stage can only take place

once a person is acquainted with their child and adult selves; in other words, when the host is well into adulthood.

Regressive Individuation

The Agency of the Orphan is a process of individuation through a regressive passage. This passage is known as regressive individuation.

Regressive Individuation:

[ri-**gres**-iv / in-duh-vij-oo-**ey**-shuhn]

The discovery and declaration of autonomy as an adult through a reunion with one's child self

Regressive Individuation is a simple process of discovering one's unique and independent self through a reacquainting with childhood. In the context of the Agency of the Orphan, regression is not a *repetition* of one's past, it is a process of foraging forward rather than backwards. The host reacquaints themselves with the state of childhood as learned through the power of the Orphan. Just as the Orphan begins life as both child and adult *in tandem*, through the process of regressive individuation the host re-identifies themselves by engendering the simultaneity of these states.

Unfortunately there is little proof of people who have successfully realized regressive individuation. Many are still enmeshed in the discovery of it, but few get past mere superficial understandings. In its most detrimental form, the performance of regression can degenerate into satire. These performances of unenlightened caricatures cause further divergence between childhood and adulthood in the host, nullifying the positive presence of the A of O.

Regressive Synchronization

What does it mean to be both child and adult? It is a synchronizing of the freedom of expression and the continual renewal of growth (child) with the power of self-governance and self-awareness (adult). The Orphan is proof of what can be accomplished through a successful marriage of child and adult.

BOOK III

THE EXISTENCE OF THE ORPHAN

Forward

This study is a testimonial to the Orphan encounter. Over the course of this reading the Orphan has been spread before you time and again. But is the profile only growing deeper in its unreality? Does the Orphan appear now more distant, more unattainable? Is your experience substantiated by our study but still unresolved as to how to practically apply the A of O in your life? In the text that follows, we will focus on the practice of living with the A of O as a way to bring us closer to ourselves.

Helping someone who is Host to the A of O develop an awareness of their circumstance is a complex process. A person develops the means to access a most pure, unadulterated autonomous self by identifying with and mimicking the characteristics that define what is Orphan. Learning how to utilize these skills is a true harnessing of the A of O. In the following pages, we ask that you consider yourself as we follow the experiences of the Host. In this way perhaps you will learn for yourself the means to navigate the Agency of the Orphan.

Chapter I: Identification

Recognizing the A of O

The A of O begins with a direct associative response to the Orphan but quickly expands to include a multiplicity of other related subjects. Before searching inside yourself for straightforward evidence of the Orphan's presence in your psyche, look first for more subtle examples.

Perhaps you have found yourself admiring images, stories and personages without realizing their association to Orphanhood, If you have ever come upon yourself rapt with covetous desire at the likes of a child engrossed in solitary play or the careening ennui of an unrequited love, then you have experienced a displacement of your Orphan self. In the midst of a social situation, maybe you have been unable to differentiate your voice from a cacophony of voices surrounding you. Or faced with a difficult decision have you been unable to confidently access and lead with your true desires?

In our discussion about the Orphan, we have addressed its cultural history and significance, as well as considered more metaphoric manifestations. As we have seen, the cultural stronghold of the Orphan is much broader

than the story of a parentless child. To identify whether you have a personal connection to the Orphan, consider some of the other subjects we have discussed thus far. What is your relationship to the process of individuation? How do you define and experience childhood and adulthood? Are they in harmony or opposition? Do you believe in the possibility of an absolute and unspoiled self?

Diagnosing the A of O

Each of us discovers the significance of Orphan in our own way. If you look with an open mind, you will see the overabundance and superfluity with which the power of the Orphan is resonant in your everyday life.

Questionnaire

Answer the following series of questions to evaluate how the Agency of the Orphan affects you,

(see questionnaire online at
www.agencyoforphan.com/activities/diagnosis)

Chapter II: Integration

Endeavor to Doubt

We cannot avoid the inevitability of doubt on our journey through the A of O. As you self reflect, it may be helpful to distinguish between the true insights versus the self-deceptions that arise in your process.

How can we integrate the attributes of such an unreal character into the very real parameters and practicalities of our everyday lives? Perhaps the Orphan should be considered to be an impossible ideal rather than an achievable goal? As we peer into the faces of Orphans are we in fact masochistically forcing a suffering upon ourselves: the unrequited desire of an impossible ideal?

Numerous contradictory forces in today's culture encourage us on the one hand to adopt identities resembling Orphanhood whilst demanding on the other hand that we seek lifestyles incompatible to such consciousnesses. We are expected to be staunchly independent but are guided through life from one emotional attachment to another. Even though most paths are already so well trodden, there still remains a pressure to pave one's own. The preciousness of children's expressiveness and vulnerability are impressed upon us as an ideal, but our integrity is

undermined when we operate without a cloyed and phlegmatic sophistication. Adaptability is held in high regard while the search for self-knowledge seems to require familiarity and consistency.

Many of us struggle with a divided self to accommodate time, place and others. We can be nostalgic for people we were in the past, and distracted by those we want to become. Why are we unable to see all these as part of the same personage? We search for an absolute identity, and then undermine it with conditions. We aim to know our most "true" selves. But what is a truth that can be replaced when variables shift?

These voices of dissent introduce a dangerous degree of judgment and moral assessment into our discussion. Linger too long on the rights and wrongs of your experience with the A of O focuses comprehension within the parameters of success or failure. The Agency of the Orphan is anathema to evaluation. The Orphan is the simultaneity of oppositions: existing as both fixed and mutable, adult and child, assimilated and apart.

The Orphan is an ideal, but a true engagement with the A of O is not without degrees of accomplishment. The fact that we can conjure and attach to the Orphan suggests a set of tools that we already embody. You must learn how to identify and utilize these tools. You must learn about your A of O in order to drown out the sanctimonious voices with the lighthearted touch of a self-governing child.

Aspire to Accept

Understanding precisely how the Orphan integrates into our lives requires a consideration of whether the Orphan remains in the realm of fantasy or is actualized through the process of the A of O. The Orphan was begat as an impossible daydream and can just as easily be reinforced to remain as such. Our focus here is to view the Orphan as a practical support for moving forward in our own lives.

The host embodies the A of O through the pursuit of the Orphan as an ideal. In the stage of regressive individuation, the ideal dissolves and is integrated into the psyche of the self. This is not the result of possessing the Orphan. It is the result of possessing the *pursuit*. We must reckon with the ideal, removing its unreality by shifting our focus onto ourselves through the process (agencies) in which we are engaged.

The goal of *Orphanhood* is to exist in the world as a whole and complete self. The *Orphan* travels on a path that belongs wholly and truly to the

Orphan. As a being unattached, possession for the Orphan does not manifest in the physical world. Possession is a state of *knowing* rather than of *having*, a possession of self rather than of other.

Chapter III: Liberation

Believing Orphan

Believing in the *Orphan* means believing in an empowered and independent self. When we discuss characteristics that are admirable, or symbolic of strength, we focus on qualities that enable independence and freedom. When we recognize these characteristics in the Orphan aren't we in truth recognizing our own power?

To be Orphan is to be self-governing, teetering indefinitely on the threshold between the state of the child and that of the adult. When you embrace the Agency of the Orphan, you develop an acute awareness of yourself whereby you see your life as a continuum through which the passage of time takes place as simultaneity of presence, with child and adult as one.

You must know your child and adult selves though the intelligence afforded by each respective stage of life. When an adult sympathizes with the behavior of a child, what transpires is merely a translation of childish activity into the language of adulthood. Likewise when we recognize maturity or precociousness in children, it is often attributed to a parroting of the older people around them.

Only the mind of a child understands the complex and intelligent logic of their behavior. Adults in turn have their own dynamic logic and reasoning which does not apply to the experiences of a child. For each to best articulate, adults and children must speak for themselves. When both are allowed to self-represent perfect harmonic polyphony is achieved.

Enlightening Orphan

Some have remarked on similarities between Orphan and Buddha. It should be noted however that the Agency of the Orphan takes a slightly different path toward inner awakenings. To embody the A of O is not to overcome desire and craving, aversion and delusion. As our beloved protagonist, the Orphan is both object and subject. We desire Orphan, but the Orphan is a constant state of want. In essence what we want by wanting Orphan *is the undeterred state of wanting*. Unlike the Buddha,

the Orphan does not cease to suffer. Rather, The Orphan IS suffering. The Orphan is desire.

To live as Orphan is to live vibrantly within the limitations of humanness: to be failed and lacking, lost and wandering, yearning and insatiable. The Orphan is a discordant hero whose pitch will neither tune to, nor be drowned out by the symphonic cacophony that is all around us.

The enlightenment achieved through Orphanhood will not be a passage to an altered state or another dimension. The enlightenment of the Orphan is a full immersion into the shallow waters as well as the depths of the human soul.

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