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Normal as a Construct in John Wyndham's *The Chrysalids*

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Letter of Recommendation

Santosh Chalise has completed his dissertation entitled “Normal as a Construct in John Wyndham's *The Chrysalids*” under my supervision. He carried out his research from 2074/02/15 to 2074/12/26 B.S. I hereby recommend his thesis be submitted for viva voce.

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Letter of Approval

This dissertation entitled “Normal as a Construct in John Wyndham's *The Chrysalids*” submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University by Santosh Chalise has been approved by the undersigned members of the research committee.

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Abstract

*This thesis is a study of a network of institutional, political and ideological factors which jointly give rise to a mechanism by means of which subjects at large are made obedient, docile and submissive. In Wyndham's *The Chrysalids*, a certain group of people who take power as their inherent privilege exercises the mechanism of discursivity in order to produce a notion of normal. This idea of normalcy is subsequently utilized by them as a means to hold sway over the seemingly rebellious and nonconformist people. Here the use of Foucault's notion of discursive formations becomes indispensable methodological truth to probe the issue postulated. The notion of normalcy becomes an indispensable tool. How the fabrication of the normal ultimately turns out to be a means to establish a sort of control over reluctant people who want to withhold their consent to the ruler. In the text, David, who was a rebellious and nonconformist, undergoes several experiences. The whole lot of experiences makes him and his groups realize that their wellbeing is at risk. David met Sophie and discovers that her six toes made her different from normal people and prone to punishment.*

Keywords: power, prejudice, heroism, control, deviation, normalcy discourse

Normal as a Construct in John Wyndham's *The Chrysalids*

The concept of the normal appears to be entirely problematical in John Wyndham's novel, *The Chrysalids*. The so-called definition of the normal, which the ruling class imposes on the ruled, is strategic in intention. It is actually manufactured in such a way that it favors the goal of the ruling elite and weigh heavily on the ruled. When the ruled are in the state of ignorance and illiteracy, they can be fooled around easily. To fool them around, those who are in power can concoct any workable notion of what is normal. The ruling class of people goes on changing the idea of the normal so that they could use this concept to prolong their rule and avert the possibility of revolt from the side of the ruled. They are bent on robbing the free and imaginative power of the ruled. They think their rule can be maintained by keeping the ruled in the condition of utter illiteracy and superstition. This assumption and practice on the part of the ruler goes on creating havoc, disorder and anarchy. Initially, the ruled are unable to know the politics of normalcy. Over time, they see through the mechanism and strategy of the ruler.

The relationship between the ruler and ruled is formidably problematical. The notion of the normal appears to be a construct. This conception of the normalcy paves the way for the continuity of the survival of shipwrecked and displaced. David and the group of telepaths are all detached from the Waknuk society because of their abnormal qualities. Having one more finger than the usual number of fingers in one's hand is a symptom of abnormality. Having a flat-shaped nose is another deviant norm which has to be frowned upon by anybody who is in support of status quo. Their society sees their ability as a threat and as a departure from the norm. When the

society finds out, it forces them to leave. It portrays explicitly how fear and keen sense of controlling frightening atmosphere give rise to the notion of normalcy.

Here the concept of the normal is the product of the genuine requirement of people who work hard to come out of the chaos and anarchy of the post-apocalyptic period. The agrarian folk are technologically backward and beset by fear and prejudice, obey a strict interpretation of the *Old Testament*. They are bent on removing all crop and animal mutations. Stern directives hang on their walls. Humans made in God's image live in communities throughout Labrador, and deviations from the norm are ritualistically purified or exiled beyond border. Many characters in *The Chrysalids* are unable to accept each other's views and beliefs.

Joseph Storm would destroy all sorts of departures because he feels they are demons not created by God. He is even willing to turn against his own children. The Sealand lady looks down on people who are not telepaths. She excludes them by labeling them as inferior. Lastly, the Fringes believe the Waknuk people are arrogant, and are intolerant of anybody who is normal. Every group in the Chrysalids has reasoning about why they are better than another group. In this way, they create intolerance and their own definition of otherness.

David and the group of telepaths are all separated from the Waknuk society because of their abnormal qualities. Their society sees their ability as a threat and as a departure from the norm, and eventually, when the society finds out, it forces them to leave. Isolation is related to intolerance because intolerance leads to persecution. In other words, isolation of characters does not fit the norm. Sophie has to be kept secret from the Waknuk society because they would exile her if she were found out. Every person with a genetic change is considered an outcast in Waknuk society.

Deviations in David's society are closely watched because they are considered the expression of the Devil in humans, plants, and animals. However, there is also much dispute over which deviations require purification. The government of Rigo provides guidelines on recognized species of plants and animals. There is still much dispute due to fear and intolerance surrounding any abnormality. Anarchic society enters the prolonged period of stability and growth if no norm and notion is cultivated. The norm and notion of the normal as a construct paves the way for the smooth and undisrupted continuity of human existence in the post-apocalyptic scenario. The normal is glorified as a construct.

The crisis in consolation is described and the growing doubt of religious metaphysics is praised. The permanent solution to the growing crisis is also pointed out. The issues his characters confront are buried in the past and remain unresolved. Wyndham ends many of his novels on a note of melancholic resignation. His characters accept their past. Christopher Priest has analyzed different aspects of Wyndham's novels. Priest claims that Wyndham's *The Chrysalids* is full of issues which have direct bearing upon our present day notion of freedom, particularly individual freedom. In *Enlightenment and Evolution*, the genuine views about unique characteristics of Wyndham's novel are expressed:

As Wyndham's novel progresses, more characters enter the war, paralleling the alliances that both the US/allies and the USSR gained as the Cold War tensions built. The undoing of the novel's antagonist, Joseph Storm, is due to his rigidity and unwillingness to embrace differences; this highlights Wyndham's thoughts that both sides in the Cold War should embrace each other despite their different governing systems. (Priest 10)

Wyndham's art of character portrayal is directed by his genuine concern for the human status of clones. He presents himself as an activist in this direction. According to Wyndham, such an inhuman treatment is not abolished. It can block or restrict the entire creative and innovative potentiality of human beings.

The mode of analysis is strictly consequential. The unique thematic issue of the writer is noticeably present in the text. In the review entitled "The Chrisalids-Review" a concise view regarding the chosen text is presented as follows:

Physical deviations are easy to spot – an extra finger, long arms and so on. But David deviates in a way that people can't see with the eye: he can communicate over long distances, with his mind. He's one of a group with the same curse, or gift. As he grows, it becomes increasingly hard for the group to hide their deviation – and discovery can only end in one way. (Labrow 1)

The impact of physical deviation on the collective psyche of people is dramatized in this novel. The power of rational consciousness comes into being with the sole intention of putting an end to all the discomforts of life. Fantasy is the bedrock of this novel. It can be concluded that the genetic engineering has nothing to do with the collective ambition of human beings at large.

The variegated range of Wyndham's narrative oeuvre is doubtless startling. In a journal article, "A Very Primitive Matter": John Wyndham on Catastrophe and Survival", Miles Link tries to bring into light the hidden narrative treasure from the text's underground of obscurity. This view on the hidden narrative potentiality is explicitly mentioned in the following extract:

Wyndham himself would hardly have been surprised at his continued relevance. Indeed, his body of imaginative fiction argues that our

reactions to disaster should be guided by the evolutionary truths imposed by nature itself, however obscured those truths have become by everyday life. Wyndham's speculations drew deeply from a tradition of British adventure literature and its accompanying preoccupation. (Link 1)

Wyndham writes in the aftermath of a cataclysmic world war. He tried his pen in the context of a worsening threat of nuclear death and social collapse. He consciously placed this state of affairs in tension with the tranquil life of affluence. Wyndham offers work rich in symbolic potential.

In an article, "The Blind Logic of Plants: Enlightenment and Evolution in John Wyndham's *The Chrysalides*", Adam Stock has looked into the underlying core essence of Wyndham's fictions. He is determined to expose the conscious choice of mystified content of his fictions. The role of conscious choice and its effectivity in the promotion of individuality is revealed here:

Wyndham reached beyond the traditional fan base into the cultural mainstream as few of writers of his generation ever did. The popularity of Wyndham's walking carnivorous plants persists to this day, through the novel itself and through numerous translations and adaptations into films and television series, radio productions, and comics. One reason Wyndham was able to find such a large readership is that his postwar style was consciously influenced by H.G. Wells' early scientific romances. (Stock 33).

Wyndham's prose reads smoothly. He adapted and updated Wells' themes to engage in a sophisticated but accessible manner with contemporary concerns and social anxieties surrounding the early Cold War, the retreat of the British Empire, and the

growth of the welfare state. This vision is productive of fear of life. Life is weakened by the limited options given by the subhuman life. Fear of disruption in the longevity of survival provoked men to categorize lives into human lives and subhuman lives are really difficult to surmise.

Karla Zubrycki happens to trace the misery of mankind resulting from the collapse of a civilized society in the novel, *The Chrysalids*. In the book, *Literary Utopias: Literal Hells*, Wyndham has not very much clarified this issue. Hierarchical and exclusionary point of view is expressed here:

John Wyndham's civilized society in *The Chrysalids* is restricted to the land least affected by nuclear disaster....The societies of these four geographically rich works...resist outside influences to varying degrees, some being more "kinetic," more willing to accept change, than others. Their isolated geographies are major factors enabling them to control which changes occur. However, this control is challenged in some of the works. (Zubrycki 1)

A true utopia can never exist, for there will always be someone who finds a situation or environment unpleasant. David, his half-cousin Rosalind, and Petra flee to the Fringes. They are followed by a contingent of men from across several districts. Through Petra's strong telepathic range, they contact a more advanced society in a distant country.

Although all these critics have raised different issues in this novel, the issue of the normalcy as a construct is totally absent in their reviews and consistent commentaries. The notion of the normal as the construct fixes the continuity of survival. Their survival was already damaged by an outbreak of apocalyptic doom. The role of ethics should be raised to minimize the dread resulting from the human

bravery to go beyond the dictation of the normal. The issue of normalcy as a construct and its strategic use for the smooth continuity of human survival is increasingly new and untested issue. The use of Foucault's discursivity yields fruitful findings. Hence, it is relevant and sensible to argue that the issue of the normal as a construct is the fresh and distinctly original issue over which research can be conducted.

Mutants need to hide their true selves. They will be persecuted, banished or even killed. This results in a lack of freedom. This is a barrier for any personal diversity. To maintain equality, individualism cannot be permitted. Labrador's society prevents individuality by removing those who are different. Mutants are made infertile. They are exiled to the Badlands. This is a part of the land where deviations are much more frequent than anywhere else. People who do not fit the norm are treated poorly. They are even prosecuted or executed. There is a clear connection detectable with the Second World War. Biological deviations are banished. To avoid deviation, lots of mechanism is used in this bizarre society. The citation taken from the chosen text clarifies the issue at hand:

It must have been a self-preserving instinct which had made us keep the thing to ourselves, for we'd no active feeling of danger -- I had so little, in fact, that when Uncle Axel found me sitting behind a rick chatting apparently to myself, I made very little effort to dissemble. He may have been there a minute or more before I became aware of somebody just round the corner of my eye, and turned to see who it was. (19)

David has internalized his own abnormality. No one else can see such a practice. He already feels he is an outsider. People in his family do not know about his special ability. David feels at-risk for doing something wrong. He hesitates to reveal

something about himself that is abnormal. David dresses a wound on his hand. He exclaims he wishes he had a third hand, so he could do it himself. As a result, his father punishes him. Thus David lives in a world in which even small steps outside of the accepted boundaries of normality can make one subject to punishment. Sophie's mutation of having an extra toe on each foot demonstrates just how exacting and punishing the world of Waknuk is.

Michel Foucault's understanding of silences as an integral part of the communicative process can be utilized as a tool in this research. Foucault stresses the necessity of an astute awareness of the idea of uniform penalty which has its own pros and cons:

The idea of a uniform penalty, modulated only according to the gravity of the crime is banished. To be more precise: the use of imprisonment as a general form of punishment is never presented in these projects for specific, visible and 'telling' penalties. Imprisonment is envisaged, but as one among other penalties; it is the specific punishment for certain offences, those that infringe the liberty of individuals (such as abduction) or those that result from an abuse of liberty. (114)

There is integral part of the strategies that underlie and permeate discourses. The silence can convey many things. Silence can contain repressed rebellious sense. Or it can contain weapon against the rhetoric of fruitless engagement in debate. Truth is the property of silence. The silences fill the space between words. A seemingly harmless abnormality marks someone as inhuman. David recognizes this as wrong. He also confused because he has been brought up to believe the religious readings in the Repentances.

The frequent repetition of this injunction has a didactic tone. Sometimes this tone sounds apocalyptic. David had believed that the deviant humans are scary monsters. The text-based illustration, which is put below, illuminates formative impact of statement which is utterly biased and subjective:

It crystallized a feeling that was in all of us. I don't suppose that there was a single one of us who had not at some time made a slip or two and brought upon himself, or herself, an odd, suspicious look. A few of these looks had been warnings enough to each; it was such looks, not comprehended, but clear enough as signs of disapproval just below the verge of suspicion, that had kept us out of trouble. There had been no acknowledged, co-operative policy among us. (21)

David describes his grandfather. He alludes to the fact that he would eventually doubt "the honor-laden picture of him" (87). The rest of his family espouses. David emphasizes his breaking out of the constraints of his society.

The community of Waknuk and David's family home serves as the setting for a large portion of the narrative. David describes the solid architecture of his home. It is the first home that is built in their settlement. The Storms' home represents the solidity of the foundation of the community. It is based on religion. It derives its nourishment from the power of the genetically pure.

Norms are often viewed critically. Concepts of normality are used to exclude, stigmatize and oppress individuals on the basis of gender, sexuality, class, ethnicity, and religion. With respect to this, Helen Budd makes the following remarks:

What are the methods through which normality is conveyed and/or institutionalized? How, when and where does normalization take place in a globalized world? At the same time, norms are also an

indispensable part of society in that they are grounded in values without which a community cannot exist. Norms can also be the basis of a collective identity. What are the philosophical and social backgrounds and implications of norms as values? How do norms and values interact? (2)

Considering normality also brings to mind its opposites which are the extraordinary, the outsider, and the crisis. The non-normative, however, can sometimes become normative, such as in pop culture as well as in feminism and post-colonialism. The Steam Engines represent the power of the Old People. It serves as a way of showing how far the Waknuk people have come. The steam engines are juxtaposed to the world that David dreams of. David believes this dream city may be a world of the old people.

Foucault's marks a radical departure from previous modes of conceiving power. It cannot be easily integrated with previous ideas. Power is diffused rather than concentrated. It is embodied and enacted rather than possessed. It is discursive rather than purely coercive. It constitutes agents. It is far from being deployed by them. Foucault challenges the idea that power is wielded by people or groups by way of episodic or sovereign acts of domination or coercion, seeing it instead as dispersed and pervasive. Power is everywhere and comes from everywhere so in this sense is neither an agency nor a structure. Instead it is a kind of meta-power or regime of truth that pervades society, and which is in constant flux and negotiation. Foucault uses the term power/knowledge to signify that power is constituted through accepted forms of knowledge, scientific understanding and truth. Foucault's view on truth is disclosed in the following citation:

The monotonous figure, at once material and symbolic of the power to punish is obvious. Already under the Consulate, the Minister of the Interior had been appointed to investigate the different 'places of safety' that were already functioning and which could be used in different towns. A few years later, sums had been allocated for the construction, in keeping with the power that they were to represent and serve, of these new castles of the new civil order. (116)

Each society has its regime of truth, its general politics of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true. The mechanisms and instances enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned. The techniques and procedures place value in the possession of truth. Foucault believed in possibilities for action and resistance. David dreams a dream of Sophie being sacrificed in a Purification ceremony. This dream serves a few literary purposes. The dream is also a hyperbolic form of foreshadowing. It is reflective of how David's community will treat Sophie when she is discovered as a mutant.

David's society feels about people who fall outside of their definition of pure. David's dreams of the beautiful city and Sophie are part of David's characterization as a dreamer. He is a sensitive insightful child. His dreamer qualities also paint him as somewhat lazy. He prefers to avoid work. Any departure from the established normal standard is taken as a threat. Such an affirmation of normalcy is a trick to maintain stability and genetic purity of people living in this bizarre land:

Differences of temperament and outlook had kept them intermittently at war with one another for years. My father had been heard to sum up his opinion by declaring that if Angus had any principles they were of such infinite width as to be a menace to the rectitude of the

neighborhood; to which Angus was reputed to have replied that Joseph Storm was a flinty souled pedant, and bigoted well beyond reason. It was not, therefore, difficult for a row to blow up, and the latest one occurred over Angus' acquisition of a pair of great-horses. (24)

Waknuk is located in the northeast part of a fictitious city. However, the climate has changed. The area only has about two months of winter. Genetic mutation is the first clue of a nuclear disaster. Climate change is also alluded to. The physical land's scarring is taken as an after effect. It is seen in the Badlands. Blacklands is described by Uncle Axel.

At the core of this concept of the abnormal are the sexual monsters of the nineteenth century. These sexual monsters are the hermaphrodite. This label includes the perverse, and the masturbating child. The notion of abnormality will be developed primarily in the context of sexuality. It intended as a direct counter to the repressive hypothesis. Foucault emphasizes, "I would like to suggest a different conception of power, a different type of analysis of power, through the analysis I will be undertaking of the normalization of sexuality since the seventeenth century" (43). The norm functions positively in the domains in which it is applied. "Normalization", Foucault argues, "erupts on the scene in the nineteenth century neither as a product of the juridical institutions, nor the medical ones. It is, rather, a third element and it introduces a new "field of gradation from the normal to the abnormal" (41). Foucault launches into a history of the moral and sexual monster. He traces its genealogy back to "the early figure of the political monster—to the dual figures of the incestuous monarch" (34).

David meets the first real "Fringes" people. Unlike his expectations of them, they appear to be like normal men. David's ideas of normality and abnormality are

called into question. Uncle Axel's discussion with David provides David with a broader view of the world. Uncle Axel's exposition reveals the extent of the different tribes and their different genetic mutations. Everyone is someone else's mutant. She describes the phenomenon of Othering. In her words, it is the process humans use to determine someone. Waknuk has taken this process to an extreme. The tendency to go to the extreme can be productive as it paves the way for freedom from the bondage of conformation. The following revelation that occurs in the text elucidates how any departure from the normal is viewed as a threat to the integrity of society:

According to Ethics, mankind -- that was us, in civilized parts -- was in the process of climbing back into grace; we were following a faint and difficult trail which led up to the peaks from which we had fallen.

From the true trail branched many false trails that sometimes looked easier and more attractive; all these really led to the edges of precipices, beneath which lay the abyss of eternity. There was only one true trail, and by following it we should, with God's help and in His own good time, regain all that had been lost. (27)

David would not be able to understand the scenario of abnormality that besets him. He is unable to see how his own abilities deceive him. Uncle Axel is a catalyst for changing the way David thinks about his own abilities. His own relationship to the true image of the old people is questionable. Although David still feels isolated from the rest of his society, his friendship with Axel is one of the main supports that help him not feel so alone.

If the main function of normalism lies in its controlling the individuals, how can normalism communicate its curve-landscape? It is here where one more dominant category of normalism comes in: the category of 'limits of normality'. Both the curves

of normal distribution and of normal growth are "characterized by strong middle ranges around the averages which function as attractors for the individual subjects in order to establish the well-known 'mainstreaming' effect" (Budd 11). The greater the distance from the middle of the curve, the less normal an individual position seems to be. Somewhere normality will end and abnormality will begin. The lands portrayed are toxic. When men go too close, they usually die. Or they can be changed forever as a result. This reflects the fears to which the majority of people are prone. It reflects the bleakness of the mood. This mood depicts a world devoid of humanity. David comes into his own power. He dreams as though he has the tenacity to try. He stops his father from sacrificing an offense.

David says a few frightening things about her difference. Petra is going to change his world. Later, the strength of Petra's power is revealed. Yet it still has an fearful tone to it. Her power is a threat to the world as David knows it. He has thus far been able to hide his power. This threat is compounded by Anne's decision to marry. Alan reports Sophie's abnormality to the inspector. Politics of extermination is manifested in this extract that goes:

The night stretched out before me in a prospect of terrors, yet nothing actually happened. The sounds like creeping footsteps never brought anything into view, the tapping was no prelude to anything at all, nor were the occasional dragging noises; they were beyond explanation, but also, luckily, apparently beyond manifestation, too, and at length, in spite of them all I found my eyes blinking as I swayed on my stool. I summoned up courage and dared to move, very cautiously, across to the bed. (35)

Michael is characterized as an intelligent leader and a planner. He is one of the oldest of the telepaths. He is going to school to learn things which are beyond the reach of common people. He is opposed to Anne's marrying of Alan. When Anne kills herself, Michael is the least concerned about her death. Instead he goes on stating "One of us has been found not strong enough" (103). Joseph Storm feels slighted by the inspector who comes late. David says to the reader what Joseph has not said out loud. If this child is deviant, then Joseph will most likely have to turn his wife out of the house.

Normalism is indicated by terms like normal, normality, and normalcy and abnormal. These terms have been ubiquitous in quite a lot of discourses, both scientific and from everyday life, including media and literature, all over different cultures of the Western type for more than two centuries. Addressing this, Budd asserts:

Here we are facing a paradoxical situation: the stronger the impact of the normalistic complex appears in western cultures, the less systematic research seems to be done on this complex. Before entering into such a systematic analysis of normalism, let us make sure of its really high importance for western discursive processing. (12)

Normality does not withstand discontinuity neither in space nor in time. So consider that a longer lasting crisis would inevitably provoke discontinuities both in the life and temptation to escapism.

David dreams that Petra is the subject of a Purification ceremony. He is sentenced to be killed. Sophie's parent is willing to flee their own community for Sophie's sake. Aunt Harriet is willing to risk heresy for the sake of keeping her baby. The dream motif returns to emphasize that David's father is eager to sacrifice

everything. Sacrificial ritual is a tool to moderate the rigor of a demand of normalcy. The plight in unison with sacrificial ritual is depicted here in the citation included below:

You can see giant, distorted heads of corn growing higher than small trees; big saprophytes growing on rocks, with their roots trailing out on the wind like bunches of hair, fathoms long; in some places there are fungus colonies that you'd take at first sight for big white boulders; you can see succulents like barrels, but as big as small houses, and with spines ten feet long. There are plants which grow on the cliff-tops and send thick, green cables down a hundred feet and more into the sea.

(41)

It is a woman's duty to bear children for her husband. If she bears children that are not in the true image, it is because she has sinned. Emily Storm naively believes in this theory. She offers no sympathy to her sister Harriet. Harriet contrasts Emily's overly puritanical point of view. Harriet sees her child as a human. She is disinclined if the child fits into the true image or not. Harriet does not see herself as a woman who has sinned. Another presentation of the woman's role in Waknuk is that of a young woman's obligation to marry. David describes Rosalind's pressures to get married. Her mother has brought her several suitors. She demonstrates that she feels she must follow the societal regulations of marrying. It will endanger the telepathic community. Both Harriet's death and Anne's death by suicide emphasize the bleak prospects available for women.

The danger of Petra's power has increased. David and his community know that they are going to have to come face-to-face with their secret. David knows that his parents will not hesitate in persecuting him and his sister. He is surprised to find

out that Rosalind's mother helped her in her efforts to escape. Horses play a large part in their escape. Rosalind has taken her father's controversial great-horses. Uncle Axel warns David. He tells a story of a man he once knew, Grouth. Alan Ervin's similarity to Grouth is what gave Uncle Axel the clue that something was amiss. The persistent demand of the normalcy produces insularity. The demand of normalcy is provocative. Its far-reaching impact is narrativized here:

The suspense was aggravated by everyone's knowledge that on the last two similar occasions there had been no certificate forthcoming. My father must have been well aware -- and no doubt the inspector was aware of it, too -- that there was plenty of silent speculation whether my father would, as the law allowed, send my mother away if this occasion should turn out to be similarly unfortunate. (57)

Uncle Axel chose to murder Alan Ervin. David is found to be sleeping at multiple times. He is needed by his group. David has not been as active a planner as other members of the telepath group. Rosalind and Michael have been silent. Michael continues in his role as the level-headed leader of the group of telepaths. He takes delight in helping to direct the three's escape plan. He aims at working from the inside of the Waknuk search party. His being a part of the manhunt for the telepaths is ironic. He is a telepath himself. Michael picks up on the superior tone of the Sealand woman. The woman's voice is being translated through Petra. Michael questions who the Sealand woman is referring to. She mentions primitive people. He only thinks of the Fringes as primitive. Communication with this new person is thus expanding the group's perspective on what civilization consists in. The rigorous demand for normalcy makes the perspective shrink. It begins to have adverse effect in the psyche of people:

Government regulations made by a lot of snivelling, weak-hearted, weak-witted babblers in the East. That's what the trouble is. A lot of namby-pamby politicians, and churchmen who ought to know better, too; men who've never lived in unstable country, don't know anything about it, very likely never seen a mutant in their lives, and they sit there whittling away year after year at the laws of God, reckoning they know better. No wonder we get seasons like this sent as a warning, but do they read the warning and heed it, do they --?' He spat again. (62)

Petra is characterized primarily by her childhood naivety. She is fearful of the Fringe people. However, she is shown to be a flexible and reflective. She spends time trying to understand the bleak adult world. David and Rosalind are bringing her into. She learns that there may come a time when David would have to kill her and Rosalind to save them from the pain of being tortured like Sally and Katherine were. Her characterization is continued through her conversations with the Sealand woman. Petra begins to develop a sense of pride. She builds up a sense of arrogance around her heightened ability.

The Sealand woman is able to make contact with Rosalind and David. She asks them questions about their situation. The Sealand people call themselves the new people. They feel that they are better than other people. They have superior ability to think together and understand each other. The Sealand woman calls the Old People barbaric and savage. David finds this strange since he was brought up to respect the Old People as the True Image. The Sealand Woman tells the history of her people. The history that favors the normal relies on the rejection or extermination of the history of those who are anomalous. The skepticism tilted to discursive construct of normalcy is noticeably embedded in the following textually persuasive element:

Other people seem so dim, so half-perceived, compared with those whom one knows through their thought-shapes; and I don't suppose 'normals', who can never share their thoughts, can understand how we are so much more a part of one another. What comprehension can they have of 'thinking-together' so that two minds are able to do what one could not? And we don't have to flounder among the shortcomings of words; it is difficult for us to falsify or pretend a thought even if we want to. (65)

The effects of tribulation did not hit them as hard. When the think-together people developed, they were able to accomplish more together. Now the New People use these machines to travel. They gather other people who can form thought-shapes.

Sophie goes to check on what is happening with the organization of the Fringes' forces. When she returns she is reluctant to report to David what she has learned. He reassures her that he wants the Fringes to win. David tries to share information with Michael. This message will help him survive the battle. The Fringes forces have plans to ambush the Waknuk army on their side of the river. Michael keeps David updated. The aggressive way to wipe out the abnormal distorted the perspective of Waknuk. The mode of direct endorsement of claim that is staked in the above-cited paragraph is repeated here:

The temptation was to tell him to mind his own damned business, but I thought it more tactful in the circumstances to be placatory. I explained that my sister's pony had been attacked, and that we had answered her calls for help. He wasn't willing to take that at its face value. He looked at me steadily, and then turned to regard Sally and Katherine. (76)

The Waknuk army spots the plan. They split into two to try to trick the Fringes army. David, Rosalind, and Petra observe the battle from the cave. They watch as the Fringes forces are trapped between the two parts of the Waknuk forces. They are firing at them from either side.

Meanwhile, the Sealand woman continues to draw closer. They send reassuring thoughts to Petra. David watches as Gordon. They shoot him with an arrow, hitting and killing him. Gordon then grabs Sophie and begins to run. Instead he is shot down with arrows. The simple demand of the normal has given rise to the institutionalized forms of punishment and violence. The nexus and proximity breed issue of self-interest that is problematized in this citation:

Nothing at the moment,' Michael advised. 'If we are right about the source, then you are in two groups; Sally and Katherine in one, you, David, and Petra in the other; and the other three of us aren't involved at all. Don't do anything unusual, or you may cause them to pounce, on suspicion. If it does come to an inquiry we ought to be able to bluff it out by acting simple, as we decided. But Petra's the weak spot; she's too young to understand. If they start on her and trick her and trap her, it might end up in sterilization and the Fringes for all of us. (77)

Suddenly they all hear a strange noise. The Sealand woman announces they are coming. The army, David, and company look up to see a silver-fish-shaped object. David had seen in his dreams as a child. It is shooting a mist of glistening cobweb-like threads down onto the people. Michael is caught in the cobwebs. The Sealand woman advises him to remain calm and lie down where he is. David watches as people try to get the cobwebs off of them. But they are stuck and struggle and fall to the ground. The threads of cobweb begin to come into the cave and stick to David.

Bio power proliferates through "the actions of the State in such a way as to regulate populations at the biological level in the name of promoting the health and protecting the life of society as a whole" (Foucault 157). This protection and regulation intersects with the "disciplining of individual bodies within the context of modern societies", Foucault argues, "and the norm is the mechanism along which this intersection occurs. It circulates between the disciplinary and the regulatory" (82). While the norm still founds and legitimizes power, it does so specifically by linking disciplinary.

David Storm has a deep secret. He is capable of communicating telepathically. By appearance, David and his fellow beings are norms. They are mutants within and a potential threat to the existing order. Instinctively, they have never revealed their abilities to anyone except for David's kind and protective Uncle Axel. David's life changes forever when. At the age of ten, he meets Sophie, a girl with six toes. Her parents are terrified of her being discovered by David's intractable father. The transferred intractability of David's father and its effect in the upbringing of his children is reflected in this textual evidence which is put below:

It was run by a fellow called Grouth, and very profitably, too. He had a staff of three girls and two men, and they did as he said -- just as he said. If he'd liked to tell what he knew one of the men would have been strung up for mutiny on the high seas, and two of the girls for murder. I don't know what the others had done, but he had the lot of them cold. It was as neat a set-up for blackmail as you could find. If the men got any tips he had them. (84)

Joseph has destroyed some of his own children and relatives as blasphemies. His deformed brother, nicknamed Spider, leads a ragtag group of marauding mutants of

the Fringes. Sophie's secret is exposed. Joseph whips David until he admits where Sophie has gone. Sophie's family disappears into the Fringes.

Uncle Axel murders the callous husband. Petra's awakened and uncontrolled powers send psychic blasts. These blasts paralyze the others. They arouse suspicion and a witch hunt. They draw telepathic responses from Sealand, which sends an aircraft to rescue them. They are pursued by Joseph Storm and his troops. Only the telepathic communion is viewed in positive light by only a coterie of people. The following extract serves as a standing proof of this line of understanding:

But what's got them so agitated about us is that nothing shows. We've been living among them for nearly twenty years and they didn't suspect it. We could pass for normal anywhere. So a proclamation has been posted describing the three of you and officially classifying you as deviants. That means that you are non-human and therefore not entitled to any of the rights or protections of human society. Anyone who assists you in any way is committing a criminal act; and anyone concealing knowledge of your whereabouts is also liable to punishment. (95)

David, Petra, and Rosalind battle their way to the Fringes. David's banished uncle, Spider, captures them. Spider brutally beats David and leaves him to die. Sophie conceals David and murders the albino guarding Rosalind. The Sealander arrive. They annihilate everyone except the young telepaths. They transport to Sealand to help build the world anew.

Foucault presents the norm as playing a fundamental role in the origin, recognition, expansion and circulation of power. The norm establishes what is

normal. Techniques of normation and normalization in turn function to make normal.

With respect to this practice, Foucault remarks:

This ever-growing knowledge of the individuals made it possible to divide them up in the prison not so much according to their crimes as according to the dispositions that they revealed. The prison became a sort of permanent observatory that made it possible to distribute the varieties of vice or weakness. From 1797 the prisoners were divided into four classes: the first for those who were explicitly condemned to solitary confinement or who had committed serious offences in the prison. (126)

Within a disciplinary context the norm gets established by, for example, factory managers who determine that workers should be able to produce a product in a certain amount of time. Normal levels are cultivated. It is important to bear in mind that not all individual social norms are normalizing. Social norms act as nodal points. Power passes through and along norms. These points of intersection can either facilitate or inhibit the further circulation of power. Norms that facilitate power's circulation do not pose a problem.

The essential quality of living is change. Change is evolution. Sealand is peopled by beings who view themselves as superior. They are doomed one day to self-destruct. People must throw off the mind-forged chains of the past. They should bury fears and prejudices. They ought to be bold enough to walk as one with enlightened steps into the future. In no way, a rigorous demand of normalcy at the cost of individuality is a step towards enlightenment. The critique of normalcy serves as a basis of individuation that has some attributes which are captured in this cited portion of text:

Out of respect for Michael's warning we were travelling as quietly as we could, with our eyes and ears alert for any sign of interception. For some miles there was nothing to be heard but the steady, cushioned clumping of the great-horses' hoofs, slight creaking from the girths and panniers, and, occasionally, some small animal scuttling out of our way. After three hours or more we began to perceive uncertainly a line of deeper darkness ahead, and presently the edge of more forest solidified to loom up like a black wall. (106)

Waknuks society does not know anything about any of the other groups. They live in other parts of their lands. Their choice shows their ignorance. Waknuk's society thinks that those groups are different from them. They frown upon those differences.

The other groups speak of the people of Waknuk in exactly the same way. Those other groups from different places think that Waknuk's society is strange. Waknuk's society does not even make an attempt to gather more knowledge about those other groups. All forms of knowledge that contribute to the construction of the discourse of normalcy are emphasized. The constructive nature of truth claim and its long-lasting impact are contrasted below:

When the minds have learnt to mingle, when no thought is wholly one's own, and each has taken too much of the other ever to be entirely himself alone; when one has reached the beginning of seeing with a single eye, loving with a single heart, enjoying with a single joy; when there can be moments of identity and nothing is separate save bodies that long for one another. . . . When there is that, where is the word? There is only the inadequacy of the word that exists. (122)

Prejudice, ignorance and intolerance are present in our own society. It is impossible to get away from it. One can avoid being prejudice, intolerant and ignorant. It is still going to occur all around oneself. They can personally make a difference to the amount of prejudice, intolerance and ignorance. People should just accept other people for who they are.

By setting out what is normal, the human sciences also create the idea of abnormality or deviation. The mutants are not considered human. The humans feel like they are in competition. David and his friends have evolved from the normal human beings. The fear that the inhabitants of Labrador experience could come from the Darwinian idea that all children could be regarded as a successor species. The genetics of the protagonists might be different. They are still human beings. They are a different. They are even considered as a new species of human kind. It does not mean they should be classified as non-human. They would not. Man got his physical shape - the true image, they call it – before he even knew he was man at all. It's what happened inside, after that that made him human. He discovered he had what nothing else had, mind.

The mutants' minds differ from the minds of 'normal' human beings. They can communicate through telepathy with each other. They still have minds. They alone should classify them as human. Individualization along with the diffusion of power is the key to the creation of the normal. This individualization was to weigh very heavily throughout the history of modern penal law. It is rooted precisely here in terms of the theory of law and according to the requirements of everyday practice. It is no doubt in radical opposition to the principle of codification. It becomes evident that the codification of the offences-punishments system and the modulation of the criminal-punishment dyad go side by side. Each requires the other. Individualization

appears as the ultimate aim of a precisely adapted code. Thus there is a distinction between talking of power-in-general and of the disciplines in particular.

To sum up, the widely accepted norm and notion of normalcy are simply the manufactured norms by some institutions, both small and big, by certain body of regulated practice and by those who are in a position to influence others. There is no God-given, norm or notion; there are no predestined and providence-sanctioned values.

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