Theory of Revelativity

excerpts from the *Living Books of Paul Bowles*

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Revelativity

It is no wonder that **Hermes** the *psychopompos* or soul guide[1] is the critical guide. He may be seen as his own caduceus, the *axis mundi* connecting and identifying the above and the below: he is matanarrative incarnate. It is significant to recognize his attribute of *Trismegistos* as the very essence of the triadic initiatory process revealed in metanarrative. The transgressive quality of Hermes and the transgressive quality of ritualistic literature is provided by the triadic aspect.[2] It is a further suggestion that the creative and receptive subject (the writer and the reader) are also essentially triadic entities, in terms of abstract, interpretive, and vital consciousness, as well as in mind, soul, and body. If we understand Hermes as the messenger, then the triadic objectivity of author, text, and audience becomes his path. *Hermetic*, then, comes to refer to matter which is hidden in order to be revealed, in order initiate the common beholder. All adequate viewers are *illuminati*.

"The presentation of the essence […] is **necessarily revelatory.**"[3] Revelation is the passage between substance and shadow. It works on two separate levels. On the one hand, between the text and the author: the text has the inner capacity (language and the story form), while the author provides outer impulse (wanting to illuminate his writing). This level, once established, is autonomous, as the text is revelatory whether anyone can decipher it as such, or not. The other level is between the immanently revelatory text and the reader, whose capacity to see substance, I believe, is also immanent. This is the level of personal task and achievement, and where adequacy may be tested and its degree developed. This level may also be seen as the game, the adventure of literature. For the reader, the experience of reading is primary: "the axioms and postulates of criticism . . . have to grow out of the art it deals with."[4] N.B. Ideally, to view substance from its two accessible directions, textual reconstruction (inductive synopsis) should be complemented with ontogenesis of experience (deductive analysis). **Real textual alchemy** should be at once witnessed and participated in bringing about. In light of the results of hermeneutics, and the results of this thesis, my suggestion is that the necessary single principle of art should be that it is **live material**. The specific manifestation of literature being alive is offered in the next chapter of analysis and modelling.

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Emblematic titles – Revelativity

Insight has revealed the texture or quality of substance as it hides in shadows. Now a fusion of **insight and synopsis** is necessary to expound the meaning of the **emblematic** configuration, the unmistakable signature of Bowles. This is the **subtle head** of substance, crowning and at once representing the metanarrative subtle body. As linguistic coding was the author's passion from youth, we may believe that he did not miss the chance of ciphering the message of his long prose works. While his plots say, everything on the horizontal axis gets darker, "everything gets worse," (*Sheltering*

[1] Kerényi Károly, *Greek Mythology (Görög mitológia*), 162.
[2] See the *Etymological notes*.
[3] Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 115.
[4] Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism*, 6.

xiv) his substantive passages say, there is a vertical path into existential fulfilment. In all the novels, the emblem system is what binds the narrative and metanarrative aspects, yokes the apparent qualitative difference between destiny (shadow) and initiation (substance). It is the emblems which resolve the bad and the good news on a higher echelon, fusing cognition and perception, because the readers must make a real effort in coming up with their own solution not only to exit the story, but to exit the book not with empty hands. As the conclusion of this final analytical phase, Bowles's particular blend of unique and universal voice, his "song" will also become audible.

1. Emblem

In each novel, the textual fusion of narrative and metanarrative textual parts is headed by a structural unit which is formally distinct but essentially analogous with the main body analysed. This unit is the **system of emblems**: the head title, subtitles, book and chapter markings, and mottos. This system manifests the same play of shadow and substance as the large body in a **holographic** way: the process and meaning of the whole in presented in the part. The peak of each novels' configuration is the name, the major title. It is **a proper enigma**, a visual-mental image in which the entire complexity of shadow and substance lies concealed. The question to which the enigma is the answer lies in the minor titles. They are a **construction of pillars, configuring into a riddle**. Therefore, the "**total form**"[5] that is the whole book is **arched** by the pillars, and stabilized by the keystone, cornerstone of a single image.

The elements of emblem **hold together and seal the book of shadow and substance.** Here the help of Hermes is indispensable to open not merely hermeneutic but hermetic figures. The hard core of the emblematic figure is not easy to crack, because what it encapsulates is the **constant, static aspect of time**. Here the dynamic flow, which appears as narrativity on the horizontal temporal axis, is seen in its flawlessness: as a constant vertical pull towards an infinite convergence of meanings. This is probably as close to the source of metaphoricity as we may get. Through a particular image, an original symbol, the emblem of a complex work presents man in his unchanging status: a key ontological position. Its form carries the message itself: look into yourself, and find the core. This is not chaining or dogmatism, but an affirmation of life and an inspiration to embrace the eternal within. The peculiarity of the emblem, through the adventure of its exploration, provides the thrill of revelation, of passage which can never become boring, even if one may know the outcome. N.B. The limitation of rational consciousness is here explicit: it is not the knowing of the figure which makes it interesting, though awareness of its relevance certainly deepens the experience.

The emblem, by no means decorative, forms a third sphere beyond narrative and metanarrative, although it belongs more to the latter. Quantitatively this element is the most condensed: less than verbal expression, it is a **maximal complexity of a minimal, creative sign or symbol, providing the immediacy of depth, and the depth of immediacy**. The symbolic nature and metaphoric operation of the emblem is obvious. In this sense emblematic parts are strongly poetic. Heading the narrative body and metanarrative spirit, the enigma of the title is the face of the body both physical and sublime. It is the face, the name, the mind, which can only be reached from the text through the metanarrative initiation, the key scenes of liminal break-though. Besides the head title, Bowles also uses sub-titles in his first three novels, and mottos in the first and third. These act as emblems of the smaller textual units, and thus a metonymy takes place between the separately signed sub-books, and the whole book. This emblematic structure shows identity with the concentricity of the metanarrative structure: the smaller textual unit is a totality analogous with the larger unit, and their common centre is the head title, which is superimposed upon all sub-titles. All **titles manifest a reconciliation, a bridge between narrative and metanarrative** parts, since they can only be understood through metanarrative, but feed back into narrative: having resolved narrative injustice

[5] Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism*, 118.

through metanarrative elevation, the reader solves the enigma of the title, and is lead back into the details of the story. Therefore the titular emblem of the books is also the eye that looks into the reader as much as it looks into itself, revealing as much as concealing, and above all, manifesting the threshold. It presents not only second-grade dual fusion but first-grade triple fusion of the three metanarrative aspects.

Observed from profane narrative, the four specific head titles seem ironic, as the problematic of the first plot is exposure, of the second influence, of the third conspiracy, and of the last fear. Observed from the sacral temporality of the key passages, however, the four titles offer veritable shelter, submission, innocence, and elevation. As a hermeneutic leap of intuition is required to ascend from the narrative to the metanarrative level, the same leap is required to arrive at the title. It is therefore a hermeneutic path which leads from literal understanding, through the literary or metaphorical sense, to the personally anagogical mode of deciphering the enigma, from the existential, through the poetic, to the kerygmatic mode (see Northrop Frye, *Words with Power*) of participation. Of the three transgressive aspects of the novels, it is the title which should be appreciated as quintessentially human: all creatures of the cosmos have a life story, as well as some kind of consciousness "of the substance of life." (*Let It* 194) But none of them, as far as known, have the gift of naming. Naming one's own creatures, and naming others is a privilege, and suggests that the essence of humanity is the making of emblems: a **visual, verbal, and acoustic** presentation of the essence of the essence. It is never an abstraction, but a concentration: a productive meditation on the substance of a unit of experienced life.

The significance of the emblem is that it directly, physically resolves the still unresolved tension between narrative and metanarrative. Although we have seen their direct causal connection of a vertical-horizontal transmission, their tension remains to be superseded in real, contemporaneous vision and understanding. The emblems form an **objective bridge** over not only the literary schism, but analogically over all perceptive and cognitive schisms. With the separated aspects of narrative and metanarrative, the four stories are still mysteries. Having found the points of escape from the story, the substance of redemption from the overwhelming injustice and darkness of plot, the reader is still befuddled. Why such controversy, why cannot the triumph of the spirit completely overwrite the suffering of the body? Having reached this ground of questioning is already an achievement of consciousness. But we must still move further, and the deciphering of the emblematic element requires an even more intense effort of interpretation, with the now trained simultaneity of objectivity and subjectivity, the embracing of shadow and substance: first following the movement of the arch to reveal the riddles, and then the execution of a precise and swift gesture to unlock their answer: the enigma.

2. Riddles

The pillar system of the novels presents four riddles, fusing narrative and metanarrative in extremely compressed forms and complex content: single aphorisms, poetic expressions, and images. Sub-titles and their complementary aphorisms ask narrative questions, answerable from narrative descriptions, e.g. What is tea in the Sahara? Where is the earth's sharp edge? What is the sky? The four head-titles, on the other hand, ask metanarrative questions, answerable more from intuition, e.g. What does shelter mean? What is it that may come down? What kind of house can a spider have? Who is really above the world? These are the riddles posed by the titles, and they hold and stand as such even independently from the text. The book gives clues, but the answer must come from the well-head of the reader. To prepare the gesture of unlocking the enigma, the pillar systems, their notations and connotations, statics and dynamics should first be analysed.

Sheltering. It is illuminative that the point of the story and its title came to Bowles at once, as anagnorisis: the concept of no protection, a necessary paradox of interiority-exteriority. Insecurity and incomprehension together create the **morphic field of fear** that both Port and Kit ultimately fall prey

to. The strange word "sheltering" had fascinated him from childhood: "Down among the sheltering palms," went the song.[6] At the moment of the novel's conception, Bowles knew that "the book was going to take place in the Sahara, where there was only the sky."[7] The unpolarized Absolute, uncontainable, threatens the cohesion of consciousness and conscience, but is at once medicative. "Symbols of heaven in [the demonic divine] world tend to become associated with the inaccessible sky, and the central idea that crystallizes from it is the idea of inscrutable fate or external necessity."[8] It is this paradigmatic paradox that the meta-narrative movement, stability, and structure arises from.

The novel's pillar-structure is a **formal triadic division of narrative** into three times three parts: books, titles, mottos, plus one over-all title.[9] The book title itself is a microcosm of movement, stability, and structure. So, too, does each motto reveal the existential tension and its immanent urge to be overcome. The mottos offer a concentrated revelation of what is concealed in narrative, as the intellectual paradox provides a chance for synthesis in a dimensional leap.

Each man's destiny is personal only insofar as it may happen to resemble what is already in his memory. Eduardo Mallea

"*Good-bye," says the dying man to the mirror they hold in front of him. We 'won't be seeing each other any more.* Valéry

From a certain point onward there is no longer any turning back. That is the point that must be reached. Kafka[10]

The same movement of consciousness can be discerned in the book titles. The movement across the novel is the immanent dynamism of fulfilment. The line of title and sub-titles may well be considered an autonomous poem, even out of narrative context:

The sheltering sky

Tea in the Sahara

The earth's sharp edge

The sky

Port and Kit's relation to these notions is personalized and symbolized in their own tracks of rites.

The title ***Let It Come Down*** is the evocation of the heavy and dark sentence of the Shakespearean murderer, as the book's motto reveals the fall into the **morphic field of destruction**:

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[6] *WS*,. 275.
[7] Ibid.
[8] Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism*, 147.
[9] Unfortunately, deep linguistic analysis cannot be offered here, due to spatial limitation of the dissertation. Bowles's textual pillars (text of titles, books, mottos), however, inspire a wide-ranging analytical method: phonology, phonetics, morphology and syntax on a microscopic scale come into relevance, as well as typology, morphology, phonology, comparative cultural, philosophical, and literary observations, and etymology. My results have shown the same nuomenon, the same triadic liminal sign as on other scales. A minimal sample is presented here.
[10] See oriental koans.

BANQUO: It will be Rayne to Night.
1ST. MURD.: Let It come downe.
(*They set upon Banquo*.)
MACBETH Act III, Scene 3

Narrative lines are defined by the **pillars** (themselves liminal entities, since connecting narrative and meta-narraitve): the title, titles of the four books, and the motto. The title and the motto, discussed briefly above, is a single metonymy signifying the space of the drama: a scene of murder. The four chapters mark four stages of Dyar's transformation, a heightening of focal intensity, again as an autonomous piece of poetry:

International Zone

Fresh Meat and Roses

The Age of Monsters

Another Kind of Silence

The story of the novel may be briefly sketched, based on its pillars. In a zone of everything and nothing, carnality and beauty is power. The uninitiated (as connoted by "fresh meat") arrives at the wrong time, however, into a culmination of aggressive inhumanity in the name of "I." "Another" is the world the Dyar creates for himself with the Übermensch attitude: victory of a different kind, neither joyous nor constructive.

Spider. As seen in analysis, the narrative lines, as well as the meta-narrative content, are defined by the pillars. As already mentioned, the book's title is a synecdoche of its motto:

The likeness of those who choose other patrons than Allah is as the likeness of the spider when she taketh unto herself a house, and lo! the frailest of all houses is the spider's house, if they but knew. – THE KORAN

Similarly, as seen in analysis, are the titles of the books expounded in corresponding mottos, and the mottos expounded in corresponding narrative (and meta-narrative) cycles. Again, the sub-titles form an autonomous, poetic development of image and thought:

The Master of Wisdom

Sins Are Finished

The Hour of the Swallows

The Ascending Stairways

The resolution of the novel is clearly not in its logico-linearity. Nor is it in the historical fact that modernisation begins in Morocco (super-narrative), or in the political conspiracy cracked down upon, or in that the Stenham and Lee find each other (narrative). The meta-narrative diptych portrays

the wise Owl and the foreign Swallow[11], unified by the Spider's house of the novel. As two centres of consciousness, they are the **two superimposed sides of the same enigma or authorial persona**.

The web the spider uses is the perfect imitation of the universe: Arachné, cursed by the envious Goddess to silence and a shameful life, weaves her web to remind the viewer of the immanent **structure** of the universe. And Bowles imitates the method, to catch the mind of the reader, and illuminate it with the sixth sense of ascension.

Up Above. In the case of the fourth novel, *Up Above*, there are no words, only numbers to distinguish the books and chapters. Here it is the ratio of number and textual quality and quantity which is telling, at least as expressively as the words of the other novels. Poetry here lies in bare numbers, chapters from 1 to 32, books from ONE to SIX. The ratio of increasing numbers and decreasing content carries its own meaning: a emphasised reversal between quantity and value. This is poetry at its most concealed, removed from all mental turbulence, or rather: a secret song. The books contain a falling number of chapters, and there is a definite pattern (mystical prime numbers, on top of it): 11-11-5-3-1-1. Referring to narrative, this can mean an increase of rhythm or meter, but referring to metanarrative it can also be a certain sonic code: a song, based on a scale. In the pentatonic musical scale of the Maghreb, and indeed of all regions where agglutinative, non-colonial languages were and are spoken, the sequence presents a full scale. (The 11's can be read in two different ways, the rest is clear.) It is a proper sonic sequence, a tiny tune of ascent and descent. Superimposing the narrative and metanarrative, the quantitative and qualitative content of the numbers, a wordless song comes to life. The verbal silence of the pillar system is also highly expressive, as only a kind of cosmic beat and music of numbers can be heard. Without the metanarrative insight into of the scene of intimacy between victim and murderer, the silent song as the riddle of the novel could be misinterpreted as utterly alienated and alienating. But with that single miracle at the hidden centre of the book, the song blossoms as a mystic rose, in another world, a world more present and real than the narrative. And it blossoms in the lap of Day, in the sleeping consciousness of *bona fide*.

As for the connotation of the speaking emblem, the head title, it is of course the evangelic third temptation of Christ in the desert, which rises up, signifying the greatest challenge of the divided man: subordination, or the exclusivity of being above. As the universal or metanarrative man par excellence is not deceived by worldly duality, falling into narrative he must always undertake the role of the underdog. The ritual participant must always identify with the relative victim, but in absolute, metanarrative sense every Soto, Kain, Romulus, and Judas is also a victim. The enigma reveals an intuitive image of the **seed of sacral time** suspended only by contemplation, before it falls to bring life: bread for the mind, and wine for the spirit.

3. Enigma

From this ground of the four riddles, the final leap must be made to the single **head title of each: the enigma**. It is **both autonomous**, in its internal, total and organic balance as a complex, self-referential image, and **part of the pillar-system**, in its function as the crown of the entire process of textual treasure hunt. In this aspectual duality, the title is the metanarrative figure par excellence: at once static and dynamic. It is both illuminated and illuminating, presenting existence as immediate, and as a transition.. One example presents the perceptive **immediacy**, the second the **transformative** effect of the enigma. "The imagery whose secret order [hermeneutists] seek to discern ... is dominated from above by the apocalyptic imagery that ... turns upon the idea of reconciliation in **unity.**"[12]

Let us take another example, from an entirely different genre and era, Goya's painting from the Black Period, ***The half-hidden dog*****.** It is an example of the immanent existentialism of an **artistic enigma**. The dynamism of the picture **presents and provides** the metaphysical de-conditionment of

[11] See the Sufi poem *Conference of the Birds* (1177) by Attar of Nishapur
[12] Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 2:18.

life. At the same time, its iconic aspect presents and provides the enigmatic rendition of essence. The space, time, and narrative conditions of the picture fall into oblivion, when such bare essence is half-revealed. But as the substance of revelations is non-quantitative, the essence of the picture, the dog is there. This essence is a creature and a creation that is at once within and beyond its context. This victory of existence, when being both subject and object of creation reveals the macro-mezzo- and microcosmic centre, the indescribable ontological essence. "We do not know what it means, but its pathos moves us on a level below narrative."[13] Here is the problem of interpretation: how is the metaphysical enigma level related to the narrative level? Paradox: a road which leads to homecoming. Goya's painting is par excellence existentialist, provoking the paradox of life to a heightened intuition of beauty and truth. Such are the works of Paul Bowles. In his novels, the picture resolution of his particular half-concealed or half-revealed dog makes it possible to observe how the concealment and revelation of the enigma works. N.B. It is curious that the criticism of fine arts does not, for it cannot misinterpret its object so hopelessly and shamelessly as does literary criticism. The reason for this lies probably in the fact of the immediacy of the image, whereas the written, no longer spoken word can be more easily manipulated by mediation.

There is an immanent metaphoric **extension** in the configured sum of shadows and substance. The transformative force of the book is revealed in this final figure. The key metanarrative scenes are directly evoked by the titles: it is the substance of these scenes which transforms their apparent narrative reference. What is to be transformed is, respectively, the threat of the unknown, the cascade of doom, the trap of conspiracy, and the illusion of power. So the enigma as such stands for transformation as the solution of the human paradigm of autonomy, extension, and organism. Enigma is solution to the riddles, riddles are the solution to the novels.

To observe the transition between riddle and enigma, to go back to the original cultic function of the emblem, let us observe the archaic riddle historicised in Greek mythology is: What is four in the morning, two at noon, three in the evening? Oidipus's superficial answer is **man in his three linear, temporally quantitative stages of age**[14]. The Greek solution of the riddle projects profane man in his triadic temporal totality. It is ironic that the metaphorically clubfooted protagonist projects his wish for normal legs into the solution. Oedipus obviously sees the world through his deformation, and this is precisely why he fails to understand the riddle of universal man. N.B. In the ideal language of the riddle, the word for *man* means both man and woman. This answer, however, seems to have no metanarrative connotation, as the riddle is exhausted in the narrative, temporal transformation. This could be the reason why the Sphinx dies: her full meaning dies. But the question conceals in numbers much more than lies in the Greek answer: a different paradigm, a different mode of existence. As if the riddle itself presented a different temporal, existential scale from the deformed, murderous, incestuous, self-blinding tragic Oedipal age.

The image of the mythical figure of the **Sphinx**, the original and par excellence enigma reveals the answer. This creature is the visual embodiment of a transformation not primarily temporal, but essential. The difference is paradigmatic. The creature presents a contemporaneity of **three different modes of vertical, qualitative existence**: stasis, movement, and manifestation, in another terminology: body, spirit, and mind, as also narrative, metanarrative, and emblem.[15] The ritual order, however, is contrary to apparent biological evolution. The East-ward gaze glorifies the head, the face venerates the bust, the breasts feed the lion. The unity of the three complete modes is a fulfilment of the human predicament. This is also the decipherment of the four-two-three number code of the riddle. Therefore the answer is: this creature is cosmic or sacral man. N.B. The partiality of the English word

[13] Robert Hughes, *Goya*, 382.
[14] Kerényi Károly, *Greek Mythology (Görög mitológia),* 248-250.
[15] See the Hermetic double triad coded in the Sphinx.

man here is in the way of seamlessness again. In the solution, the transforming Sphinx becomes a **human transformer of profane time into sacral time, individual man into universal man**. The experience of the puzzling creature is timeless: seen once, the intrigue remains open; understood once: the contemplation remains open. As par excellence initiatory tool, the Sphinx operates the **first-grade triple fusion of transgression.** At this point the suggestion arises that the universal enigma, as well as the individual answer provided for it, are always ritual presentations of man, in one existential mode or other. Oedipal man is temporal (narrative) man, the Sphinx is universal (metanarrative) man.

While the practical function of the pillars is to hold together the textual structure, the ritualistic function of the enigma is to yoke together the reader's dual mental-emotional sensibility in the immediacy of image: the enigma is, more than any literary element, a mirror of the text, and a mirror to the reader. The image here is both intellectual and aesthetic, and neither: more an archetypal presentation of an absolutely contemporaneous experience.

The head emblem, as the **ritual stamp** achieves this in the most condensed expression of the singular message of the novel. It provides a strong first impression of an exposed sense, a world of potentiality. In retrospective, once the book has been eaten, the meaning of the enigma becomes the fulfilment of the initial potentiality. All of Bowles's enigmas manifest a particular human mode of existence, answering directly the riddle of the title-system.

The Sheltering Sky as enigma implies that the sky, as the containing sphere of a common human consciousness, is both within and beyond this world. It is the par excellence human threshold of no quantitative attribute, sometimes revealed, sometimes concealed, providing focal points of orientation as dynamic sources. Thus the initial suggestion of the enigma is the **metanarrative sphere** of the human world. Rhythmically, tonally, even visually the title draws a liminal curve: the mental image of perspective curvature implies the sign of union between man and cosmos. Thus the dual aspect of narrative-metanarrative division is transformed into a bond, and the translucent spheres of earth and text ultimately appear as the **space of human-cosmic *communitas***.[16]

Let It Come Down as enigma institutes a frog's perspective that is at once a relation to one's own dominant aspect, and to an exterior judgment. The submissive disposition is potentially both self-constructive and self-destructive: sunlight and rain, as blessing and washing is invited just as wrath and plague is. Submission to benevolent sacrality brings illumination, while submission to disorder brings terror. The enigma suggests not so much But at this point of insight, faced with the vertical choice of human existence, no sane participant will chose the curse. The question suggested by the title is: how to transform the blessing into life, narrative matter? The **process of transformation**, according to the enigma, begins in the higher realm of consciousness, and turns gradually into thicker substance. The rhythm, tone, and sight of the title suggests an increase of a matter, not directly vertical but **falling in a spiral**, just as the message of the book falls into place through a gradual metanarrative process.

The Spider's House as enigma is a paradox of objective images, as the intrigue of the natural spider web and the confinement of a profane block are juxtaposed. The result is a Donnean metaphysical conceit, which serves as physical-rational trap, at the same time offering a metanarrative escape for the mind and the spirit. The image is more challenging for contemplation than a labyrinth, as it superimposes the recognition of body as house upon the monotony of horizontal circumambulation. There simply is no objective house of the spider. The emblem brings about a metanoia of perspective: the mental recognition of the textual and physical body as the contemporaneous containment of a complete world. In terms of ritualism, the **body as the space of sacral time** is revealed by the enigma. The novel, as man, becomes not only representative but presentative of this type of space.

[16] See also the *Etymological notes*.

Up Above the World is the most complex title in ritual process. The spatial descriptive sense of as emblem may be seen as the bird's eye counterpoint of *Let It Come Down*, as the same vertical paternoster is presented. The sense of superiority in the dualistic paradigm is more deceptive than the blind submission of the frog. Certainly, the world as coexistence of narrative and metanarrative can only be fully perceived from a point beyond, above. But by the time the title recognizes itself as the only phenomenon above the book, it is already reintegrated into the world. Therefore its ritual process is not linear, but cyclical. The word *up* is single autonomous instance of break-through, as the following autonomous phrase already refers and feeds back into its the book. As *up* is elevated most extremely from the body of text, the mind lifts the spirit for an instance. In the next phase of morphogenesis, however, already in narrative time, *up* cannot exist without reference. The enigma projects the first phase of creation not as a distant past but as immanent future: a **vertical image of time** is intuited. In terms of gradual transformation within the title, the rhythm, tone, and image suggests three phases: *up* is the break-through, *above* is the relative metanarrative, and *the world* is the nominal dimension where the revealed capacity of time may be realized and fulfilled in verb as both word and action. Bowles manages to turn anagogy upside-down and outside-in. This is truly apocalyptic imagery.

The four titles together form a new enigmatic unity, presenting a **cycle of a process, a cross of perspective, and two distinct points of consciousness**: the inner perceptive centre of the reader, and the outer creative centre of the author. This ritual stamp on the four novels is neither arbitrary, nor coincidental. It is the timeless sign of **originality**. At this point we can no longer talk about the message of a work, but about momentum, where „imitation and representation are not merely a repetition, a copy, but knowledge of the essence … a "bringing forth."[17]

[17] Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 114.