

THE TIME-RESISTANT SYNTAX OF HUMAN RITUAL AND MYTH

Chris Knight

ON (hard/loud signals)

Seclusion

Eclipse

Thunder

Noise/chaos

Rebellion

Waxing moon

Night

Death

Other world

Incest/orgiastic sex

Wet

Bleeding/raw

Non-available/taboo

Hunger/being eaten

Animal mask

Gender inversion

OFF (soft/weak signals)

Emergence

Midday sun

Silence/calm

Harmony

Surrender

Waning moon

Day

Life

This world

Marital sex

Dry

Cooked

Available

Feasting

Human identity

Biological sex

- Signals of same polarity reinforce one another
- Signals of opposite polarity cancel each other out
- Purest possible OFF ideally alternates with loudest possible ON

Workshop questions

Examine each of the following combinations. Should it happen or not? (Remember, we are dealing with idealized ritual states, not physical or social ones). Now think about any fairy story or horror film.... How closely is the syntax followed?

Seclusion and cooking

Seclusion and incest/orgiastic sex

Seclusion and midday sun

Seclusion and waxing moon

Seclusion and animal mask

Seclusion and marital sex

Animal mask and cooking

Animal mask and heterosexuality

Animal mask and thunder

Animal mask and rebellion

Thunder and cooking

Thunder and incest/orgiastic sex

Incest/orgiastic sex and cooking

Incest/orgiastic sex and being eaten

Incest/orgiastic sex and human identity

Incest/orgiastic sex and thunder

Incest/orgiastic sex and death

Death and cooking

Death and seclusion

Death and midday sun

Death and eclipse

Death and thunder

Animal mask and taboo

Thunder and human identity.....