

Symbolic Anthropology

Anthropology 456

Spring Semester 2021; 3-4 Credits

Meets: Tues & Thurs 11:00a-12:15p

Instructor: E. Ohnuki-Tierney

The course will first introduce theories about symbols, tropes, and rituals, with an emphasis on their role in political spaces. For example, the European roses deployed by the 20th century dictators (Stalin, Hitler, etc.) will be compared with cherry blossoms utilized by the Japanese military state. Examples of rituals include the bear ceremony of the Ainu (hunter—gatherer), the monkey performance of a minority group in Japan, the “festivals” of the French Revolution, the Nuremberg rally of the Nazi, & various religious rituals, with questions on the power and limitations of symbols and rituals. The students are encouraged to develop their own interests, while learning broad knowledge in theory, history and ethnography.

