Horizons of Hope in Asia
Chaired by Professor Carol Gluck

Like the rest of the contemporary world, Asia today confronts an array of challenges: environmental threats and disasters, economic inequality within and between nations, competing nationalisms, and rising political and military tensions. The panelists will discuss instances from their respective areas and perspectives when resilience and creativity prevailed over alienation and despair. Following the theme of the conference, the topic is hope: how to study it, think about it, make the most of it for the sake of a better Asian—and global—future.

Participants:

Carol Gluck is the George Sansom Professor of History at Columbia University. She is a leading historian of modern Japan with writings in modern social and cultural history, international relations, World War II, history-writing and public memory in Japan and the West. Her many publications include Japan’s Modern Myths: Ideology in the Late Meiji Period, Showa: The Japan of Hirohito, Asia in Western and World History, Words in Motion: Toward a Global Lexicon, as well as works in Japanese, including Rekishi de kangaeru, and, this year, Shiiso toshite no gendai Nihon. Forthcoming are Thinking with the Past: Japan and Modern History and Past Obsessions, World War Two in History and Memory. She is a past president of the AAS.

Jie-Hyun Lim is Professor of History at Sogang University in Seoul. He is a famed authority on transnational studies on history and memory. He writes widely on the transnational interaction of nationalism and Marxism in East Asia and Eastern Europe, transnational memory studies, and postcolonial historiography in East Asia, and his current work focuses on “victimhood nationalism.” He playfully and yet fittingly calls himself “a memory activist.”

Rwei-ren Wu is an Associate Research Fellow of the Institute of Taiwan History at Academia Sinica, Taipei. He received his Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Chicago in 2003 and has published extensively in both Chinese and Japanese on the modern political and intellectual histories of Taiwan and Japan, with emphasis on themes such as nationalism, state-formation, colonialism, postcolonial critique, and left wing movements. He is also well known as the translator of Benedict Anderson’s Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism into Chinese. He is now working on a comparative study of nationalism in Taiwan, Okinawa, and Hong Kong.

William Kelly is Professor of Anthropology and Sumitomo Professor of Japanese Studies at Yale University and is widely respected in the field of Japan anthropology. A noted authority on the social and historical anthropology of Japan, Kelly focused much of his research for two decades on regional society in Japan, based on extensive fieldwork in the Shōnai area of Yamagata Prefecture. He has also written widely on the broader dynamics of class formation in Japanese society, body and sport, and fandom and consumer culture. He is currently writing an historical ethnography (tentatively titled, The Hanshin Tigers and the Practices of Professional Baseball in Modern Japan) on professional baseball in the Kansai area.

Katherine Bowie is Professor of Anthropology at the University of Wisconsin and is the incoming President of the Association of Asian Studies. She has conducted extensive research in Thailand for more than forty years. Combining archival research with oral histories, interviews, and participant-observation, her work explores Thai peasant history, political economy, social movements, electoral politics, gender, and, most recently, research on anthropological approaches to Theravada Buddhism. Her most recent work, The Politics of Humor: The Vicissitudes of the Vessantara Jataka in Thailand, explores the history of variations