What if the “modern world”—the one we live in and has been developing for just the past 150 years—had not emerged out of the early modern world? What would our world be like?

In terms of the relationship of humans to the environment, we would probably be living in a world something like China in the 18th and 19th centuries. Professor Marks’s talk will explore these linkages among China, environmental changes and challenges, and the early modern world in ways that promises to shed new light on that historical period.

Contact: Professor Ling Zhang | Ling.Zhang.2@bc.edu

Robert B. Marks is Richard and Billie Deihl Professor of History at Whittier College in southern California where he has been teaching since receiving his Ph.D. in 1978 from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. His most recent book is China: Its Environment and History (Rowman & Littlefield, 2012). Other publications include Tigers, Rice, Silk and Silt: Environment and Economy in Late Imperial South China (1998; translated into Chinese and published by Jiangsu Renmin Chu-banshe in 2009), and The Origins of the Modern World: A Global and Ecological Narrative from the Fifteenth to the Twenty-first Century (2009). He received the Harry Nerhood Teaching Excellence Award in 2001.