



THE FIRST ZEN INSTITUTE OF AMERICA

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會協禪一第國美

Film Series

# Marco Polo's Silk Road

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Friday, November 8, 2013 7:30 – 9:00 PM

113 East 30<sup>th</sup> Street New York, NY 10016

*Marco Polo's Silk Road* is a film about the tea road (otherwise known as the “southern silk road”) which snakes through Yunnan Province into Tibet and India. This road has been traveled for over a thousand years, and is still in use. This film starts with a discussion of tea growing and harvesting and then follows a caravan of pack horses laden with tea as it travels through Yunnan province into Tibet. Isn't China modernizing with roads and railroads? In this particular setting because of the ruggedness of the mountains, the old silk road is still in use – with pack horses and cell-phone toting caravan leaders. Horses can go places where automobiles and trucks cannot go – provided that the horses can negotiate steep mountain gorges crossed by rickety bridges and cable-pulley systems. Tea is a standard drink in Zen temples, and this film provides a little bit of background on the historical transport of tea from India to China in ancient times, all driven by the profit motive and the abiding Chinese (and later Japanese) love of tea. Be forewarned: toward the end, the film touches on the Chinese/Tibetan conflict, and casts it in a decidedly pro-Chinese light. 90 Minutes.

Admission is free.

