

THE ARMENIAN CENTER AT COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
PRESENTS

Networks of Knowledge: Communication and Identity in 12th-14th Century Armenia

Lecture by Dr. Sergio La Porta

Haig and Isabel Berberian Professor of Armenian Studies
at California State University, Fresno



(Marco Polo and a caravan on the Silk Road from the 'Catalan Atlas'. Ar. 1375. Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris.)

We are accustomed to thinking of globalization as a modern phenomenon. While the worlds of late antiquity and the Middle Ages may not have enjoyed the intense and tightly connected networks that define so much of our contemporary existence, they were interconnected and in conversation with each other. In this conversation, Armenians functioned as conduits of intercultural contact, but maintained and developed a distinct linguistic and cultural identity. The routes that crossed Anatolia, from Iran to the Mediterranean and from Russia to the Middle East, are where these dynamics played out. In this talk, Dr. La Porta will present the ways Armenians participated in important vectors of trade and cultural interchange. He will then chart the development of how the Armenian monastic schools of the period formed networks that created an Armenian textual community and helped define Armenian identity in the 12th-14th centuries.

Friday, November 30th, 2012

7:00 pm

Columbia University Faculty House
64 Morningside Drive @ W 116th Street
Reception to follow