



Center for Russian & East European Studies presents

# Modern Rivers of Eurasia: Potential, Control, Change

An International Symposium in the Environmental Humanities

**Friday, February 23, 2018**

## **KEYNOTE LECTURE:** **Living on the Margins—** **Burlaki Culture and Identity** **on the Volga River**

4 - 5:30 p.m. | Humanities Center | Room 602  
Cathedral of Learning | University of Pittsburgh



Mythologized, romanticized and vilified, Russia's burlaki (barge haulers) have been a part of Russian history since the seventeenth century. Their lives were fraught with hardship and deprivation. But work on the waterway also allowed for a freedom not enjoyed by others in conventional society. The Volga River acted as an oppressor and liberator, shaping the lives of the burlaki, and contributing to the social construct of an identity that was both feared and celebrated.



**Dorothy Zeisler-Vralsted** is a Professor of International Affairs at EWU. She is also the Co-Director of the UNESCO Project on Water and Indigenous Peoples. Her research focuses on water history with publications on the historical development of major river systems and the intersection of race, class and the environment. Her most recent publication is *Rivers, Memory and Nation-Building: A History of the Volga and Mississippi Rivers* (Berghahn Books, 2014).

*For more information, visit [www.ucis.pitt.edu/rivers-symposium](http://www.ucis.pitt.edu/rivers-symposium)  
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