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## Multilayered Ecosystem of the Cultural Landscape of Onega

We participated the summer school as environmental researchers. We had to work in a team with anthropologists and art educators to study and perceive the cultural landscape of the northern village of Onezh'ye on the bank of the river Vym. Perhaps, this village is inherent in many of the usual features of any other rural landscape of northern villages in the Northeast of the European part of Russia. However, people and the things they do and have done in previous history give it a special charm and uniqueness.

We became aware that it was in these parts that Pitirim Sorokin spent his childhood. He lived on the opposite bank of the river - in the village of Turya. The surprise was caused by the fact that the shipyard, organized by entrepreneur Kozlov in the 19th century, worked on the site of the Onega. Materials for the manufacture of vessels went already Veliky Ustyug.

During our stay in Onega, we discovered an amazing multilayered picture of the life of the northern village in the moments of the change of seasons. For several days while we were living in the village, we saw and felt the green fragrant spring, cold weather, more like a winter with a strong wind and wet snow and a little hot summer.

Fluctuations of the weather did not prevent vegetation from passing through the phenological path, predetermined by its genetics. We saw how the green foliage dissolves in the trees and the floodplain meadow plants begin to vegetate and blossom.

*Willow blossoming in Onegy.  
Image: Antti Stöckell*





The natural ecosystem, architecture and people living in the village form a multi-scapular and multi-layered landscape. The axis of the natural component of the landscape is the river Vym. Around it is built the life of both the animal world and the people living in these parts.

Vegetation is quite diverse. In the vicinity of the Onega, we can see all the plant communities characteristic of the taiga: light pine forests with cranberries and blueberries in a ravine-kustranichkovom tier and green mosses and bushy cladonia in the soil cover; spruce forests with well developed undergrowth and a variety of herbaceous plants; floodplain meadows and swamps.

Despite the relatively active agricultural activities, we did not notice any serious signs of disturbances in the natural ecosystems of the rural landscape. However, a certain problem is the lack of organized

places for collecting household waste by rural villagers. They simply throw garbage into the ravine, which somewhat spoils the aesthetic qualities of the cultural landscape.

Against the background of the picturesque taiga nature, we see the authentic architecture of the northern village and the old temples built in the north-Russian (Onega) and Komi (Osla) styles. Villages are gradually emptying, because they can not stand competition with cities in connection with the more simple life of the latter. However, here we see examples of families who do not want to change the serene and free country life to urban fuss. And here they try to equip their lives in harmony with nature and God. Most of the locals are quite religious. The center of their spiritual life are the temples, where they come to worship with their whole family.

*Taiga forest in Zhiganovka. Image: Tanya Kravtsov*

