

MEMORY AND IDENTITY IN THE SYMBOLIC SPACE OF THE ISLAND

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Abstract

How does the island framework influence the peculiarities of social structure of a community and the identity of its' members? The Solovky Islands is an archipelago, located in the White Sea. It is the land where historical and ideological experiments were implemented and left the imprint on the islands' symbolic space. But the collective memory of modern islanders unlikely corresponds with the real local history of the past centuries. Moreover, they hardly incorporate the symbols, cultural and spiritual heritage into their everyday lives and rarely reflect it inside the identification process.

Key words: *Socio-cultural identity; Solovky islands, local community, symbolic production, Memory*

“The objective of judgment in the historical or literary-critical discourse... consists in transformation History into Memory: what you need to remember and in what way it should be remembered. It converts every judgment in judgment of a person that articulates it”¹.

The spirit of this article is to describe an *identity* not only as a phenomenon of human self-consciousness, but also as social, socio-cultural identity, that is continually reshaping and changing under the influence of the society. First of all it's worth depicting historical and cultural context, in which describable reality is incarnated.

What do Solovky islands represent by themselves? These are formed in a big archipelago, situated in the White Sea that is connected with the Arctic Ocean. This territory was long since considered frontier point – in geographical, political and symbolic sense. That's why the attention of many explorers and pioneers of new lands was drawn to these northern islands. Before the XV century fishermen and trappers landed on the island, but never dared to pass the whole winter on the archipelago. But after the first monks settled on Big Solovky Isle in 1429, the headlong development (from the small religious community to the flourishing monastery) started.

Two centuries later one could see the citadel and even an autonomous medieval town, not only the monastery. Since that period Solovetsky monastery was well-deserved reputed as an advanced post of Russian Empire on the Northern border. And though no serious military operations took place in this region, still two military invasions of the fortress were implemented by British fleet during the Crimea War in 1856 and by French and English units that intervened Solovky Islands after the October revolution of 1917 and took an advantage of the fact that Soviet government hasn't yet established the regime in this corner of the country.

And so we observe on the one hand - the monastery that was grounded in the middle of the XV century and, on the other hand – the citadel that protected the borders of the Russian Empire in the water area of the White Sea. However, did the ideological orientation of monastery activities really correspond with the clerical and state policy? In 1650-1660s in Moscovia a reform of church service regulations took place. The new divine service books, in which the former non-canonically inaccuracies were corrected, were sent into the large-scale monasteries and cathedrals. But Father Superior and the fraternity of Solovetsky monastery didn't accept the reform and changes and continued to serve in an old way.

In 1667, as a result of insubordination, the monastery was deprived of the patrimonial estates on the continent and in 1668 an economic blockade started. The ships were not allowed to moor to the monastery quays, and fraternity was reluctant to use its own substantial stockpiles of food and other resources. The siege lasted for eight years. Several attempts of a fortress seizure were initiated by the

tsar's Streltsy detachment, but without success. During this period revolt and split of faith in the context of Nikonian reform inside the fraternity led to the decline of the monastic discipline, spiritual atmosphere and culture on the whole.

During this period the wave of protests and resistance to the Church reform rolled over the Moskovia State. Old Believers were forced to leave their towns and villages and migrate beyond the Urals or to the North of European part of Russia and form new close-ended settlements.

As distinct from these small commonwealths and religious communities, Solovetsky monastery became a stronghold of opposition and confronted church policy not by the escape, but by taking up a defensive position. Many monks, those were not concordant with the church reforms and were seriously tortured by the siege and antagonistic environment inside the fraternity, made secret breakouts from the fortress via the ice cover of the White Sea. They took away knowledge, technologies, myths and legends, old service books and icons with them. Later they influenced the formation of Old Believers northern Pomorie communities. Till our days these communities preserved old traditions of belief and values, old singing tradition and old books.

The fraternity that still stayed in fortress was not numerous and was really emaciated. They had no spiritual leader and no integrated position concerning the problem of the reform acceptance. This situation was resolved in 1676. One day one monk got outside the monastery walls and came to the encampment of Streltsy detachment. He showed a hole in the wall thanks to which spies managed to get inside and open the gates. Thus, due to a betrayal the citadel was finally occupied by the military force. The old-belief followers were violently executed and their bodies were left on the ice cover of the bay near the monastery. All the survivors accepted the church reform and till the end of the XVII century community re-established relations inside the monastery, restored economy and the of island population. This case shows, how ruinously does geographic, economic and social isolation has exert an influence on the social atmosphere of the community.

After the visit of Peter the Great to Solovky Islands, the monastery restores its status of the biggest spiritual Center of Russia and was under the patronage of the Emperor. During the XVII-XVIII century monastery that was in sovereign's "favor", was supplied with all essential resources for the economy development, for the construction of churches and then again fell into disgrace - by State and by the Church authorities.

Despite the clerical reforms of Catherine the Great Solovetsky monastery remained a "First-class stauropegial monastery", that was not under the authority of the regional church authorities (metropolía), but subordinated to the Moscow Patriarchate directly. It retains this status to this day.

For us it is important to analyze what was the state of things in the Solovetsky monastery until the October revolution. The Monastery in the beginning of the XX century is a flourishing economy and more than 1000 novices and monks. It is a center of pilgrimage for all social strata of the population - from simple peasants, to officials, merchants and nobles. There were hotels and shops to fit any taste, stores and warehouses. There are those who toil for years on a votive and stay at the monastery year round or in one of the many hermitages. There are those who come here for only three days, to pray and see the wonders created by architectural genius and nature. Work and leisure, consumption and production are concentrated around the Solovetsky monastery, and there is no other instance on the island, which could change the course of things.

Key images and figures of the period, under the influence of which a spatial structure of livelihood was formed throughout the archipelago - are the four images of Saints-founders of the Solovetsky monastery - venerable Savvatiy and Herman (they first visit to the Island); venerable Zosima (at a time when he was spiritual leader of the community, the first buildings were erected, the community was born, and the first Church was consecrated); as well as St. Philip, under whose leadership the first stone churches, hydraulic facilities and a refectory were built.

On the other hand, the toponymy of the archipelago is full of allusions and references the influence to the Palestinian place-names mentioned in Scripture. The nonrandomness of geographical names of the mountain Golgotha (Anzer Isle), the appearance of the Mount Tabor on the Isle Big Muksalma, Mount

Sekirnoj which symbolizes the mount Olivet with the temple the Ascension on it - all of these spatial images influenced the formation of a relationship to the Solovky Islands as a special place. These interconnections automatically indicated what is permissible or not permissible in the territory.

But let's return to the historical context of the symbolic space of Solovetsky archipelago formation. In 1920, the Soviet government disbanded Solovetsky monastery and established a sovkhos (a state farm), and then, in 1922 Solovky Special Purpose Camp (SSPC) was formed. So, the first batch of prisoners landed on the island, finding themselves in the former Savvat'evo cell, built on the site where first monks lived and prayed in 1429 – 1435's.

Pioneers of the monastic community and pioneers of the camp regime found themselves in the same point of space the archipelago as fate has willed it. SSP Camp was a structure that historically preceded the GULAG, which sprawled throughout the Soviet Union and included several hundred departments. The original aim of Solovetsky Special Purpose Camp establishment was re-education of offenders and other unreliable social elements by means of geographical isolation from the society, strict discipline and labor. The key slogan of the SSPC was: "We will drive the mankind into Happiness with an iron hand".

Not long after the camp structure enveloped the Big Solovetsky Island: the main part, situated inside the walls of a fortress and several small cells around the island. Soon other islands of the archipelago were re-equipped for the camp needs. Everywhere one could see prisoners toiling over a hard work. Here and there the history of a place was flouted and territory was adapted to new inhumane purposes. Death and disease, been ignored by Tradition, infiltrated into all corners of the island. Instead of a quiet, orderly cemetery near the Church, this consecrated land was dissected by shooting ditches and nameless graves of thousands of prisoners, which died in the camp. This layer of solovetsky memory can hardly be washed away. It overlaid the monastic past, and nowadays, it remains almost at the earth's surface and affects the atmosphere in the modern Solovetsky settlement.

So, let's take a good look at this village. As of today according to the statistical data less than thousands of residents live in it. The civilian population arisen here 70 years ago, after the disbandment of the Solovky Special Purpose Camp and the Solovky Special Purpose Prison, which existed from 1937 to 1939 years. However, it was civil only on condition.

In 1939 – 1957-s a training detachment of the Northern Fleet of Soviet Union was located here². It included a variety of departments and navy schools. The famous Sea Cadet school was established on the Solovetsky Islands in the year 1942. It released many sailors and soldiers who participated in World War II, though they were still boys of 14-17 years old. After the war, the School was moved from the archipelago to Kronstadt. Gradually, after 1947, other departments of a training detachment of the northern fleet were closed one by one. At the same time in 1941-46 an Aerial strike force was basing on the neighboring island of Big Muksalma and was subsequently withdrawn to the Mainland. After the year 1956 the Garrison called "Solovetsky Islands" and the garrison of "marine aviators" was located on archipelago. Then a troop unit settled on the Island, and numerous warships occupied, the old monastic docks and marinas, that had remained idle until.

Thus, in the period between 1939 and 1991 military personnel lived on Solovetsky Islands side-by-side with local people. They started families, but few of them took roots on this land. Terms of service came to an end, and servicemen leaved for the Mainland. Once again, the dominant symbols of the era gave place to a new one: figure of Sanctity was replaced by pattern of violence of Stalin's repressions, a sign of violence was replaced by a military discipline.

In the late 1980's, during the "thaw", the community Solovky Islands has found itself outside a rigid social structure, imposed from above. The moral assessment of each of the periods cannot be extended under this article. However in this case we can see a new type of community. Let's see how it was formed.

On the basis of biographical interviews, we discovered that the ways of rooting on Solovetsky island were essentially different. Some people lived in the village since 1940s, settled, started a family, found a job. Some people came here to work for hire. Some people were seeking for salvation from the

hustle and bustle of city, a romantic adventure, new knowledge, serenity, peace and were ready to undertake to any low-skilled jobs.

Our idea is that the motives of the choice of Solovetsky Islands for permanent residence reflect the connection type, the type of ties between a human and historical, cultural and natural heritage of the archipelago. The identity of the residents of the Big Solovetsky Island has nothing to do with conformity to the ideals, conformity to the principles that are common to the members of a traditional form of community. It is, above all, a relation of a person with a Place; a Place that is, firstly, marked with its location in the gate to the Arctic region, and, secondly, the individuality of which manifests itself through a set of controversial historical events that took place on the Solovetsky archipelago since the 15th to the 20th century. "The place of memory is such that you have to be able to find it both replete and appealing. If we simply rely on what is an essence of a Place itself, then we'll find nothing essential in it. One have to take care about the places of memory, that is to revive, skimming them in your imagination"³.

However, is self-determination possible to make through an attribution to the Place from which all the symbolic content was already removed and only a sonorous name was left? Such places are called by name, not by describing in detail what you mean. A natural question arises: what for one needs to identify himself with the territory, settlement, historical place (place of memory) if it's not related to the internal needs of the individual?

In this case, we can see a paradox: people tend to identify themselves with a Place to vend oneself indeed through associating with it. To do this seemingly one needs to describe colorfully the place of interest to potential visitors, researchers. However, it's required only in case when you are "outside" an object of interest, not inside. "A common trait of majority of modern manifestations of Memorial mania is a transformation of self-concept. In a world in which alternative realities constantly enter into a conflict with each other, and in which various possible identities are put in the window, the uncertainty of identity is perhaps an inevitable byproduct. In such a situation it is quite enough reason for the "Memory" to come to the fore. One can even postulate a rule: when Identity becomes questionable, the value of Memory increases"⁴.

Then to sell image, person has to know about it all, and even more. Attracting a potential visitor, you need to use the entire arsenal of tools: to specify the ancience of buildings; to initiate listener in the nuances of unique technologies of planning and construction; pay attention to the artistic and aesthetic value of architecture and iconography; uncover the political significance of this Place in the context of the State history; draw the picture of embodied violence and cruelty, expanded on Solovetsky archipelago; to narrate the lives of saint ascetics, to tell about their difficult living conditions, about the miracles testified by monks, sailors, pilgrims and worshippers over several centuries.

However, is it really necessary to entice the visitor by all the incredible facts and legends, myths and historical evidence, if you already encounter him on the island at the moment when hundreds of kilometers have already been overcome, in order to see this Place remarkable in all respects? However, in Solovky resident's judgment, there is no need at all. A person has already landed the island to see the embodied history, incarnate culture and faith and personified memory. This situation requires the finishing touch: one is to present himself as a part of a Place, be identified with it and to merge with it completely, without carrying out anything except the ties with this very Place. That's how a blank form, a shell of real identity "I am a resident of the Solovetsky Islands" or "I am *solovchanin*" arises. According to Megill, when the memory and knowledge of history are not the focus, identity is not problematic. It is unquestionable, but it is empty.

But, alas, such an identity of the solovetsky islanders doesn't pay the desired dividends in comparison with such bright bearers of local culture, as Indians, that pose for the photos with exotic culture-lovers, demonstrate knowledge of crafts and technologies and sell local handmade products. "Anyone who tries to conduct intelligible to oneself, faces such a circumstance that Memory throws a challenge to an effort of being sensible. The loss of center, around which events and their subsequent interpretation were assembling, leads to a necessity to remember more and more"⁵. As Pierre Nora states, "it is impossible to predict what you'll have to recall. Hence comes the prohibition to destroy, the

transformation of everything into archives, undifferentiated extension of matter field and exaggerated blowing up Memory function that is associated with a sense of its' loss, and consistent strengthening of its' institutions"⁶.

So, a local resident, if he is a local culture bearer, ought at least to remember if he cannot witness simpliciter. Ought to remember, and only then - to know. "The skill of a constant remembering can be a matter of pride and a sign of horror, but in both cases the finished memory is a time intensive working process, spent on memorization. And if there is a pride of the memory, it's not a pride of the memory itself, but a pride of the work, that has been done: a hard work, often cruel, but the one, that has taken an effect. There is nothing more painful than to get it into one's head and let it stay there, but there is nothing more reliable and nothing more efficient. Memory is the most profitable of the currencies: a final effort is expended on it, and one remembers, or is forced to remember extremely long. But just when something has been remembered "forever", something changes not in a person that remembers, but in the world on the whole. Memory work, therefore, is related not even to a person, but to that has been changed as a result of the acquisition of a skill to remember"⁷.

But what is to be done with those events in history, which in fact are not stored in any personal memory? It is worth noting that with the closure of the Solovetsky monastery in the 1920's the tradition of oral narrative of the events disappeared also. The fragments of Memory were enclosed in historical folios: miracles and incredible rescues, prayerful and ascetic deeds of monks were recorded and published in the hagiographies; the history of construction of temples and significant dates - in the full the monastic chronicles; the realities of camp life - in letters, diaries and memoirs of survived prisoners. So now there are no bearers of oral history.

But who wrote these memoirs, letters and historical descriptions? Where are these people and their descendants? Modern inhabitants of the Solovetsky settlement did not inherit these legends, descriptions and stories. Seemingly, there are documents, books, materials, via which everyone can explore the history of the Place. However, even if all the sources have been already studied, will the received information be interiorized as personal memory? "...When it is a question of sameness of self-perception, Identity is nothing but a Memory. Memory that is granted not by a live testimony, but by a documented testimony, no longer convenes but agitates, no longer remembers, but fixes and after losing its' own autonomy, is acting not on its' own behalf but on behalf of the authoritative claim of History. <...> In other words, personality in the usual European sense is not that much produced by the memory, but by history, that is just what has neither the autonomy nor the duration: personality is formed by the passage of time and is defined as the thing in case of which Time, filled with concrete events has already passed"⁸.

The question is whether the people that live on territory rich in history and symbols are ready to perceive the history of a place as their personal history? When answering this question, we can better understand how do personal memory and history of the places correlate with the identity of a local resident.

As we mentioned above, on closer examination identity, formulated as "I am solovchanin" has no particular cultural, spiritual, historic content. Let's dwell at length on this point. If we talk about a spiritual component of identity, it's necessary to mention that faith and religious affiliation is of particular importance to the Solovetsky Islands. These can be seen in the historical context. Due to the fact that Solovetsky monastery maintain a resistance to nikonians reforms of the 17th century the interpretation of these events, for example, the savage reprisal of old-believers, the betrayal of the monk, that gave up the secret passage to the fortress to the Royal troops, can be diametrically opposite, depending on what kind of faith is confessed by visitors, pilgrims and locals. Thus, in the context of church reform in the second half of the 17th century, Solovetsky monastery represents a symbol of resistance and defiance of the imperial power and the spiritual center of the country.

A completely different image of Solovky occurs at the mention of religious tolerance during the camp period. Not only Orthodox metropolitans, bishops, priests, religious philosophers and thinkers were among the prisoners, but also Jews, representatives of the Catholic, Protestant and Anglican Churches. During different periods the camp authorities allowed or prohibited to hold a service in former

monastic chapels and cemeterial church. But chanting of a liturgy was not dependent on the requirements and camp restrictions - even in the forest, on the stump, under the branches of a fir tree. And a secret was carefully kept among believers from year to year. Books, church utensils were handed to each other and people of different faiths and beliefs united during the camp period to resist the destruction of tradition and the abuse of holy sites, which still were inside former monastic walls. And once again these events refer to the image of a secret opposition to the Power, which put into a practice its ideology through by force of violence.

If we appeal to an earlier period of history, we'll see that the religious identity of the ascetics of the XV-XVI centuries manifested itself first and foremost in courageous and self-sacrificing way of following the principles of Christian faith, which took the form of ascetic way of life, prayer and special interpersonal relationships within the community.

So: courage, resilience, commitment to the ideals, despite strong external influence, conservatism, resistance to changes and new trends, putting one's belief into life, despite the threat of violence and pressure of life, preservation of a spiritual core. These are the main aspects of spiritual identity, formed and registered in the historical memory of generations, in the documentary and oral testimonies. So what is typical for the historical period of domination of the religious identity? Megill precisely observed that "in some historical eras, when there was a widespread adherence to theological dogma and structures of faith, people used to believe that personal identity has really obtained cohesion and value as a part of a broader pattern of relationships. But in a world without illusions, the "soul" has no such a constitutive support. It is reduced to the worldly experience and the continuity of this experience is determined by Memory and depends on it"⁹.

Let's explore the cultural and historical aspects of identity that were formed on the archipelago since XV to the XX century. To have a clear understanding of cultural elements affecting nowadays life of the islands we have to take look at the whole region in which Solovky Islands are situated. Arkhangelsk, Murmansk oblast and Republic of Karelia have an exit to the White Sea. Marine and air communication with Murmansk region (Murmansk coast of the White Sea) is virtually non-existent. The main waterway to Solovky lies through two Karelian towns whereas air communication during mainly winter time is made through Arkhangelsk.

Before the October Revolution Archangelsk used to be the main port for delivering provision, goods and for sea transportation of pilgrims. Despite the fact that the Archipelago is situated equally far from Murmansk, Karelia and Arkhangelsk coasts the island today is attributed to the Arkhangelsk oblast. This means that for a long period of time the cultural and economic exchange existed between the Orthodox monastic culture and Pomor fishermen settlements. And monks greatly benefited from this exchange due to the fact that Pomors used to visit the Islands before the year 1429 when a monk's community was found.

In the Arctic region labor and life-support features are forming the heart of a material culture and influence crafts, architecture, culture and musical tradition. Therefore the Solovky Islands culture was influenced with prayer and spiritual heritage of Northern monasteries and with the culture of pomors. The core of this culture is laying in the tradition of northern seamanship, fishing, hunting, and various rare craftsmanship as bone craft and pearl hunting. With this mixture of different cultural knowledge monastic culture began to flourish and in the 16th century it made possible to start construction in stone.

However it is notable that later Solovky culture of economic management and the Pomor culture went parallelly rarely crossing with each other. In fact in the 19th century or perhaps earlier the Solovetsky monastery not only assimilated the experience, skills and knowledge of coastal villages but also influenced their own culture with knowledge and skills obtained as a result of centuries of activity on the archipelago. Monastery provided an education. In the 1860 first school was founded and provided a four year education for boys and voluntary monastery workers. In the 1913 school has grown larger to the working academy and now it was providing eight years education with courses not only in theology, writing and law skills but also provided wood working, electrician, builders and pottery

professions for its graduates. It was a unique project for this time and many monks who graduated this academy were welcomed in kolkhoz after abolishing the monastery in 1920.

Finally, the third aspect of the identity of the Island culture is determined by the social structure of community and indirect influence of social institutions and organizations of the archipelago. The integrity of the institutional structure in the social sphere of the Solovetsky Islands until the mid XX century is astounding. In the 15th century the first representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church came to the Island. Progressively starting from 1436, and later, when Venerable Zosima was given the right of ownership for Solovky islands and building documents by the Novgorod Archdiocese, we can observe the emergence and evolution of a small monastic into a large community. Until 1920 the archipelago didn't have any other legal actor but the monastery organization.

However, it is worth noting that the structure of the monastic subordination has been exaggerated since the XVI century. In addition to the central cloister behind the wall different cells, hermitages arose in various parts of the archipelago. These were the separate units, but subordinated, however, to the Abbot of the monastery or to the Vicar of the Patriarch in the monastery. These small entities have been inconsistent in its membership: some monks secluded themselves in remote cells, while others returned to work of penance and served "series" of divine services in the churches and chapels of the monastery. Besides that, each summer new staff (adults and youth) came to the monastery to work on the votive.

In the XVI century, an ascetic Venerable Eleazar founds a new cell on the nearby island of Anzer. Originally the arising of this cell with a strict ascetic charter was blessed by the Abbot of the monastery. However, when the major construction on the Anzer Island began and the number of inhabitants has increased dramatically, a question of the autonomy of the monastery in economic, financial administrative and even spiritual sense arose. This situation provoked a negative reaction from the main monastery situated on the Big Solovetsky Island. Monastic authorities tried to prevent the process of procurement of building materials to avoid rapid construction. As a result of such pressure, none of the cells has never completely separated from the Solovetsky monastery.

So, from the XV to XX centuries, we see the presence of *one social institution* (the Church) and *one organization* (Solovetsky Monastery). How does the situation changes later on? In 1920-1922's a state farm (sovkhoz) is organized on the islands for the short period. It employs mostly brethren of the closed down monastery. Officially the Charter is changed, but the inner tenor of life remains the same. In 1922 – 1939's *one social institute* (the penitentiary system) and *two major organizations* were presented on the archipelago. Those were SCSP (the Solovetsky Camp of Special Purpose) and SPSP (Solovetsky Prison of Special Purpose), which controlled the whole structure of labor, leisure and livelihoods, the process of the relocation of people on the archipelago and beyond.

After 1939, all units on the Islands, including the aerial strike force, subordinate to the *one social institution* (the Soviet Navy). And again an individual has to subordinate to the unified governance structure, unified command, and the charter. Local residents and military personnel thought of the Island as a special zone where food and all necessary things were always sufficient even during the years of the deficit and the best commodities were delivered to the Islands. Besides that the admittance to the archipelago was restricted to the general public as to the territory, which has the status of the borderland.

In 1961, a branch of the Arkhangelsk Agar-agar (algal) plant was established on Solovetsky Islands. From the nearby island of Zhizhgin, where the post of algal-picking was functioning, people started gradually to migrate to the Solovetsky Islands since the late 1960's. Thus, the population grew at the expense of the workers, employees of algal plant.

An absolutely different immigration wave started in 1967 when the Solovetsky branch of the Arkhangelsk regional museum was founded. This organization has become in the future an autonomous organization "Solovky State historical, architectural and natural culture preserve". Simultaneously historians, archaeologists, art historians, restorers, museum employees and workers of the archives moved to Solovetsky settlement with this organization. During summer time students came to take part in the reconstruction of the monastery complex.

Military structures were gradually disbanded and withdrawn from the archipelago. So, by the early 1990-ies the settlement gains a completely different look. The social sphere is featured by a school, a kindergarten, a museum, an algal plant and a cooperative of restorers. AS far as the Solovky Islands stopped being a restricted area, the flow of tourists flooded them in summer. In 1988 an Orthodox community was registered in Solovetsky settlement. It was an organization that has contributed a lot to the revival of the Solovetsky monastery in 1991.

During these years, in an era of changes and the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Island was flourishing and things were really zipping along here. The museum receives visitors; the restoration of the monastery started and the first brethren arose on the archipelago, the algal plant procures and processes the algae, trades and supplies raw materials to Arkhangelsk. The settlers owned a sufficient number of livestock and the livelihood was established properly. Research process, restoration, production, trade, education, tourism, spiritual sphere - all of these areas are represented in the life of the Island. However, for a short while.

In this period the diversity of social institutions was striking. The Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Defense; the Russian Orthodox Church and a municipal unit; private business and the large industrial establishment; the tourist and hospitality agency; educational and entertaining institutions – all of them represent different aspects of life and professional niches for local settlers. These social niches in turn had seriously influenced their identity. And, sometimes, it influenced even more, then the history of the place and spiritual values transmitted from the past centuries.

Since the economic crisis of 1995 year on Solovky branch of algal plant was closed. This means that the islanders have lost their jobs in the sphere of production, and the only active realm that was left was a service industry. So we can see the spreading and compressing of social structures: from abundance to scarcity. It cannot but influence the self-sentiment and self-consciousness of the people, which live on the island. And here we come to a consideration of identity in the context of personal interpretation of historical and memorable events. Some of the modern settlers shut themselves off the historical heritage of Solovky Islands, and continue living just as if nothing had happened. They continue to inhabit the houses that are built on the mass graves and the places of execution by a firing squad. At the same time, when it comes to telling the tales while selling the souvenirs, they call all their knowledge, all the historical facts and myths, that are suitable to this moment for a help. Local people derive benefit from history and then let themselves to forget it till the next opportunity.

Taking all this facts to an account, we can judge that local population is rather to have an *instrumental identity*, that hardly penetrates into their private lives or transform their self-consciousness. Here we can see such a phenomenon: declining the responsibility to maintain the cultural and historical elements of Islands' environment. People also decline the responsibility to take part in process of cultural transmission and communication, that can be easily held on this land, deep and saturated with symbols and memory. But the thing is that this memory is buried in soil or hidden in books and archives. Seemingly, one can imagine how personal emotional and conscious relation can perform a miracle and call history into being. "Moving from "history" to "memory" implies the shift from the cognition of what have or haven't taken place in the past to bringing up judgments concerning the nature of subjectivities in the present. First of all, we would need a reliable verification of the personality whereas the quality of the work done by people that are judging would be secondary, if not entirely irrelevant"¹⁰.

So we can hypothesize that identity, if it's not *instrumental* but *essential* never arises from scratch. Identity is more exactly a bond type that is formed as a result of an individual conscious and subconscious interpretation work. And the sculpting materials of this work are Place, History and personal Memory. "The movements occurring in a certain Place <...> do not have a particular subject that they face. They are directed to everybody and inquire everyone who comes to the Place. The call is a simultaneousness of everything that is moving and enabled in the place of memory: fining ourselves in some place, even mentally, we can't not to change, and this is the change that we call recollecting"¹¹. And the final subject of this sculpting and transformation is a Person himself.

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