

## LANDSCAPE-PALIMPSEST

Originally, palimpsest (gr. *palimpsēstos*) was a manuscript written on a material on which, after erasure, several layers of text were superimposed. In modern science, it is a term that describes the multi-layered and multi-temporal nature of a subject of research or experiment, in which certain content has been obliterated or concealed.

The term "palimpsest" is used in literary, historical and archaeological research, geography, memory studies, psychology, neurobiology and others. In landscape studies, it means the multi-layered nature of the landscape – symbolic and physical; it describes natural and cultural processes in layers, which are deposited in the form of readable material and non-material traces.

In archaeology, the palimpsest metaphor is used to describe the multi-layered overlapping and accumulation of cultural landscape sediments, characterised by successive stratigraphic layers. In particular, landscape archaeology uses this concept, treating the landscape as something that lasts in time and is subject to constant change. This requires the tracing of the individual actions taken in it, which make up the process of transformation of the inhabited land (Barrett, Ingold). The description of the landscape as a history of transformations of the earth's surface by man leads to the cataloguing of material changes. In this sense, the term "palimpsest" is in line with research methods referring to a chronological sequence of events and artefacts, taking into account the wider context of an environment in which various material and natural testimonies are recorded. Stratigraphy aims at the temporal ordering of traces, testimonies and monuments, from the earliest to the last.

The cultural landscape is also referred to by the discourse of memory. The palimpsest metaphor applied to the landscape of memory in this discourse is an argument for the ambiguity of the past and its readings. According to Traba, the overlapping layers of the past are a continuity enabling to understand the past and, as such, they tell the "true story of the place". The palimpsest idea allows us to maintain the memory of what has been forgotten and erased from the collective memory, proving that meanings and senses lost in the course of history cannot be completely erased. "Lost" senses penetrate into the present in allegorical form (Benjamin). Such an understanding of landscape is also referred to in the concept of "palimpsest reception of reality". (Smith).

In landscape research the palimpsest metaphor, referring to both natural (topographical) and cultural landscape, allows to assign a narrative character to it, which means that the landscape itself becomes a kind of story about previous generations that shaped it, and whose memory is inscribed in the structure of the landscape. Humans leave their traces in the landscape in the form of signs and symbols reflected in its geo-morphological shape, fauna and flora and cultural activity of humans. In the landscape understood this way, the natural meets the cultural, and each element, whether architectural or natural, acquires its meaning burdened with the past and marked with the present.

[B. F.]

### Literature:

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