Constructing urban cultural landscapes & living in the palimpsests: a case of Moscow city (Russia) distant residential areas

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1   Every city is a place, a place we live in or a place we love, a place we are willing to leave or a place we hate. That means, that any place has *multiple* functions, visions, representations, emotional ties with people. A model of *palimpsest* is a one I use hereby to consider that inevitable multiplicity.

2   The *structure* of this article is as follows. At first I study the history of the "place as palimpsest" concept, trying to single out what it could mean to geographers and social scientists. The contradiction of the idea of symbolic construction of cultural landscapes originating from the new cultural / humanistic geography and the turn to everyday life practices of people shaping the landscape (typical for critical geographies) is in the focus of the 2nd part of this paper. Finally I use an example of a cultural project I've designed in Moscow (Russia) in order to describe how this original place model and these contradictory concepts are shaped and contested in a Post-Socialist city.

Place as palimpsest

3   The term "palimpsest" originally described a medieval manuscript in which new text was written over previous text that had been erased. The word originates from the Greek "palin"+ "psaio" ("again I scrape"). What was peculiar about palimpsests was the fact that any layer didn't fully erase their predecessors, so one could always recognize the previous layers of the text written earlier (Mitin, 2010). These specific features have made a

palimpsest an important metaphor used in social sciences and the humanities to stress multiplicity of a text or phenomenon, to witness its layering and to single out some – by chance partly hidden – layers of reality.

4   The idea of palimpsest was borrowed by geographers from the theories of architecture and urban history. The original metaphor was used to describe the coexistence of material elements that originated in different historical periods in a building or an urban site. This is how A. Baglajewski describes Gdansk city in Poland:

> "Textual Gdansk – to say it from the very beginning – is a place-palimpsest of mixed & hidden civilization and material cultural layers, a specific melting pot of traces, fragments, elements that may be pulled out of the recent new layers and read in different languages [...]. Gdansk is made of those layers taken together, but not any of them alone" (Baglajewski, 1998, pp. 9-11).

5   This seems close to the classic interpretations of temporal changes in the cultural landscapes (Sauer, 1963) and sequent occupance (Whittlesey, 1929). However it was transformed into a certain model within historical geography by J. Vervloet in the 1980s only (Vervloet, 1984).

Figure 1. Historical-geographical model of landscape as palimpsest.
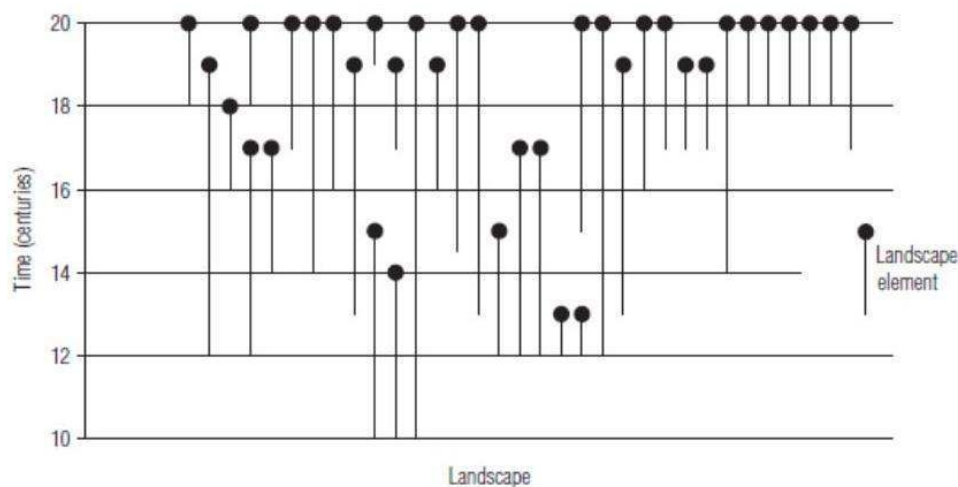
Vervloet, 1984, p. 2; translation: Urbanc *et al.,* 2004, p. 119

6   The first geographer to call a landscape a palimpsest was obviously Donald Meinig (Meinig, 1979) who wrote in the preface to a famous volume "The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes" that "it is at once a panorama, a composition, a palimpsest, a microcosm; [...] in every prospect there can be more and more that meets the eye" (Meinig, 1979, p. 6).

7   The meaning of a landscape as palimpsest was thus changed due to the *cultural turn.* The palimpsest "provides the possibility for erasure and overwriting and the co-existence of several different scripts, implying not just different historical eras, but several historical and contemporary actors as well" (Schein, 1997, p. 662). What Richard Schein meant here was the very multiplicity of human interpretations and representations of a place. The palimpsest model turns out to be not about the temporal changes alone, but also about the differences in the landscape as it is "read" by social groups and individuals,

differentiated by identity, occupation, lifestyles, experience, imaginative power, and emotional factors (Mitin, 2010).

8   This turns any cultural landscape – no matter at what time period it originated – into "a sum of erasures, accretions, anomalies and redundancies over time" (Crang, 1998, p. 22). In terms of the "linguistic turn" (Lees, 2002) we are likely to call a landscape a *text* that can be read (Cosgrove, Jackson, 1987; Duncan, 1990; Lavrenova, 2010; Rowntree, 1986). As Lewis puts it, "reading landscapes is not as easy as reading books" as "ordinary landscape seems messy and disorganized, like a book with pages missing, torn and smudged; a book whose copy has been edited and re-edited by people with illegible handwriting" (Lewis, 1979, p. 12). The landscape is seen as a specific kind of text, in which "different layers or fragments of texts can get into conflict, questioning and contesting each other. Unavoidably inviting controversial interpretation, the reading of such a palimpsest is more like a process of multivocal, and often ambiguous, communication than an act of linear understanding. In modern and postmodern theory of text and communication, this process has been called 'intertextuality'" (Brockmeier, 2001, p. 222).

9   The model of palimpsest turns the "landscape as text" into an *intertext*, that is a structure of mutual references of multiple meanings (Kristeva, 1969; Barthes, 1973). Thus I define palimpsest as "a conceptual model of a place as a multilayered structure that emphasizes the coexistence of multiple visions and impacts of different cultures on the landscape" (Mitin, 2010, p. 2111).

Urban cultural landscape: symbolic construction vs. lived practices

10   The model of a multivocal place as a palimpsest has become a result of *cultural turn* in geography, as I have mentioned above. The development of cultural geography from the classical theories of the beginning of the XXth century (Sauer, 1925) to the second half of the XXth century was contradictory, yet important. The cultural turn has become a main trend of that *change* (Gritzner, 1966; Norton, 1981; 1984; Mikesell, 1978; Zelinsky, 1973).

11   The representatives of the *new cultural geography* criticized the Sauerian Berkeley school for focusing "their studies on the material artifacts, exhibiting a curious and thoroughly antiquarian 'object fetishism' over such items as houses, barns, fences and gasoline stations" (Price, Lewis, 1993, p. 3). Instead, they regard the cultural landscape through its human *interpretation, symbolization & signification* (Brace, 2003; Robertson, Richards, 2003; Rowntree, Conkey, 1980). They stated that "the total cultural landscape is information stored in symbolic form" that "in part functions as a narrative" (Rowntree, Conkey, 1980, p. 461), and "the symbolic qualities of landscape, those which produce and sustain social meaning, have become a focus of research" as this "allows us to disclose the meanings that human groups attach to areas and places and to relate those meanings to other aspects and conditions of human existence" (Cosgrove, Jackson, 1987, p. 96).

12   This idea of *place as being constructed* has been developed in various directions inside humanistic geography (Tuan, 1974, 1976; Hall, 1978; Entrikin, 1985; Hasson, 1984). "Space is transformed into place as it acquires definition and meaning", Yi-Fu Tuan (1977 [2002], p. 136) states. "The central concept is 'meaning', and indeed 'place' may be redefined as coming into existence through men according meaning to locations" (Jeans, 1979, pp.

207-208). Dennis Jeans found the exact words for that *constructing* perspective: "To make a place is to surround a locality with human meanings" (Jeans, 1979, p. 209).

13   My model of a palimpsest originates from the vision of a place as a "fuzzy set" of diverse interpretations, not only historically different elements, as legitimized by new cultural / humanistic geography. To touch upon the relations between various layers of one and the same place, the *semiotic* model of *mythogeography* is used (Mitin, 2007).

14   "Mythogeography's main peculiarity is in the *special vision of the 'filling' of every place with constructed realities*, created with the help of mythological models of communication and the theory of the semiosis of modern myths" (Mitin, 2007, p. 215). The model *combines* several theoretical frameworks described below.

15   First, we need to look on *each layer* of that "place as palimpsest" alone. Yi-Fu Tuan regarded those layers as place *narratives* (Tuan, 1991), however I argue they are rather *contexts*, as each layer of the palimpsest is *centered* by a few unique dominant peculiarities of a place (Mitin, 2004). This idea is borrowed from the theory of *regional geography*.

16   Geographers have been traditionally saying about the process of *construction* of the texts describing this or that place through the theory of *regional geography*. Those layers are in fact special kinds of those texts. Different modes of geographical descriptions have been described throughout the XXth century (Darby, 1962; Davis, 1915; Finch, 1934; Hart, 1982; Lewis, 1985; Paterson, 1974). Being *opposed* by the positivist view of storing the *entire* data on any place in a form of *encyclopedic* classification, the idea of a good description as a geographer's *art* of constructing a place is as follows.

> "Good regional geography should begin with, and probably should be organized around, the dominant theme of each region, which of course will vary from region to region. No standard list of criteria or checklist of features-to-be observed can be universally applicable to the study of all regions [...]. Features that are overwhelmingly important in one region may be completely missing in another, and the regional geographer should give pride of place in each region to its most important or significant features" (Hart, 1982, p. 23).

17   The history of Soviet human geography has been to a larger extent focused on the regions (though primarily economic ones) and regionalization. As a result, the theory of regional geography ("stranovedeniye") has been productively discussed and developed (Baransky, 1950, 1980; Yefremov, 1981; Mashbits, 1998; Mironenko, 1992; Mitin, 2004). Combining the Anglo-American debates on the "highest form of geographer's art" with those Russian concepts, I argue that "genuine complex geographical descriptions should be based on picking the dominant features of place and adopting the secondary features to the dominant with the usage of internal and external textual interconnections" (Mitin, 2007, p. 219).

18   For example, there is no use in making a full long description of St. Petersburg in Russia if our message is to stress its dominant feature in the sphere of tourism as a "cultural capital of Russia". World famous State Hermitage, Peterhof and other museums, the historical intent of Peter the Great as the city founder to build a new capital "sticking" Russia to Europe, and the largely discussed special intellectual and authentic local identity would be those secondary features revealing and explaining the dominant one.

19   While that legitimizes certain rules of constructing each layer of place as palimpsest as a context, I need other theoretical frameworks to describe how the combination of various layers is created. The layers seem autonomous, and their hierarchy is easily changeable under the internal and external circumstances. However, the psychological essence of

perception & imagination processes makes us always consider one of those layers the main – the dominant – one, though we may change our mind immediately. The palimpsest is a unite totality of those autonomous layers, that regards a place as multidimensional.

20   To understand how that totality is created through representations the semiotic model of semiosis is used to describe the interconnections between the autonomous layers of the palimpsest. A theory of modern mythologies as developed by Roland Barthes (1972 [1991]) turned out to be the best framework with each layer regarded as a certain spatial myth. Similarly to the place within humanistic geography, "mythical speech is made of a material which has already been worked on so as to make it suitable for communication" (Barthes, 1972 [1991], p. 108).

> "In myth, we find again the tri-dimensional pattern [...]: the signifier, the signified and the sign. But myth is a peculiar system, in that it is constructed from a semiological chain which existed before it: it is a second-order semiological system. That which is a sign (namely the associative total of a concept and an image) in the first system, becomes a mere signifier in the second. We must here recall that the materials of mythical speech (the language itself, photography, painting, posters, rituals, objects, etc.), however different at the start, are reduced to a pure signifying function as soon as they are caught by myth. Myth sees in them only the same raw material; their unity is that they all come down to the status of a mere language" (Barthes, 1972 [1991], p. 113).

Figure 2. Myth as a semiological system.
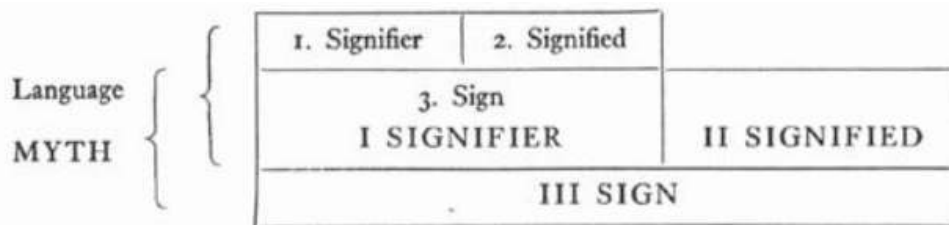
Barthes, 1972 [1991], p. 113

21   The vision of urban imageries through myths' semiosis explains how multiple representations are constructed through history, and the new ones replace the previous ones. For example the myth of St. Petersburg as the "*bandits' capital of Russia*" emerging in the 1990s was to a much extent based on its strong opposition to the previously stated idea of country's cultural capital.

22   The process of semiosis (Figure 2) is usable for the *endless number of re-interpretations of spatial meanings*, as the essence of any certain place (or any previously constructed place image) is reduced to a form of a myth that constructs a new meaning out of one and the same place (Mitin, 2004).

23   Combining (a) the idea of the cultural landscape as being constructed through symbolic values, (b) the theory of regional geographical descriptions, and (c) the semiotic model of modern mythologies altogether form a model of place as palimpsest as being created and re-created. However, it is to a much extent settled within a *representational* paradigm of geography.

24   Meanwhile cultural geographers' focus on the representations has been changed to a concern about certain *rematerializing* of the discipline, or a call towards combining

material and immaterial realms as typical for contemporary urban geography (Lees, 2002).

25　The cultural turn within non-representational geography is seen through the lens of what Henry Lefebvre names a *double illusion* (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 27). In Lefebvrian terms, cultural geography in the XXth century has executed a shift from the material / perceived space towards the conceptual space of representations, but the forthcoming critical paradigm is concerned about the third realm, that is the "representational spaces: the space directly lived through its associate images and symbols, and hence the space of 'inhabitants' and 'users'" (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 39).

26　Critical geography uses that Lefebvrian triad to focus on the *thirdspace* (as Edward Soja names it), as "spaces of representation are seen by Lefebvre both as distinct from the other two spaces and as encompassing them, following his strategic use of social space in his preliminary thirding" (Soja, 1996, p. 67). Moving beyond that double illusion of real (Firstspace) and imagined (Secondspace), Soja stresses, that his thirdspace "contain all other real and imagined spaces simultaneously" (Soja, 1996, p. 69), it is a *real-and-imagined space we live in.*

27　While geographers call for rematerializing the discipline and the focus on what is "real" in that thirdspace, Lefebvre moves forward describing *what kind of space* it is. "Every society [...] produces a space, its own space" (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 31), and the society we live in is named as completely urbanized, or simply "the urban society" (Lefebvre, 2003). While the previous mode of a city linked to the industrial society is seen as rationally planned and characterized by imposed homogeneity, the urban society and its space make a certain opposition to it.

> "During this new period differences are known and recognized, mastered, conceived and signified. [...] It is constituted by a renewed space-time, a topology that is distinct from agrarian (cyclic and juxtaposing local particularities) and industrial (tending towards homogeneity, toward a rational and planned unity of constraints) space-time. Urban space-time, as soon as we stop defining it in terms of industrial rationality – its project of homogenization – appears as a differential, each place and each moment existing only within a whole, through the contrasts and oppositions that connect it to, and distinguish it from, other places and moments [...]. The urban space is complete contradiction" (Lefebvre, 1991, pp. 37-39).

28　The urban space is stressed to be complex, heterogeneous, multifaceted, interrelated. This vision of the new space constitution *revives the idea of a palimpsest*, as the latest embraces that very endless multiplicity co-existing in one and the same place. What is needed, is to shift the focus from those layers being *constructed* to the places being *lived* and experienced.

Mobile quest games in Moscow distant residential areas

29　In order to implement the model of "place as palimpsest" in practice in the sphere of urban cultural policy and to create that mix of representational and lived modes of a cultural landscape I *elaborated a project* of mobile quest games. It is aimed at the cultural development of distant residential areas of Moscow (Russia) city which lack both unique local imageries and place-specific practices. The process of creation of the images which

stick to those placeless distant areas (as a part of project management) is regarded through the lens of symbolic construction of urban cultural landscapes. The process of local dwellers using the quest games and getting acquainted with the suggested unique features of their own home areas is regarded as lived consumption of places and changing the lived practices.

30   The project including the launch of *22 mobile quest games* during 2015-2017 was implemented by "Moscow Agency for Area Development through Culture" ("MosART") as the operator. The Agency was founded by the Department of Culture of the Moscow city Government as a cultural events' management and methods' development centre for promoting socio-cultural activity outside the centre of the city, in particular, outside the Third Ring Road. "MosART" has been an official name of the Agency till 2016, when it was renamed into "Cultural Centre 'Ivanovsky'" without changes in its main functions.

31   Mobile quest games were suggested as an *alternative to traditional excursions*, as the areas outside of the city centre have been traditionally out of tourist interest and were not regarded as important leisure sights by local residents. There are a few sights outside the Third Ring Road, which are considered to be tourist objects, like Tsaritsyno or Kolomenskoye museums and parks. Those popular places were intentionally excluded from the project.

32   Traditional excursions are hardly possible in the areas with poor tourist infrastructure, the attractions in physically poor condition, located far one from another, and/or representing industrial / engineering heritage, or traditional residential blocks from the XXth century, that are rarely considered valuable as tourist destinations in contemporary Russia. Those objects and areas were intentionally chosen for the project.

33   Muscovites are considered the main target audience of the project according to the Department of Culture's policy agenda.

34   New cultural / humanistic geography, the ideas of symbolic construction of tourist sights and the model of "place as palimpsest" were considered to be the theoretical background of the project. It was thought to be a means of *creating new attractive sights* in distant residential areas and *constructing the new local images* which could become important parts of local imageries, areas' branding and promoting local identities.

35   All mobile quest games are promoted at the Agency's website (https://ivcenter.ru/ project/vse-kvesti/) and through Moscow city official cultural and tourist websites and social media. As soon as a user chooses one of the quest games from the website, s/he is forwarded to a web page of "Street Adventure" company, a project partner responsible for technical support. In a few minutes after being registered at that web page the user receives the individual link to start the quest game online. Users follow the directions from that link, receive the questions and insert their answers online using their tablets or smartphones, and thus follow the route of the quest game. Apart from providing questions and checking the answers, the online interface provides the *attractive information* about the places visited, that might be useful to answer the questions, but is more likely to serve to create the certain images of the places and the area as a whole.

36   An example of that kind of a small text about "Fabrika 1 Maya" settlement, located in the Novomoskovsky district of Moscow in some 30 km from the Kremlin, that became a part of the city in 2012 only, is below.

> A cloth factory opposite has an interesting history. It was first mentioned in 1853 as
> a possession of D.A. Okulova. She married Nikolay Pavlovich Shipov, a colonel and a

real state councilor famous for the agricultural innovations he implemented in his Ostashevo estate near Mozhaysk, Moscow region. Okulova was also acquainted to Pyotr Vyazemsky, a poet and an owner of the neighboring Ostafyevo estate that we have just visited. The factory was sold to engineer Ivan Ivanovich Baskakov in 1879, however there is an evidence that Baskakov reconstructed the estate and built a new factory. He also built a dam across the Desna river, though the one you'll see as you walk a hundred meters upstream has been seriously rebuilt later on. Baskakov also constructed the manufacturer's estate and the red-brick barracks for the workers. Some of them are still used as residential houses. Those were probably built before 1912, though we can't know that for sure. However, there is a building further on with a construction year you can know for sure. Find it and insert that year as an answer!
Tip 1: Walk between the houses on the Desna river bank.
Tip 2: Find a house No. 3.
Answer: 1927.

37   The tips from the example are used if the user fails to find the right answer or loses the way.

38   Some 22 mobile quest games were launched for three years, and 34 000+ people played at least one of them. The exact user statistical data is below (Table 1).

Table 1. User statistics for mobile quest games by "MosART", by December 31, 2017.

No.	Mobile quest game name (District of Moscow)	Launch month / year	Users
1	"Here stands, with shady park surrounded, Petrovsky Castle..." (Northern)	April 2015	2996
2	From Pasternak to "The Tale of Igor's Campaign" (Novomoskovsky)	April 2015	2224
3	Military history patriotic automobile quest (Troitsky)	May 2015	2096
4	Detective (Troitsky and Novomoskovsky)	May 2015	2488
5	Moscow milestones (Zelenogradsky)	May 2015	2184
6	Cottages, barracks & a factory on Yauza river (Eastern)	May 2015	3404
7	Hidden Pererva (Southeastern)	June 2015	2812
8	Different Vorobyovy hills (Western)	August 2015	4548
9	Unknown Biryulevo (Southern)	August 2015	1996
10	Pokrovskoye-Streshnevo springs, beavers and river locks (Northwestern)	August 2015	2660
11	Follow the traces of ancient estates (Southwestern)	September 2015	1976
12	To the Yauza river banks (Northeastern)	September 2015	1900
13	Around "Mosfilm" film studio (Western)	March 2016	708

| 14 | Read Sviblovo (Northeastern) | April 2016 | 340 |
15	To the birthplace of "Moscow Nights" song (Troitsky)	June 2016	144
16	"Could One Imagine?" (entire city)	August 2016	280
17	Rostokino, the "most cinematic" area (Northeastern)	September 2016	1308
18	Follow the old "Vladimirka" road to the Saint lake (Eastern)	March 2017	236
19	By "literary streets" to the Solomennaya Storozhka (Northeastern, Northern)	April 2017	64
20	New Moscow, the open-air museum (Novomoskovsky)	May 2017	32
21	Forest paths of Belokamennaya (Eastern, Northeastern)	June 2017	148
22	Dragons of the Serebryany Bor (Northern, Northwestern)	September 2017	12

39   The analysis shows, that in spite of the effort to promote the most distant and unknown areas of the city, the most closely connected to the Third Ring Road and the most well-known areas were the most popular. Vorobyovy hills seem the best evidence here: though the route passes through the historic picturesque park, the viewpoint on top of Vorobyovy hills is a known tourist sight, and its name attracts the users to this mobile quest game (No. 8 in Table 1). However, I argue that by means of the project even the least attended areas could be transformed from real "*non-places*" into certain meaningful *places*, though not widely known and recognized.

Lived practices of the quest game users

40   The idea of the project of mobile quest games was in fact to *create a new layer* of place as palimpsest. The possible influence of those new representations towards lived practices of people is critically important in the light of critical non-representational urban geography. An *experiment* was held in order to study those *effects* of mobile quest games towards *everyday lived practices* of its users. I needed to check if there was any influence of playing the quest game on (a) the imagery of the area, and (b) the estimations of its comfort for everyday living. 60 students of the Academy of Public Administration of Moscow region were asked to pass 2 quest games in the Northeastern district of Moscow, not far from their campus and dormitories, and share their statements and images of Sviblovo area before and after the experiment. Sentence completion and drawing tests were used as an initial point of the research to learn about the current imageries of Sviblovo area. The survey was held for the participants of one of 2 routes (N=32) to check if the imagery was changed. Observation and in-depth interviews (N=12) were used to witness the essence of the new local images and the new lived practices possibly emerging after the completion of the game.

41   The *initial* image of the area (Figure 3) included the underground (metro) station and the Academy campus for the majority of informants. Those living in the dormitories also mentioned the shopping malls and the restaurants in the vicinity (an example is in the

left part of the Figure 3). A small "Zodiac park" established in 2007 was mentioned a few times, as well as the Kapustinsky pond. Nothing more than some points of the students' everyday routine was pictured.

Figure 3. A typical drawing of Sviblovo area.
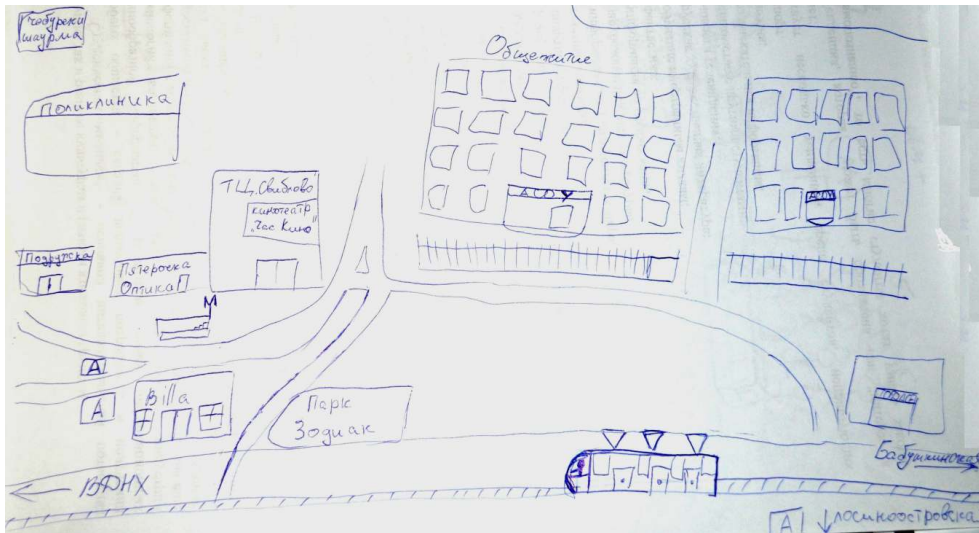
Female, from Moscow region, living in the dormitory

42   Some of the students used Wikipedia data in the sentence completion test to mention the exact amount of inhabitants of the area, the Yauza river and the fact that the famous Soviet comedy "Operation Y and Shurik's Other Adventures" was filmed there. Sviblovo was generally characterized in the sentence completion tests as a *distant dull area of residential blocks with no specific sights to visit.*

43   The *final* image was influenced by the mobile quest game. 66% of quest users agreed that their image of the area was changed after the game according to the survey conducted, and 75% of the latter said it has become *more positive.*

44   The interviews could help me to understand the *substantial* changes. The users mentioned the old estate, the houses filmed in the Soviet comedy movie, some street-art objects, which were a surprise for them in their neighborhood:

"We didn't feel anything special at first. It was all ours, so familiar. But it was astonishing to see that street-art object, as I've never noticed it before" (Female, from Central Asia, living in the dormitory).
"I would say, I have opened Sviblovo from so different sides after all, though a heavy rain started. It was [previously] just a place where I study, and that's all of it" (Female, from Moscow, living in another district of Moscow).

45   However, the idea of Sviblovo as a historic neighborhood that could be "read" through literary sources and famous movies was not transferred to the quest users.

46   The picturesque Yauza river bank was one of the most discussed places together with a neighboring old estate. There was even an idea for *new everyday practices* mentioned in one of the interviews:

"It would be not bad to go for a walk on those grounds near the [Yauza] river, may be in summertime with my boyfriend. It creates a special atmosphere, [it is] helpful to forget about the routine" (Female, from another region, living in the dormitory).

47   However this was the only mention of any possible changes in the lived uses of a place. The transformation of the local imagery, which I would regard as the influence of a new representation constructed, was hardly influential enough to give birth to the new practices which remained unchanged.

Conclusion

48   I have discussed a *model of place as palimpsest* as a possible framework *to study and to transform* urban cultural landscapes in the Post-Socialist cities with Moscow distant residential areas as an example.

49   New cultural / humanistic geography, semiotics and theory of regional geography taken together make a unique framework for the original "*palimpsestic" vision of any place* and the tool of *constructing new layers* of that palimpsest.

50   Place as palimpsest is a useful tool in the sphere of cultural management to legitimate the "space production" and the construction of attractive tourist sights. Deep insights into Moscow city distant residential areas' imageries make the experience of the mobile quest games valuable for the locals, rediscovering their neighborhoods, traditionally regarded as standardized "non-places", as becoming rich in symbolic capital.

51   The palimpsestic idea of *multiplicity of layers* is especially useful in the *Post-Socialist cities*, as they are produced and reproduced through opposing, exaggerated, outdated or imposed imageries, and the meaning of Post-Socialism itself is multi-layered (Gentile, 2018). Mimi Urbanc and her colleagues studying the Post-Socialist landscape transformation focus on a certain *value change* creating that multiplicity:

> "Some landscape elements have remained the same through all the changing socio-economic formations. Some others have been forgotten or destroyed by the emerging formations. Some have been replaced by other objects. Yet others have retained their physical structure but the meanings have changed. [...] What is valuable will be retained, what is not valuable will disappear. But value systems keep changing, too. Some elements were considered valuable during the national states period then ignored during the Soviet era and became valuable again after independence" (Urbanc *et al.,* 2004, p. 119).

52   However, my conclusion is rather contradictory due to the results of the empirical research. Trying to unite the majorly "*constructing"* perspective of new cultural geography and "*living"* perspective of critical geography is still a challenging task for urban cultural agenda. The connections of place images and local practices are not that *close*, as one could expect.

53   Nevertheless, I argue, that the palimpsest metaphor originated from the new cultural geography may be *revived* through the critical approach as a model embracing the *multivocal multiplicity* of agents, everyday strategies, lived practices and (re)constructed images of Post-Socialist cities, characterized by representational & non-representational effects intertwined.

54   I would definitely continue studying that effects in Moscow distant residential areas using a model of palimpsest, however, a more complex approach combining cultural geographical research and cultural management with broader horizons of *place management* seem necessary and prospective.

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ABSTRACTS

A metaphor of palimpsest is used to describe the multivocal cultural landscapes since the 1970s. Interventions into new cultural / humanistic geography, semiotics and the theory of regional geography help to regard each layer of the palimpsest as a constructed context, centered by dominant representation of a place.

Real-and-imagined landscapes are regarded as palimpsests lived through everyday practices seen as processes of (re)construction of new layers.

Trying to unite those "constructing' and "living' perspectives is a challenging task for urban cultural agenda.

A series of mobile quest games was made by the author for Moscow Agency for Area Development through Culture in order to construct new tourist sights outside city centre. This project is discussed as a case of constructing new geographical contexts (palimpsest' layers) and the lived experience rediscovering the distant residential areas, traditionally regarded as standardized "non-places', as becoming rich in symbolic capital.

La métaphore du palimpseste est utilisée pour décrire les paysages culturels polysémiques depuis les années 1970. Les emprunts à la nouvelle géographie culturelle/humaniste, à la sémiotique et à la théorie de la géographie régionale aident à percevoir chaque couche du palimpseste comme un construit contextualisé, centré sur une représentation dominante d'un lieu.

Les paysages à la fois réels et imaginés sont envisagés comme des palimpsestes vécus à travers des pratiques quotidiennes, elles-mêmes vues comme des processus de (re)construction de nouvelles couches.

Tenter d'unifier ces perspectives en construction et vécues est un enjeu à l'agenda de la culture urbaine.

Une série de jeux de questions sur le terrain ont été construits par l'auteur pour l'Agence moscovite du développement par la culture, afin de construire de nouvelles perspectives touristiques en dehors du centre de Moscou. Ce projet est discuté comme étude de cas d'une volonté de construction de nouveaux contextes géographiques (couches du palimpseste) et d'une expérience vécue de redécouverte de zones résidentielles périphériques, traditionnellement perçues comme des « non-lieux » standardisés, mais qui pourraient acquérir un riche capital symbolique.

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