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pal·imp·sest  (păl ĭmp-sĕst')

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n.

1. A manuscript, typically of papyrus or parchment, that has been written on more than once, with the earlier writing incompletely scraped off or erased and often legible.
2. An object or area that has extensive evidence of or layers showing activity or use: *"My skin had become a palimpsest of fleeting sensations, and each layer bore the imprint of who I was" (Paul Auster).*

[Latin *palimpsēstum*, from Greek *palimpsēston*, neuter of *palimpsēstos*, scraped again : *palin*, again; see **k^wel-¹** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#) + *psēn*, to scrape.]

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Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

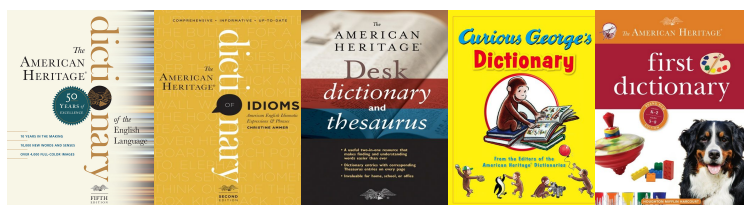
Thousands of entries in the dictionary include etymologies that trace their origins back to reconstructed proto-languages. You can obtain more information about these forms in our online appendices:

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