Towards a Theoretical Model of the Epigraphic Landscape
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Since the advent of printing, the publication of epigraphic texts and, accordingly, their study, has been conditioned by the technology of moveable type. Gutenberg's legacy made it easy to reproduce the text of an inscription, but expensive and time-consuming to reproduce its more purely visual and spatial aspects.[1] Examples of this history of text-centric epigraphic publication can be seen from the earliest printed studies of epigraphy, discussed by William Stenhouse, through the monumental publications of Jan Gruter and his successors in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, to the beginnings of the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* under the direction of Theodor Mommsen in the nineteenth.[2] It is only in comparatively recent history, first with the development of post-letterpress printing technologies and second with the advent of the digital age that the visual and spatial characteristics of an inscription are likely to be recorded with the same precision and fidelity as its textual characteristics. With that change has come an increasing awareness that scholars should consider not only the textual meaning of an inscription, but also its art historical contexts and placement in the built and natural landscapes. Nonetheless, epigraphy remains a highly textual field; while the technologies of reproduction have changed, those of interpretation are only just beginning to catch up.

The present chapter has been written with this historical context in mind. Its goal is to lay out a theoretical framework for understanding the totality of text, image, and surroundings in an epigraphic artefact, what might be called "the epigraphic landscape". To do this, it has drawn on the resources of processual archaeology and landscape phenomenology, as well as more traditional art history and epigraphy, but has applied them - altering and developing their methods in the process - to a specifically epigraphic context. Rather than discussing this framework in the abstract, instead it will be demonstrated through a case study: an example drawn from the neglected corpus of early-modern Scottish epigraphy. Using such a monument as a case study demonstrates that the methodology proposed here has applicability well beyond the classical period, however broadly defined, while also highlighting the ongoing reception, continuity, and transformation of classical epigraphic practices in early modern Europe; both classical and post-classical students of epigraphy can benefit from a methodological conversation begun across chronological boundaries. This exploration will begin with the monument itself, the most familiar object of epigraphic enquiry, and gradually work outwards, exploring the ever-widening ripples of meaning that it produces in its human and natural landscapes.

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[1] See generally Febvre & Martin 1958 and Eisenstein 1979.

[2] William Stenhouse has discussed the earliest epigraphic collections in detail in his *Reading Inscriptions and Writing Ancient History: Historical Scholarship in the Late Renaissance* (Stenhouse 2005). The publication of Jan Gruter's *Inscriptiones antiquae totius orbis Romani* (Gruter 1603) marked an important watershed moment, as did the later edition of the same work edited by Johann Georg Graevius and his collaborators (Gruter 1707). For more on the still-murky histroy of epigraphic compendia between Gruter and Mommsen see Jackson Williams 2017, 80. The *Corpus inscriptionum Latinarum* began publication in 1853, under the supervision of Mommsen, and continues to appear under the aegis of the Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften (see https://cil.bbaw.de/).

The Monument

Our case study is a late-sixteenth-century funeral monument in the parish kirkyard of the royal burgh of Crail, a once prosperous fishing port at the far eastern tip of the county of Fife, midway down the North Sea coast of Scotland (figure one).[3] It is a product of Scotland's post-Reformation Renaissance and an early post-Reformation example of what, in the Scottish context, is typically described as a "mural monument", a substantial architectural construct, almost always for a funereal purpose and with an epigraphic inscription at its centre, which would be built into the wall of a kirk, kirkyard, or burial aisle.[4] The text on our case study makes it clear that it pertains to one James Lumsden of Airdrie and before considering the stone itself it will be useful to recover what we can of the socio-biographical contexts of its subject from other sources.

[*Insert figure one here*]
Fig. 1.

Airdrie is a small estate four miles to the west of the present village of Crail and had been owned by the Lumsden family as early as 1450, when it was erected into a barony along with other lands in Fife and the county of Haddington (Thomson 1882, 2. no. 402). The first notice of James Lumsden, the subject of the funeral monument, occurs a little over a hundred years later when, as a minor and the second son of John Lumsden of Blanerne or of that Ilk, he was retoured heir of tailzie to his cousin (*consanguineus*) Thomas Lumsden of Airdrie in that barony on 14 January 1566.[5] He would have been about ten or eleven years old at the time.

The acquisition of a barony might ordinarily suppose a degree of wealth, but James acquired his estate under less than favourable terms. When he was retoured heir to Airdrie, two widows of former owners were then living: Euphemia Lundin, widow of William Lumsden of Airdrie - who was still alive in 1582 - and Marjory Douglas, widow of Thomas Lumsden of Airdrie, who was living as late as 1591 (Beveridge 1893, 138, 140). Scottish law reserved part of the estate and its revenues, the "terce", to these ladies during the terms of their lives (Stair 1759, 287). As well as this burden, James, upon his inheritance, had also obliged himself to pay substantial sums of money, presumably as dowries, to the three sisters of his cousin and predecessor (Beveridge 1893, 144).

Despite these financial burdens, James rebuilt the house at Airdrie, overseeing the construction of the present tower house whose armorial panels date its completion to 1588 (RCAHMS 1933, 61-62). Raising funds, however, required making an inroad into the core of the estate. On 25 October 1587 he feued (leased) sixteen acres of arable land near Cupar to David Jamesoun, a burgess of that burgh, on 24 June 1591 he sold outright his lands of Gleghorn across

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[3] "Kirk", "kirkyard", and analogous terms in Scots are equivalent to the English "church", "churchyard", etc., and have been preferred in this chapter.

[4] Graham 1960, 212-218, offers a useful taxonomy of early modern funeral monuments, describing mural monuments as "consist[ing] of three main parts - a pedestal, columns and entablature framing a central inscribed panel, and a pediment, the last often topped by a finial. The columns are usually flanked by massive scrolls, and the whole is crowded with Renaissance ornamentation and funerary emblems".

[5] Record Commission 1811, 1, Fife, no. 61. In Scottish law a "retour" was the return drawn up by an assize confirming the ownership of land by the heir of a deceased individual. A "tailzie", similar to the English entail, was an inalienable settlement of property on a specific, usually agnatic, line of individuals. See Stair 1759, 228-229 (tailzie), 494 (retour).

the Forth to an Edinburgh merchant, while his lands of Powran were disposed of later that year to a fellow laird (Thomson 1882, 5, nos. 1676, 1886, 1986). By 24 March 1598, a few months before his death, the remainder of the barony of Airdrie had been temporarily granted to Archibald Douglas of Whittinghame, an Edinburgh lawyer who was presumably amongst his chief creditors (Thomson 1882, 6, no. 692). While his family held onto the remains of Airdrie until its final disposition in 1605, James's tenure marks the beginning of the estate's descent into ruin.[6]

James was a creditor as well as a debtor, but equally unsuccessful on this side of the balance book. At some point before 24 July 1590 he had lent to Jean Lyon, Countess of Angus, the substantial sums of 9,208 pounds Scots and 8,000 merks in two separate bonds. The countess, however, refused to acknowledge the debt and it was left to her kinsman William Douglas, 9th Earl of Angus, to negotiate a bond for repayment with Lumsden. Accordingly, the countess gave James "a grite fair diamant sett in gold" valued at 2,000 crowns, apparently as a partial payment of her debt. Unbeknownst to James, however, the jewel belonged, not to the countess, but to the crown, and a few days later on 4 August he and his servant David Ferry were denounced as rebels for not having appeared to answer for their possession of the same. While James eventually delivered the jewel to the king and was exonerated of any wrongdoing, it seems unlikely that he received sufficient compensation from his aristocratic debtor.[7]

Nor did James's misfortunes end there. On 27 June 1592 he was one of the chief actors in the Earl of Bothwell's attempted assault on the king at Falkland Palace (Salisbury 1883, 13.465; Bain 1898, 10.708). His tangled affairs with the Countess of Angus were now used as a weapon against him by the royal party when her new husband, Alexander Lindsay, Lord Spynie, had James put to the horn (declared an outlaw) for debts allegedly owing to her (Bain 1898, 10.763). By September he was in royal custody and attempting to parley his way out of a sticky situation by implicating "Lord Hamilton and others of good quality" in the conspiracy, "a matter troubling the King greatly" (Bain 1898, 10.771). He was released later in the month, presumably in part due to his willingness to cooperate with the crown (Bain 1898, 10.779). While Macpherson assumes he was tortured during his imprisonment, thus in part explaining his eagerness to compromise other supporters of Bothwell, this seems to be supposition only (Macpherson 1998, 521).

Parallel to this chequered financial and political career, there are indications that Lumsden was a member, at least to some degree, of the hardline Presbyterian faction in the Scottish church, a faction centred on the east of Fife. From the time of the 1584 so-called "Black Acts", which established the supremacy of the crown and the episcopal order over the Scottish kirk, the theologian Andrew Melville and other like-minded individuals had formed a Presbyterian party in opposition to the royal position.[8] Melville himself was rector of the University of St Andrews until his deposition in 1597 and, as Jamie Reid Baxter has established, many of his adherents formed a tightly-knit intellectual and theological circle centred on east Fife (Reid Baxter 2017). Lumsden himself had several links to this circle. His brother Robert had married Isobel Cor, daughter of the leading Presbyterian Clement Cor and herself a friend of the Presbyterian poet Elizabeth Melville, and both James and Robert had interests in Hebridean fishing, interests which would lead the latter, with other hardline Fife lairds, to invest in the ultimately disastrous Lewis Plantation early in the seventeenth century (MacCoinnich 2015, 100, 411, and *passim*; Reid Baxter 2017, 61,

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[6] The final sale in 1605 to William Turnbull of Pittencrieff is recorded in Thomson 1882, 6, no. 1611.

[7] The relevant documents are quoted at length in Beveridge 1893, 146-148.

[8] For the historical context see Wormald 1991 and Mason and Reid 2014.

61). While no direct evidence for Lumsden's religious leanings is known (beyond what will be presently deduced from his funeral monument), the larger social groups in which he moved suggest a distinctly Calvinist and Presbyterian ethos.[9] As such, the funeral monument erected over his corpse reflects both the lavish expenditure which characterised one part of his life and, as we shall see, the Presbyterian faith with which it coexisted.

This biographical account provides us with a sphere of reference within which we can situate the stone's subject, though it should be emphasised that while the possibility of recovering such fine-grained biographical detail surely enriches an epigraphic study, it is hardly essential; the same process proposed here could as easily be applied to a carved stone, classical or early modern, whose subject is otherwise entirely absent from the written record.

We can now turn to the layers of meaning present in the stone itself: the visual, the symbolic, and the textual. The first is the purely visual appearance of the object, its power as a "material medium" separate from any supra-visual codes.[10] The symbolic consists of the meanings which can be extracted from symbols present on the object, in the case of the present example: emblems of mortality, heraldry, monograms, and, indeed, the visual aspects of the texts. Finally, the textual embraces the meanings which a literate person fluent in the appropriate language(s) could extract from an inscription. In this instance, there are multiple textual layers to be explicated dependent upon a reader's knowledge of Scots and/or Latin.

The visual codes move from the general to the minute. Most obviously and essentially, the shape of the Lumsden tomb, its position built into the wall of the kirkyard, the recessed niche below, and the massive pediment above, all characterise it as a funeral monument. They also characterise it as a particularly lavish example of the genre; there were few tombs in east Fife built during the later sixteenth century which could match Lumsden's in size and ornament. The only immediately comparable example would have been the massive mural monument to Robert Stewart, Prior of St Andrews, dated 1586, in St. Leonard's Chapel, St Andrews, ten miles to the north.[11] Looking more closely, a well-travelled viewer would notice additional visual cues. The symmetrical spires which give the monument its immediately recognisable appearance are characteristic of sixteenth-century Dutch architecture, one of several visual linkages between the burgh of Crail and its trading partners across the North Sea. By contrast, however, the capitals of the lower order of pillars are decisively medieval in character, suggesting a familiarity on the part of the sculptor with the rich medieval architectural heritage of eastern Scotland.[12] Taken as a whole, the monument consciously exists between old and new styles, remaining international, novel, and eclectic without rejecting the medieval heritage surrounding it.

The symbolic codes of the monument situate it within the Calvinist and noble cultures we have already seen. Prominent to a viewer are the facing heads projecting from the interior planes of the frieze. On the left is a spade-bearded firgure apparently meant to represent Lumsden himself, on the right a death's head. This is a more sophisticated variation on the crossed bones and hourglass so common in Scottish funeral carving: a *memento mori* which in this instance has

[9] Reid Baxter (2017, 64) asserts that James's "piety is not in question", based on the same evidence.

[10] See Tilley 2008, 19-20, for "the material medium of the rock".

[11] RCAHMS 1933, 247. Stewart's tomb, like Lumsden's, echoes a medieval canopy tomb with its lower recess partially protected by pillars, but has a smaller, square pediment flanked with scrolls rather than the massive upper range of the Crail monument.

[12] RCAHMS 1933, 60, suggests that the capitals have been taken from "early 13th-century models".

taken the form of a truncated echo of the *transi* tombs of the later middle ages.[13] It represents the ideal 'good death' (*mors beata*) prized by medieval and early modern Christians and is, in turn, a reminder to the viewer to prepare for their own inevitable mortality (see Lahtinen and Korpiola 2018).

[*insert figure two here*]
Fig. 2.

This reminder of the transience of the flesh and the vanity of the world exists in tension with a symbol representing just such vanity: the heraldic achievement which occupies the central panel of the pediment. Heraldry is the most ubiqitous form of symbolic code across carved stones in Scotland - indeed, across carved stones in early modern Europe - and performs a variety of functions for the observer aware of its meaning (Thiry 2014). The nature of a heraldic achievement as a visual identifier used by multiple generations of an agnatic kinship group links it both to the individual and to a dynastic history; in other words, the panel in Crail both signifies the position of James Lumsden as the subject of the monument and links him to a deeper history of Lumsdens as members of a gentry kinship group.

[*insert figure three here*]
Fig. 3.

Parallel with the heraldic achievement are the intricate circular monograms to either side of it and the additional monogram on the eastern side of the monument, facing outwards to the rest of the kirkyard. The monogram on the side is palindromic, reading I L OA L I, i.e., Iames Lumsden of Airdrie, and is echoed in more compressed form by the monograms to the left and right of the heraldric panel each of which reads J L O A with 'JAMES LUMSDEN' cut in small capital letters above the left monogram and 'DE ARDRIE' above the right. A similar monogram is present on Airdrie House and it would appear to have served as the personal emblem of James himself, an individual symbolic marker to pair with the dynastic marker of heraldry.[14]

At this stage we have already reconstructed a rich nexus of meaning present in the monument before even beginning to discuss the textual codes present, that is to say the inscriptions to which a more traditional approach to epigraphy might limit itself. There are five distinct texts - not counting the three monograms - present on the monument: three placed in discrete panels along the length of the frieze and two occupying the large panels below the frieze. All are now significantly eroded and, in parts, entirely illegible but a careful inspection of the monument itself, combined with the readings given by Beveridge in 1893, allows for a partial transcription:[15]

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[13] For a concise introduction to emblems of mortality on Scottish tombs see Willsher 2005, 38-41. For the *transi* tomb tradition see Cohen 1973.

[14] A similarly complex monogram founded upon the geometrical proportions of a perfect circle can be seen in the carved details of the laird's loft at Pitsligo, Aberdeenshire, which dates to the early 1630s (cf. Chernoff 2012, 115 and figure 5.9).

[15] In my transcription practice I have followed a slightly simplified version of the Leiden System as summarised in Cooley 2012, 352-355.

Frieze, central

Prima decvs thalamos et opes mihi contvlit æt[as]
proxima et innumeris avcta pericla malis
vivere cvm desii vixi qvod defvit ævi
mortalis nobis vita beata dedit

l. 1 Beveridge reads *aer[a]* for *aet[as]*; l. 2 Beveridge reads *immeritis* for *innumeris*

Frieze, right

Iames L[v]msden of Ardrie
his a[na]gram
[l]ord ie[s]vs made man frie
died xxiii agvst 1[59]8

Frieze, left

Hic dormit vir pivs et nobi
lis iacobvs lvmsden de ard
rie qvi obiit 23 Avgvsti an
no domini 1598 ætatis suæ 43

Central panel, right

To the savil depart[ed s]ore d[istrenȝeit]
my sillie savil that hes sa lang indvre[d]
the wretchit woes of wardlie miserie
now in thy wayis of welth fvl weil asvrd
and [dea]f to wardlike [w]ardlie vanitie
[g]o nestle [f]irst be[low] and then go frie
frome dvngeone dark and [fearfull] sl[av]er[ie]
stand not in dovt bot [b]oldlie go and sie
that sight that fvllie al thy hairt c[a]n [gre]   *gre,* to be in agreement with
[of si]nfvl slovghe qvhan in al thy [ma]gest[ie]
[ovt of] the grave til thov fr[om]e dvst be f[rie]
[- - -] grap[p]le t[il - - -]
[- - -] can his [- - -]
[- - - - - -]
[- - - - - -]

l. 1 Beveridge reads *d[istravght]* for *d[istrenȝeit]*, but the former is not attested in Middle Scots. Distrenȝe in its sense of "to subject to constraint or distress" is the more linguistically plausible reading.

Central panel, left

[- - -] in his [- - -]st hes grantit the that grace
[- - -]e qvha sinneris til imbrace
t[h]at cursit [- - -]ad agane
[- - -] o pla [- - -]
[- - - - - - &c.]

The bilingual nature of the inscriptions immediately presents multiple levels of meaning: one which could be construed by a literate individual fluent only in Scots, another open to a member of the educated Scottish elite with access to Latin, and a third corner case in which we might imagine a foreign visitor, literate in Latin but not in Scots. The Scots poems on the central panels are both the most accessible and most physically present inscriptions, occupying the space broadly at eye-height for an individual standing in front of the monument. While the lefthand poem is too worn to allow for more than a conjecture at its contents the righthand poem presents us with more than enough to allow for analysis. It begins with a title, "To the savil departed sore distrenȝeit", and is in the form of a fourteen-line sonnet in iambic pentameter following an extremely tight rhyme scheme of ABAB BBBB BB[--] [--]. Its sense is a devout Calvinist turning away from the "wretchit woes" of the world and towards a union with the divine. The divine "magestie" appears at the turn of the poem, between octave and sestet, and it seems plausible that the description of earthly imprisonment in the octave would have been balanced with a description of heavenly freedom in the obliterated final lines.

This poem, together with its now illegible companion which seems to have dwelt on the subjects of grace and salvation, are paired linguistically with the Scots inscription on the righthand side of the freeze. Lumsden's name and his date of death are plainly given along with the almost playful anagram of his name: "lord iesvs made man frie".[16] Collectively, they paint a picture of conventional Calvinist devotion, one which would hold Lumsden up as a pious model for the Scots-literate readers of his parish.

The Latin texts offer a distinctly different inflection to this presentation of Lumsden. The Latin memorial inscription on the left side of the frieze roughly echoes the Scots on the right in its statements of Lumsden's name and the date of his death (adding his age, which is not present in the Scots), but its language - "Here rests a pious and noble man" - emphasises Lumsden's secular rank in a way which is not present in the Scots. A similar focus on Lumsden's earthly life can be seen in the four lines of verse which occupy the centre of the frieze. The first two lines contrast the glory of Lumsden's youthful marriage and wealth with the "numberless evil dangers" of his later life, while the second ends on a more conventional truism that "when I ceased to live, I lived" for "what is missing from the mortal life, a blessed life gives to us". Again, the fortunes of Lumsden's secular career are given more prominence in the Latin than in the Scots, offering a more nuanced interpretation for a bilingual than for a monolingual reader.

A sufficiently well-read, Latinate contemporary of Lumsden would have recognised even more textual traces and echoes encoded into the face of the monument. The *prima* and *proxima*

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[16] Anagrams on names in this way were a common form of literary play in early modern Europe, see Camden 1605, 150-157, and the numerous examples given therein.

aetas of the first two lines of Latin verse allude back to Aristotle's three ages of man, particularly in their emphasis on the reversal from the noble idealism of youth to the pessimism and uncertainty of mature age.[17] Likewise, the idea of living in Christ only when one had ceased to live in the world was a Christian truism in early modernity for Catholics and Protestants alike.

In the years following Lumsden's death, our hypothetical learned reader might, however, have become aware of a more proximate analogue for the Latin verses. In 1603 the *Heroes ex omni historia Scotica lectissimi* of John Johnston was published in Leiden for sale in Edinburgh (Johnston 1603) and included a printed version of the same verses which appear on Lumsden's tomb. At the time of its publication Johnston was master of St. Mary's College, St Andrews, and one of the most outspoken hardline Presbyterians in the Scottish church, joining Andrew Melville in challenging the royal power and James VI and I's episcopal hierarchy (M'Crie, 1824, 2.284). The *Heroes*, while notionally an impartial poetic paeon of praise to famous Scots, had a strong Presbyterian and east coast bias; Lumsden's inclusion would undoubtedly have strengthened any viewer of the monument's suppositions as to his religious leanings as well as placing him within the circle of an influential and controversial national figure, adding an ex-post-facto intertextuality to the monument's inscriptions.[18]

The textual codes on this monument can be seen to operate on at least three layers: Scots, Latin, and intertextual. When this is added to the already densely layered series of visual and symbolic codes, we can begin to see the full range of possible interpretation which a viewer could derive purely from the monument itself, while also recognising that only a privileged few would possess the keys necessary to explicate every code present. However, I shall proceed to argue that these many layers of meaning still only represent a proportion of the totality of meaning which we can derive from this, or any other, carved stone.

The stone in its space

We should now consider the stone in its space. "Its space" here means both the physical spaces immediately surrounding the stone, but also the spaces it creates by virtue of its placement within those physical spaces. This can best be explained with reference to the theories of Chris Tilley. Tilley's works on landscape phenomenology, *The Materiality of Stone* (Tilley 2004) and, more recently, *Body and Image* (Tilley 2008) offer a theoretical toolbox for opening up new possibilities in epigraphy and it is useful to tease out how some of his ideas can apply in this field.

Speaking of prehistoric rock art, Tilley posed himself a set of intriguing questions:

> I wanted to experiment, [he wrote], with a phenomenologically informed kinaesthetic approach to . . . rock art. In other words, I was interested in what effects the carvings themselves had on my body as someone looking at them: What did I have to do to see the carvings? How did I have to move? (Tilley 2008, 16)

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[17] Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, II. xii-xiv.

[18] Reid Baxter (2017, 63) has suggested that Lumsden's joint donation with Clement Cor of two yards in St Andrews to St. Leonard's College may also have played a role in his celebration by the St Andrean Johnston.

His conclusion was that "it was not possible to see the carvings in any way that I might wish, or decide". Fair enough, one might say. If a stone has carving on its front, you cannot view that from the back. But Tilley drew more far-reaching conclusions. "The carvings", he wrote, "were exerting their own power and influence in relation to what I saw and from where I saw it, and how I saw it. I was no longer a free agent . . . There was a dialectic at work between the rock itself, and its landscape location, and the positioning of the images carved on it" (Tilley 2008, 16).

In many ways, this is an application of David Turnbull's earlier work on the Maltese megaliths. Turnbull's point was – once again – that:

> People perform objects of all kinds, but especially buildings, by moving through and around them but buildings also perform people by constraining their movements and by making likely certain kinds of encounters between them and others (Turnbull 2002, 135).

In other words, the physical monument forces us to move in certain ways if we want to interact with it and that accordingly deforms and reshapes the human spaces around it. This can be usefully applied in the present case study with reference to the map in figure four of Crail kirkyard as it would have appeared around 1725 (the Lumsden monument - no. 11 - is circled).

[*insert figure four here*]
Fig. 4.

By 1725 - the end of the first wave of monumental building in Crail - the kirkyard was full of elaborate mural monuments, sixteen in all, which are here numbered on the west and south walls. In 1598 when the Lumsden monument was constructed, however, this topography would have looked very different. This was only a generation after the Scottish Reformation in 1560 which had dramatically disrupted traditional burial practices. The custom of "kirk burial" was vehemently opposed by the religious establishment, but new habits of exterior burial epigraphy were still very much in flux depending on the individual locale (cf. Spicer 2000). Not long after the erection of our case study, a mausoleum in nearby Collessie reminded passers-by of this new epigraphic and burial environment with the determined lines:

> Defyle not Christ's kirk with your carrion
> A solemn sait for God's service prepar'd
> For praier; preaching and communion
> Your burial should be in the kirk yard
> (Spicer 2000, 149)

What, then, can the Lumsden monument's place in the landscape tell us? The arrow on the map follows the path which leads from the kirkyard gates to the main door of the kirk itself. This is the path which the inhabitants of the burgh would have trod every Sunday. Now consider the location of the Lumsden monument. When it was constructed, its builders would – we may presume – have had the entire western wall of the kirkyard accessible to them, the other monuments not yet having been erected. Why then did they choose the furthest possible location still in the sight line of the main path?

There are two competing motives at work here. The attempted ecclesiastical regulation of burial practices has already been discussed above. This had been an ongoing issue, but one on which the General Assembly – the supreme authority in the post-Reformation Scottish church – had been taking an increasingly strict line. In 1588 – only ten years before the date of the Lumsden monument - the Assembly had made the latest in a series of instructions, complaining that "albeit inhibitioun hes bein diverse tymes made for avoyding" the abuse of kirk burial, "yet the acts and constitutiouns of the Kirk are daylie brockin". The new act recommended to the civil power the outlawing of, "burial within kirks, and sicklyke erecting of tombis, and laying of troghes in kirkyeards" (Kirk of Scotland, 1839, 2.733). The problem, as the General Assembly well knew, was that prominent burial monuments were an integral part of Scottish elite culture and one which the elites were loth to part with. The Lumsden monument, as the first major post-Reformation burial monument within the parish of Crail, acted as something of a litmus test for how the local community would respond to the national decree.

The way in which James Lumsden's heirs handled this question was masterful. The monument is placed almost as far away from the kirk door as possible, creating a spatial statement of the family's pious submission to the decrees of the kirk. At the same time, however, it is visible – albeit at a distance – from the moment a viewer enters the kirkyard gate until they walk through the kirk door itself. The monument has been perfectly poised in the three-dimensional space of the kirkyard so that it simultaneously performs a particular post-Reformation, Calvinist form of religious obedience while still firmly reminding its viewer of the Lumsden family's power and wealth.

It seems likely that this careful positioning of the monument played a role in dictating how the subsequent mural monuments at Crail were situated. The majority of the monuments noted in figure four are built into the west wall, forming an aisle up which a potential viewer would have to walk in order to view the Lumsden monument. Most of the monuments on the south wall are late – from the beginning of the eighteenth century – and likely reflect a lack of available space on the western wall. In effect, the Lumsden monument created a circulation of people through space – it performed people, to borrow Turnbull's phrase – in such a way that it encouraged the builders of subsequent monuments to group their works along an already extant axis, reinforcing and developing the spaces which it had brought into being.

In short, then, everything that can be identified about the location of this monument in its immediate space is productive of meaning. It is situated so as to project specific religious and cultural meanings and it has shaped the nearby space in such a way that subsequent monuments have been built in line with the spatial circulation it created.

Let us now cast our eyes further afield and think about the stone, not just in its space, but in its landscape. Tim Ingold, in his 2000 collection of essays, *The Perception of the Environment*, writes at length about what he calls "the practice of wayfinding" (Ingold 2000, 153). In Ingold's conception, wayfinding is the activity of the native, the local, while navigation is the activity of the outsider. He argues that:

> While dwelling in the world entails movement, this movement is not between locations in space but between places in a network of coming and going that I call a region. To know one's whereabouts is thus to be able to connect one's latest movements to narratives of journeys previously made, by oneself and others . . . places do not have locations but

histories. Bound together by the itineraries of their inhabitants, places exist not in space but as nodes in a matrix of movement . . . a 'region' (Ingold 2000, 155).

If we entertain, for a moment, this conception of movement, we can proceed to consider how a carved stone or monument could work within these 'regions'. The stone itself is a waymarker, a point which has gravity in the landscape and which accretes to itself histories and narratives – that seems clear enough – but it also exists within a larger matrix which may contain other stones or other objects or spaces which act as analogies for stones.

This leads us back to the layers of meaning discussed earlier. A viewer existing in the wayfinding space conceptualised by Ingold would not only be able to extract visual, symbolic, and/or textual meanings from a stone, they would also be able to extract inter-visual, inter-symbolic, and/or inter-textual meanings based on their experience of other stones or analogous forms elsewhere in the region within which they existed. Put more simply, the presence of a region – which may be geographical or may also be intellectual, in either case a horizon of knowledge – will condition the ways in which any individual person reads a given stone; no stone fully exists in a vacuum, not even if the subsequent vagaries of time have ripped it completely from its original spatial context.

The Stone in its landscape

How might this work for the present case study? Beginning with the inter-visual, figure five represents a monument in the kirkyard of Kilrenny, a small village a few miles to the southwest of Crail. One can immediately recognise the similarities in pillars, in the entablature, in the central heraldic panel, and, indeed, throughout the monument. A viewer familiar with the Crail monument would recognise its twin in Kilrenny, but how are the two related?

[*insert figure five*]
Fig. 5.

In this case, as with the location of subsequent mural monuments in Crail, the Lumsden monument has been the model rather than the copy. James Lumsden of Airdrie's nephew, also named James, followed a distinguished military career in the Swedish service – like so many other Scots during the seventeenth century – and retired to the small estate of Innergellie, just opposite the kirk of Kilrenny during the middle of the seventeenth century (Wood 1887, 383-384). The family continued to reside at Innergellie until the nineteenth century and at some point in or prior to 1823 the memorial in question was erected in Kilrenny kirkyard.[19]

It is striking, then, that it should have been so closely modelled on their kinsman's tomb. Why, we might ask? The answer, it would seem, is a straightforward one of reflected glory. The family had lost both most of their fortune and the estate of Ardrie itself in the first decades of the

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[19] The only inscriptions on the Kilrenny monument are "LUMSDAINE. 1823 INNERGELLIE." which has led to a nineteenth-century date generally being ascribed to the monument as a whole, but it should be noted that the inscriptions appear considerably fresher and less weathered than other sections of the tomb, suggesting they may have been added at a later date.

seventeenth century and were subsequently nowhere near so prominent as they had been in 1598. The lavish reimagining of the Crail monument at Kilrenny was a way both of reconstructing and echoing the family's past glories, creating a visual link between their forbearer at Crail and themselves.

These sorts of analogies could be easily multiplied for almost any stone and in each instance a different set of echoes and additional meanings would be revealed. To remain close to the case study, however, let us turn to inter-symbolic codes. Both the ubiquity of the death's head motif and the repetition of James Lumsden's monogram on his house at Ardrie have already been mentioned. The extent to which any sort of recognisable symbolic system – monograms, trade symbols, emblems of mortality, etc. – could exist within a larger region- or landscape-wide matrix of meaning should also be emphasised. In this instance, heraldry offers an excellent example. The two heraldic panels on the Crail and Kilrenny monuments are immediately recognisable as possessing the same heraldic device as, for example, a painted manuscript version of the same arms from an armorial dating to the period of the Crail monument (Maxwell Findlater 2008, 304-305).

In the case of the Lumsden monument it is also important to think particularly in terms of inter-textual meanings present in its inscriptions; what one might think of as the most erudite or esoteric level of meaning contained. The presence of the Latin verses on the central frieze in Johnston's *Heroes ex omni historia Scotica lectissimi* has already been discussed in its religious context, but one could go further in following the implications of this intertextuality. Johnston's collection of poetical epitaphs included a host of famous Scots, beginning with the mythical king Ferchard (Johnston, 1603, 2ff.). Placing James Lumsden within this august company raised his and his family's stock considerably and this would add, in turn, to the cultural capital generated by the monument in the mind of a sufficiently well-read viewer. The marmoreal and printed versions of the text are in dialogue with each other and each brings their own echoes and contexts with them in the reading of their twin.

The burial aisle of Sir James Melville of Halhill at Collessie, also in Fife and not so far from Crail, provides an additional point of triangulation. It was constructed about 1609, a little over a decade after the Lumsden monument, and like the latter is notable for two parallel verse inscriptions in Scots on its exterior wall facing the road (Spicer 2000). The two inscriptions, rhyming ABACCDD (*i.e.*, rhyme royal, a form common to fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Scots poetry), simultaneously remind the passing "pilgrim" of their mortality and the need to repent, while sternly warning against defiling "Chrysts kirk with your carrion" (as quoted above).

What is striking here is this use of parallel verse inscriptions, something not very common elsewhere in Fife and a textual quirk which seems to connect the Collessie mausoleum with the monument in Crail. Even more striking, the poems at Collessie appear to have been written by Elizabeth Melville, Lady Culross, one of the most accomplished Scots religious poets of her generation, and a close friend of James Lumsden's sister-in-law Isobel Cor (Melville 2010, 69). While proof is lacking, it is not implausible that the poems on the Crail monument may have been written by Melville herself or a member of her circle. Either way, a Fife viewer of the early seventeenth century would have recognised in them a resonance with the Collessie monument and a further confirmation of the picture we have gradually built here of a religious allegiance to the hardline Calvinist faction in the Jacobean church as well as some degree of participation in the Presbyterian intellectual circles of St Andrews and the East Neuk of Fife.

From these examples it can be seen that an inscription's meaning comes not just from the inscription itself, but from its immediate and its more regional surroundings. Its meaning is thus contingent. It can change depending on the subsequent development of the epigraphic landscape around it and it can in turn effect change in that same landscape by virtue of its presence. To fully read a carved stone we need to go well beyond the stone itself.

Conclusion: The meaning and efficacy of an epigraphic stone

First in his 1992 essay "The Technology of Enchantment" (Gell 1992) and subsequently in his posthumous 1998 magnum opus *Art and Agency* (Gell 1998), Alfred Gell set out to restructure the anthropology of art. He attempted to push past the aesthetic valuation of art objects in order to better understand their anthropological significance, a project which has major implications for how we engage with epigraphy. Gell's point was that:

> The work of art is inherently social in a way in which the merely beautiful or mysterious object is not: it is a physical entity which mediates between two beings, and therefore creates a social relation between them, which in turn provides a channel for further social relations and influences. This is so when, for instance, the court sculptor, by means of his magical power over marble, provides a physical analogue for the less easily realized power wielded by the king, and thereby enhances the king's authority (Gell 1992, 52).

This might at first sight seem to be a rather reductive way of reading an object, as simply a metonym for some more abstract power, but Gell goes on to elaborate his basic concept with reference to the canoe boards of the Trobriand islanders. Specifically, he argues that we must jettison aesthetic valuations of the canoe boards in favour of an instrumentalist view which focuses on the psychological effects – in this case, intimidation – which the boards are meant to produce and the cultural context in which they are produced. The carver of such a board, Gell wrote,

> Must exercise a faculty of aesthetic judgement, one might suppose, but this is not actually how it appears to the artist in the Trobriands who carves within a cultural context in which originality is not valued for its own sake, and who is supposed by his audience, and himself, to follow an ideal template for a canoe-board, the most magically efficacious one . . . (Gell 1992, 54).

Allowing for differences in cultural context, this offers a useful framework in which to understand carved stones. The inherently social stone is carved with a purpose and because of that purpose it, to return to Gell's description, "provides a channel for further social relations and influences" (Gell 1992, 52). In other words, carved stones are tools, they are "system[s] of action, intended to change the world rather than encode symbolic propositions about it" (Gell 1998, 6). Their ability to successfully do so can be seen in what has already been written about the Lumsden monument and its subsequent effects both on its proximate and more distant landscapes.

I have proposed here a model for understanding epigraphic objects by reading along two axes: visual-symbolic-textual and stone-space-landscape, each of which influence the other and each of which are productive of new and entangled meanings. The example used here offers a

case study for how this model might operate in an early modern context, but it is equally applicable elsewhere, at least where a stone's original context is known. Even where a stone has been detached from its original context, fragments of these axes of meaning continue to cling to it and new meanings are generated in the space in which it has come to rest, be that museum or rubbish heap.

This leads, however, to a final proposition which follows inevitably from a model such as this: a stone removed from its context, placed in a museum for example, can only ever be a fragment, having been shorn of the meanings which it would have produced in its original environment. If such a loss or transformation of meaning occurs in the environment of a museum, what must occur when a carved stone is shorn of its context and placed, instead, in the pages of an epigraphic corpus? We *cannot* happily perform a reading of any epigraphic object out of context and assume that that meaning would hold were it restored to its intended landscape.

Where a context can be recovered, however, this model offers the possibility of recovering a far richer web of meaning than any abstract reading of an object's text alone. Once both people and landscape are restored to a stone, it becomes alive as a multivalent social object which both influences and is influenced by the ebbs and flows of its environment.

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Illustration Captions

Fig. 1. The Funeral monument of James Lumsden of Airdrie, *c.*1598, Crail Kirkyard.[20]

Fig. 2. Detail of heraldic panel from Lumsden monument.

Fig. 3. Detail of monogram on east side of Lumsden monument.

Fig. 4. Crail Kirkyard with early modern funeral monuments numbered. Based on the map by Beveridge and with now-demolished sections of the kirk highlighted in grey (Beveridge 1893, plan facing 67).

Fig. 5. The Lumsdaine of Innergellie monument in Kilrenny.

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