The London trade in monumental sculpture and the development of imagery of the family in funerary monuments of the period 1720-1760

Abstract
The thesis is concerned with the use of family imagery in monumental sculpture commissioned from the major London workshops in the mid-eighteenth century. It explores the interaction of the many factors which dictated the way in which the family might be represented in monumental sculpture. The interests of the competing London workshops in producing images which established their fame and increased their profits are studied in conjunction with the interests of the patronage in furthering personal and family reputations. The thesis evaluates the contribution that work upon the social history of the eighteenth century family can make to our understanding of the development of monumental imagery. I investigate the many levels of problems associated with using an art form as a source of “data” in the formulation of social history and the potential of the analysis of artistic images to question, or confirm, the validity of theories of family history. The central objective is to enquire into the reasons why the London market in monumental sculpture thrived and expanded in the first half of the eighteenth century. Much of the analysis is directed at revealing the fundamental reasons which caused patrons to order monuments. Changes in funerary culture are measured in terms of the proportion of monuments commissioned to mark, for instance, the elevation of a family to the peerage, or a bereaved husband's grief for his wife. I conclude that the great majority of monumental sculpture commissioned from London workshops throughout the period was concerned with matters of inheritance and property; marking the end of dynasties, the gratitude of those inheriting land, and the establishment of new families upon country estates. The demand for images marking the transfer of property and the passage of titles and honours is shown to have dominated the sculpture market in the first two decades of the period and, despite a strong cultural reaction against formal dynastic sculpture in the 1740s and 50s, continued to have a commanding role in the success of the London workshops.

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The imagery painted on these vases, rather than their physical structure, best reflects their intended sepulchral function. The most common scenes of daily life on South Italian vases are depictions of funerary monuments, usually flanked by women and nude youths bearing a variety of offerings to the grave site such as fillets, boxes, perfume vessels (alabastra), libation bowls (phialai), fans, bunches of grapes, and rosette chains (69.11.7). When the funerary monument includes a representation of the deceased, there is not necessarily a strict correlation between the types of offerings and the gender ... In fact, many of the monuments in St Petersburg were created in the 19th and earlier centuries to commemorate the great achievements of the emperors that built the mighty Russian empire as well as to honor those who gave their lives in the service of their country during the wars. Others were erected to remember and pay homage to prominent people, such as thinkers, writers, poets, architects and scientists whose ideas, creativity and inspired work played a key role in the development of the city and country. These monuments contribute to the unique historical, architectural and artistic image of