Rome, Naples, Spain. Notes on the Caterina Pignatelli Chapel and Diego de Silóe’s Work in Naples

In the formation of the “maniera moderna” great importance must be given to those artists whom Roberto Longhi with a felicitous turn of phrase called the “Comprimarj spagnoli della maniera italiana”, roughly “Spanish co-protagonists of the Italian manner”, whom documentation and whose artistic works reveal to have been on “trips for instruction” to Rome and Florence in the first and second decades of the sixteenth century, namely Alonso Berruguete, Pedro Machuca, Bartolomé Ordóñez, and Diego de Silóe. However, the same sources tell little about the role of Naples – the Spanish Naples of the Viceroyalty – which, after 1503, was the major point of entry and departure for persons traveling between the Iberian Peninsula and Rome or Florence. Starting from the restored marbles of a small funerary chapel in the Neapolitan church of Santa Maria dei Pignatelli, the present essay deals with one of these protagonists, Diego de Silóe, refocusing on his role, the stages of his formation, and the chronology of his Italian sojourn. We hypothesize that he worked together with Andrea Sansovino in Rome around 1510-1512, while his later stay in Naples around 1513-1518 can be reconstructed from well-known works certainly attributable to his hand, such as the Caracciolo di Vico Chapel in San Giovanni a Carbonara and the Madonna in the Sant’Aspreno Chapel in the Cathedral, or other older works of less certain attribution, such as the Pandone and Carmignano sepulchers in San Domenico Maggiore and San Lorenzo Maggiore, respectively, or the small Caterina Pignatelli Chapel in the church of Santa Maria dei Pignatelli.