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## Résumé

Dans sa première édition de *Delia* en 1592, Samuel Daniel affirme, dans sa dédicace à la Comtesse de Pembroke, qu'il n'a jamais voulu publier ses sonnets et que les circonstances l'ont forcé à le faire. Il révèle ainsi son attitude ambivalente par rapport à la publication, puisque, dans le même temps, on sait qu'il n'a cessé de faire éditer et de remanier ses œuvres. Pourtant, on trouve dans son œuvre de nombreuses références au silence, en particulier dans *Delia*. Cet article se propose d'analyser les références au silence, ainsi qu'à l'acte d'écrire et de parler dans le recueil de sonnets *Delia*, et d'examiner leur importance dans la vision qu'a Daniel de son statut de poète et dans son esthétique.

## Abstract

In his first edition of *Delia* in 1592, Samuel Daniel reveals his ambivalent attitude towards the act of publishing, claiming in his dedicatory letter to the Countess of Pembroke that he had never intended to "appeare so rawly in publique." This assertion is contradicted by the publication of his subsequent works, as well as their numerous reprints during his lifetime. However, Daniel often refers to silence in his poetry, and even more so in *Delia*. This paper explores Daniel's references to silence, as well as to speaking and writing in the sonnet sequence *Delia*, and how they inform his attitude towards his status as a poet, as well as the aesthetic of his poetry.

**“THINGS UTTERD TO MY SELFE,  
AND CONSECRATED TO SILENCE”:  
SAMUEL DANIEL’S SILENT RHETORIC**

**Christine SUKIC\***

The appearance of Samuel Daniel’s sonnet sequence *Delia* as a published work has a complex history.<sup>1</sup> It was officially published for the first time in 1592 in a joint edition with Daniel’s *Complaint of Rosamond*. However, it had already been made public before that, as Daniel stated quite clearly in the paratext of this first edition, thus in a rather dramatic and somewhat contradictory way, staging himself as a poet unwilling to be published.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, in his dedication to the Countess of Pembroke, Daniel complained about the pirated edition of some of the sonnets — twenty-eight in all — that had appeared the previous year, included by an unscrupulous printer, Thomas Newman in *Syr P. S. His Astrophil and Stella*. It was also the first edition of Sidney’s sonnet sequence, five years after his death, none of Sidney’s works, as we know, having been published in his lifetime. In his dedication, Daniel claimed that he had never intended to publish these sonnets, which he calls “the private passions of [his] youth,” and that he considered them “things utterd to my selfe, and consecrated to silence.” He also complained that his Muse had been “forced to appear so rawly in publique” and that he himself

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<sup>1</sup> I wish to thank Margaret Tomachio for proof-reading this article and offering numerous useful suggestions.

<sup>2</sup> All quotations from *Delia* are taken from Arthur Colby Sprague’s edition of Samuel Daniel’s *Poems and a Defence of Ryme*, 1965.

had been “thrust out into the worlde.” The poet, in other words, should have remained silent, and his poems should never have been published. At the close of his sonnet sequence, in the very last line of the last sonnet (sonnet 50), Daniel also alludes to silence — that which follows the “voicing out” of his sonnets — by stressing the end of the speech act corresponding to the end of the sonnet sequence: “I say no more; I fear I said too much,” a line which could be related to what Daniel advocates in his dedication to the Countess as regards his public/pu-blished voice and *persona*.

Thus, both within the text and in its prelude, Daniel stressed the speech act of his poetic voice, but in a negative way, since he surrounded it with silence and emphasised the fact that, first, he had been silent as a poet before this publication and had never wanted to speak out, and secondly, that the *persona* of the sonnet sequence, himself or not, would be silent at the end of the fifty poems and had already said too much anyway.

Dramatizing the speech act for both the poet and the *persona* by introducing himself as a reluctant author who had never wanted his works to be printed, allowed Daniel to appear in a positive light according to the social and poetic codes of the late sixteenth century, that is to say, as a non-professional poet who only wrote “toys” (*Astrophil and Stella*, Sonnet 18) in his “idlest times” (*The Defense of Poesy*), to use the words of the most admired of all poets at the time, Sir Philip Sidney. In his first published work, the translation of Paolo Giovio’s book of *imprese*, *The Worthy Tract of Paulus Iovius*, published in 1585, Daniel had already appeared as a timid writer, since the anonymous author of the preface, N. W., claimed that in a letter to him, the poet had seemed to be very critical of his own work and unwilling to make it public: “There is another point in your last letter, wherein you seeme to marre al that you have made, and dash that which so cunningly was devised” (Farmer n.p.). N. W.’s preface, which

also dramatizes the context of this publication, constitutes a justification for Daniel's first appearance, if not as a writer, at least as a young translator — he was twenty-two at the time. Consciously or not, Daniel, in the first years of his writing career, appeared as an author who did not want his works to made public.

However, some critics, such as H. R. Woudhuysen, conjecture that Daniel actually could have had a part in Newman's publication of *Syr P. S. His Astrophil and Stella*. He might have seen it as a way of being associated with the Sidney family and, more particularly, with the Countess of Pembroke as a potential patroness, and also, symbolically, with an aristocratic poet who had never published his own works, even if Woudhuysen makes it quite clear that this is just one of several possible hypotheses, stating that "...the text of Daniel's poems shows they derive from an authorial manuscript. The evidence of his later career reveals how he liked to revise his poems once they had appeared in print" (Woudhuysen 377). This association with Sidney would have meant, for Daniel, making a "risky bid for the Countess of Pembroke's patronage, which would at the same time announce his own arrival on the literary scene" (Woudhuysen 378). When Daniel finally published *Delia* separately, he "dedicated them to the Countess with an obsequious but quite untrue explanation for their earlier appearance in a raw state next to her brother's poem. The bluff worked and Daniel was invited to join the Countess at Wilton" (*ibid.*).

If Daniel really did have a part in Newman's publication, the attitude of the silent poet for whom printing one's work is a stigma, to use Edward Arber's phrase,<sup>3</sup> would merely have

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<sup>3</sup> "The stigma of print," in his edition of *Tottel's Miscellany*, 1870, p. iii (quoted by May 18, note 2).

been a pose for a writer who was not an aristocrat but may have had great social aspirations. It would be in keeping with the view expressed by Sidney about his works and with the social codes of the time, according to which writing should appear as an occupation for idle aristocrats, accomplished with ease and *sprezzatura*, to quote Castiglione. As Stephen Guy-Bray remarks, “Daniel’s reluctance to publish is a conventional gesture: by 1592, many poets prefaced their books with disclaimers” (Guy-Bray 103). John Pitcher has also pointed out that Daniel corrected, amended, published and republished his texts throughout his poetic career, until his death in 1619. *Delia* itself was extended several times: in the first 1592 edition, it was composed of fifty sonnets, then fifty-four in a subsequent edition the same year. In the 1594 edition, Daniel removed two of the new sonnets and one from the first authorized edition, adding four new poems, so that there were in all fifty-five sonnets. Finally, *Delia* ended up at sixty sonnets in the 1601 edition.

So Daniel was never really a silent poet, although he was sometimes silenced by censorship, as in 1605 when he was summoned by the Privy Council to answer charges about his play, *Philotas*, in which he was accused of having indirectly expressed support for the Essex rebellion. On that occasion, he wrote a letter to Robert Cecil expressing his desire to withdraw from the world (“wtdrawing [*sic*] the booke & mee to my poore home,” quoted by Pitcher 120). He nevertheless continued to write and to have his work published after 1605. Once again, expressing the desire to remain silent was probably a pose, but a necessary one this time, imposed by political circumstances.

Daniel’s obsession with the motif of silence is striking in *Delia*, but also in other works such as *The Complaint of Rosamond* and even in a play such as *Philotas*, in which the hero

falls for being too outspoken<sup>4</sup> or, as he says himself, for “dangerous liberty of speaking truth” (IV. 2. 346-47). In fact, the loss of voice is a *leitmotiv* in Daniel's sonnet sequence, as well as the image of the “silent rhetoric” of the eyes. But these motifs are recurrent in the poetry of the period, especially that of the French poets whom Daniel sought to imitate. In Joachim Du Bellay's sonnet sequence *L'Olive* and even more so in Philippe Desportes' works (Mathieu-Castellani 28) the theme of the speechless poet is common.<sup>5</sup> Pierre Spriet demonstrated at some length the influence of these two French poets on Daniel, and more especially on *Delia*. He shows how Daniel adapted several sonnets and sometimes went as far as translating whole lines literally.<sup>6</sup> However, it is not the textual influence that interests me here, but rather a correspondence between the themes and aesthetics used by the English poet and by his French contemporaries, particularly concerning the insistence on the inability of the *persona* to express feelings and emotions in spite of the necessity to articulate them in words.

In sonnet 8 of Daniel's sequence, the *persona* addresses in turn his heart, his eyes and his verse. In the second quatrain, Daniel writes:

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<sup>4</sup> In his article, John Pitcher draws attention to the importance of silence in Daniel's work (see especially note 21 p. 129). Lars-Hakan Svensson entitled his very thorough study of Daniel's sonnet sequence *Silent Art*, but he only refers to the conceit of “dumb eloquence” when he evokes sonnet 8.

<sup>5</sup> In the last line of sonnet VIII in *L'Olive* (Paris, 1550) Du Bellay writes : “Je mourroy' cygne, ou je meurs sans mot dire” (I will die a swan, or I die speechless).

<sup>6</sup> For Joachim Du Bellay's influence on *Delia*, see more especially Spriet 223-228, and for that of Desportes, Spriet 228-234. For Daniel as imitator of Italian poets, see Jason Lawrence.



And you mine eyes the agents of my hart,  
Told the dumbe message of my hidden grieffe:  
And oft with carefull turnes, with silent art,  
Did treate the cruell Fayre to yeelde reliefe.

Daniel's silence does not mean that it is impossible for the poet to express himself, but it is, rather, another form of eloquence, in which it is not the matter — as the message is “dumb” anyway — but the manner or what he calls “silent art” that prevails. This is what Daniel, in *The Complaint of Rosamond*, calls: “Sweet silent rhetorique of perswading eyes: / Dumbe eloquence, whose powre doth move the blood/More then the words” (ll. 121-122). Daniel's definition of eloquence is a contradictory one: the words voiced out by the *persona* are supposedly less effective than silence. But this was a familiar *topos* at the time. The influence of Plutarch's *Moralia* was probably of prime importance in the spreading of this idea, as in his treatise *Concerning Talkativeness* (*De garrulitate*), Plutarch clearly states that silence is superior to words. The treatise was translated into Latin several times in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, which attests to its popularity: by Paceus in 1522, Pirckeimer in 1523, Laurentius in 1524, Russardus in 1554, Naogeorgus in 1556 and Xylander in 1570. Jacques Amyot translated it into French and published it in 1618 and Lodovico Domenichi's Italian version appeared in 1560, to give just a few examples. Apparently, no English translation of the *Moralia* existed before that of Philemon Holland, published in 1603. Furthermore, it was also through Plutarch, in several of his moral essays — but especially in *Of the Fame of the Athenians* (*De gloria atheniensium*) — that Simonides of Keos' *sententia* on painting as mute poetry and poetry as a speaking picture was made known (Plutarch, 1936, 501) and then corrected by Leonardo Da Vinci in his treatise on painting in which poetry is termed “blind painting,” because his purpose was to demonstrate the superiority of painting over po-

etry: "And if you call painting dumb poetry, the painter may call poetry blind painting" (Leonardo da Vinci 12). The *topos* of dumb eloquence or silent rhetoric can be found in many early modern works, such as Sidney's *Astrophil and Stella*, where the *persona*'s "dumb eloquence" is one of the weapons he uses to "assail[...]" Stella's eyes (Sonnet 61). Ben Jonson even offers a humorous version of the *topos* in *Every Man out of his Humour* (1599) when the foppish courtier Fastidious Briske tells the envious Macilente whom he is about to take to court: "I will bring you tomorrow by this time, into the presence of the most divine, and acute lady in court: you shall see sweet silent rhetorique, and dumbe eloquence speaking in her eye" (III. 1).

However, Christina Luckyj, in her study of silence and gender, showed how the two notions of silent rhetoric and Ciceronian eloquence coexisted in early modern times, mutually challenging each other as to which could express more.<sup>7</sup>

What I would like to suggest in this paper, bearing in mind some of the research conducted in France on the poets who had an influence on Samuel Daniel, such as Philippe Desportes, one of the most famous mannerist poets, is that Daniel, like his French contemporary, used a type of discourse which implies the disappearance of the poet as speaker.<sup>8</sup> I do not think that this is peculiar to Daniel: it is, indeed, character-

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<sup>7</sup> She writes for example that "Where silence was concerned, the notorious conflict between the Ciceronians and the anti-Ciceronians, between 'Asiatic' and 'Attic' styles, between the *genus grande* and the *genus humile*, was frankly illusory since both were ultimately *rhetorical*" (Luckyj 14).

<sup>8</sup> For Gisèle Mathieu-Castellani this disappearance of the poet as speaker is exactly what Stéphane Mallarmé states in "Crise de vers" about the disappearance of the poet's voice in a "pure work" (Mathieu-Castellani 28).

istic of the aesthetics of many poets of the period. Daniel's contact with continental literature and his use of imitation facilitated his assimilation of an aesthetic which was characteristic of a period of change and uncertainty in all epistemological fields. For Daniel, this emerged in his own aesthetics in the gradual silencing of the speaker's voice. In that, he was close to his French contemporaries. So, what I am interested in here is the perception of the *persona* and of his rhetoric that emerges from Daniel's *Delia*, and how it informs his aesthetic and that of some of his contemporaries.

In sonnet 7, the poet suggests that if he had not spoken out his love for Delia, his heart might have broken: "For being full, should not I then have spoken,/My sence oppres'd, had fail'd; and hart had broken." But what does the verb "speak" mean for Daniel? The speech utterance of the *persona* in the sonnet sequence is a lamentation, a long plaintive expression of melancholy. Using the *topoi* of Petrarchan sonnets, Daniel defines speech as "my playnts" (sonnet 1), "wailing verse" (sonnet 2), "mornefull Songes" (sonnet 3), "plaintive verse" (sonnet 4), "the plaints I utter now" (sonnet 6), or "complayning" (sonnet 40), and these are just a few instances of the melancholy definition of the speaker's voice in the sonnets. These words refer to the tone he uses, but also to the content of his speech utterance. Daniel also uses the Petrarchan *topos* of sighs as expressions of the suffering of the poet-lover, but they are no longer images and become, in his poetry, actual verbal expressions, describing manner and not matter. For example, in sonnet 1, talking about the sonnet sequence, the *persona* describes it as an account book in which he has recorded all his sighs, as if writing were equivalent to sighing:

Heere I unclaspe the booke of my charg'd soule,  
Where I have cast th'accounts of all my care:  
Heere have I summ'd my sighs, here I enroule  
How they were spent for thee...

In the same way, in sonnet 2, addressing his verse, he calls on it to "Sigh out a story of her cruell deedes."

On the other hand, the speaker sometimes loses his voice from excessive speaking, as in sonnet 16, where he is "Hoarce with crying mercy." However, in sonnet 47, using the conceit of his Muse as a lute, he says that if he were not inspired by Delia, his voice would only utter rough sounds: "Els harsh my style, untenable my Muse,/Hoarce sounds the voyce that prayseth not her name."

On the whole, the *persona's* voice is ineffective, faint and uncertain. It even tends to disappear. In sonnet 2, the story told by the "wailing voice" of the sonnets is punctuated by "interrupted accents of despayre." In sonnet 15, the speaker utters "broken words halfe spoken." What is more, his interrupted and insubstantial discourse, consisting in sighs and moans, is on the whole inefficient and incapable of persuading the cruel mistress.<sup>9</sup>

In the first sonnet, the speaker asks Delia to read his verse ("Reade it sweet maide") look at his sighs, compare her physical appearance with its poetical description ("Examine well thy beautie with my trueth") but, unlike Astrophil in the first sonnet of Sidney's sequence, he does not state that he wants to persuade her.<sup>10</sup> Already in the second sonnet, he mentions

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<sup>9</sup> Interestingly, Daniel, in his epistle to the Earl of Southampton (published in 1603 with his *Panegyrike Congratulatorie* to James I), seems to deem Stoic fortitude more effective than the expression of woes, as he stresses the "glory" there is in the attitude of endurance.

<sup>10</sup> In the first sonnet of *Astrophil and Stella*, Sidney explains how writing could affect Stella's love for him:

Loving in truth, and fain in verse my love to show  
That she (dear she) might take some pleasure of my pain;

Delia's "disdaine." There does not seem to be much hope of moving his beloved's "hard hart" (sonnet 2). So, unlike Sidney in *Astrophil and Stella*, Daniel does not create a fiction with different stages and episodes, in the course of which the *persona* tries to persuade Delia to yield to his advances. From the outset, his speech delivery is "in vaine" (a phrase found in sonnets 11, 17, 19, 31, 45, 49) whether it be to convince Delia, or to please any potential reader. In sonnet 4, he speaks in order to relieve his heavy heart: "These lines I use, t'unburthen mine owne hart;/My love affects no fame, nor steemes of art." In sonnet 11, he even states in the same line his hope to win Delia over, and his acknowledgement that it is impossible to achieve: "I pray in vaine, a merciles to move." In sonnet 16, he describes the insubstantial nature of his love, either "Imbracing cloudes by night," or "the Summer windes pursuing." He even concedes in sonnet 22: "Yet never any true effect I prove," which could be read both as the speaker's acknowledgement of his inability to seduce Delia, or as the poet's self-disparaging comment on his style. As he constantly reasserts, the speaker is unable to "move" Delia. Finally, in sonnet 49, he defines his verse, "Unhappy pen, and ill accepted papers," as bad poetry rejected by a very demanding reader. Here again, Daniel creates a form of confusion between courting a woman and currying favour with readers.

The *persona* of *Delia* does not seek to be believed and does not believe himself or in himself. This is one of the causes of his melancholy. But as his voice disappears, he also becomes estranged from himself, which is one of the characteristics of Daniel's *persona*. In this respect, he is very close to the *persona* of Desportes' sonnets. In one of the sonnets in *Les*

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Pleasure might cause her read, reading might make her know;  
Knowledge might pity win, and pity grace obtain.

*Amours d'Hippolyte* (1573), Desportes writes that he speaks with a “dead tongue” (l. 1) a “doleful and plaintive voice” (l. 5) and that each word he pronounces is in vain:

Langue morte à mon secours tardive,  
Que m'a servi tant d'heur que j'ai reçu  
De voir Madame aussi bien que tu n'as su  
Dire le mal qui de repos me prive.  
Propos brûlants, voix dolente et plaintive,  
Vot're faveur à ce coup m'a déçu:  
Car un seul mot hors de moi n'est issu  
Propre à montrer combien ma peine est vive.  
Mais qui ne fut autant que vous surpris,  
L'étonnement gela tous mes esprits  
Je devins sourd, sans pouls, et sans haleine,  
Un voile obscur sur mes yeux s'étendit,  
Le cœur me chut, tout mon sens se perdit,  
Et ne restait qu'une peinture vaine.

At the end of this sonnet, he describes how his own self tends to disappear: he turns deaf, his pulse stops, he is breathless (l. 11) his heart stops (l. 13) and all that remains of him is “a vain painting” (14).

*Delia's persona* is very much like Desportes' speaker. His mind is “wandring” (sonnet 5) or “distress'd” (41) and in sonnet 17, using this time the image of the labyrinth, he speaks of his mind as “this thoughts-maze, to my confusion tending.” Comparing himself to a failed Pygmalion in sonnet 13, he complains that the matter he has to handle — flint — is so hard that it leads him to disappear:

For hapless loe even with mine owne desires,  
I figured on the table of my harte,  
The fayrest forme, the worldes eye admires,  
And so did perish by my proper arte.

Interestingly, he uses the same verb in sonnet 14, the next one in the sequence: “So much I please to perish in my wo.”

In sonnet 27, in which he compares the wings of his desire to Icarus, he finds his death in his fall (“this my death”, as if writing were also falling), drowned by his own tears that were supposed to extinguish the fire of his desire (“Th’Ocean of my teares must drowne me burning”).

The poet’s vision of the world is not unified and harmonized, but distorted: he perceives the world as simply a series of fragments or vignettes. Gisèle Mathieu-Castellani has pointed out that this was characteristic of the French mannerist poets of the same period, including Desportes. She notes that this fragmentary vision of the world was demonstrated by the use of deictics such as “here” and “this” (Mathieu-Castellani 31). This also appears in Daniel’s poems, in his use of deictics in the first lines of many of the sonnets, such as: “If so it hap *this* of-spring of *my* care” (sonnet 3); “*These* plaintive verse” (sonnet 4); “O had she not beene faire and *thus* unkinde” (sonnet 7); “If *this* be love” (sonnet 9); “O then I love, and drawe *this* weary breath” (sonnet 10); “*Those* amber locks” (sonnet 14); “*These* sorrowing sighes” (sonnet 21).<sup>11</sup> Thus, at the beginning of each sonnet, the *persona* seems to be pointing at a different object, either his own feelings, or his particular situation or different parts of the body, such as Delia’s hair in sonnet 14, for instance. By concentrating on a different object of study each time, Daniel emphasises the fragmentary aspect of his work, made up of a series of psychological situations.

It seems then, as a consequence of his self-effacement and the fading of his voice, that the *persona* of the sonnet sequence feels the need to point to his own situation and to his own poetry. He needs to reassert what would otherwise disappear and

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<sup>11</sup> My italics.

be lost and Gisèle Mathieu-Castellani, writing about the French mannerist poets, describes their poetry as a “badly assembled mosaic,” with no continuity. There is, she says, no “syntax” in their poetry, in the sense that they juxtapose elements but do not join them together (Mathieu-Castellani 31). The impression for the reader is that of a fragmenting almost disintegrating world. As I have already pointed out here, in his sonnet sequence, Samuel Daniel's fiction does not constitute a story as such, with a beginning, a middle, and an end and elaborate episodes and developments. It does not give the impression of having been carefully put together like *Astrophil and Stella*. Instead, the sonnets are often joined together, not by their matter, but by their form: Daniel often uses the last line of a sonnet as the first line of the following one, each time creating a new situation. For instance, the last line of sonnet 31: “But love whilst that thou maist be lov'd againe,” and the first line of 32 are identical. Daniel uses the same technique for sonnets 32 and 33, this time with a slight variation though: “When once they finde her flower, her glory passé,” the last line of 32, becomes “When men shall finde thy flore, thy glory passe” in the first line of 33. In the same way, he links sonnets 33 and 34, as well as 34 and 35.

The sonnet, as a short form, referring to a precise point of view with a narrow setting, is Daniel's favourite form. It is interesting to note that in a later text, *A Defence of Rhyme* (1603) Daniel explains his preference for sonnets. His first reason is of course their use of rhymes, as this is the subject of his treatise in response to Thomas Campion's *Observations on English Poesie* (1602). Daniel also commends the structure of the poem, and in his description of the form mainly stresses its closed structure, and the fact that it can provide limits to the otherwise infinite chaos of the imagination:



Nor is this certaine limit obserued in Sonnets, any tyrannicall bounding of the conceit, but rather reducing it in *girum* and a iust forme, neither too long for the shortest project, nor too short for the longest, being but onely employed for a present passion. For the body of our imagination being as an vnformed *Chaos* without fashion, without day, if by the diuine power of the spirit it be wrought into an Orbe of order and forme, is it not more pleasing to Nature, that desires a certaintie and comports not with that which is infinite, to haue these clozes, rather than not to know where to end, or how farre to goe, especially seeing our passions are often without measure? [...] Besides, is it not most delightfull to see much excellentlie ordred in a small roome, or little gallantly disposed and made to fill vp a space of like capacitie, in such sort that the one would not appeare so beautifull in a larger circuite, nor the other do well in a lesse? [...]

Daniel here uses an cosmological metaphor, and praises the size of this “small room,” in which everything is “ordered” and “disposed.” The “bounding” of this constraint is for him necessary, as are the “clozes” that confine the infinity of the poet’s imagination. The sonnet is for Daniel the Ptolemaic form that contains the imagination seen as a universe, which otherwise would be without order or form.

Daniel’s field of vision is thus restricted to a very close space, both in terms of form and of content. This must also account for the limited scope of the speaker’s voice, as it is aimed only at Delia. Sometimes, one wonders even if his voice is not directed only at himself. The restriction of his field of vision also has an effect on the type of Eros that appears in *Delia*. In Sonnet 13, whose main conceit is the reference to Pygmalion carving his own grief in flint, it seems that

Delia is a product of the *persona*'s imagination. He has moulded a statue that he cannot bring to life, and so he perishes, as he says, "by [his] proper arte." His relationship with Delia is thus of an artistic nature: she is his object and the matter to which he gives form. Finally, in sonnet 29, he uses the conventional image of the mirror: Delia, like Narcissus, is looking at herself in the mirror: "O why dooth Delia credite so her glasse,/Gazing her beautie deign'd her by the skyes." The *persona* senses the danger of this self-love, and asks Delia to look instead at him, in whom she will discover a true image of herself: "Upon my selfe you best may finde the forme./Then leave your glasse, and gaze your selfe on mee." If the poet is a mirror-image of Delia, Delia is a sort of self-portrait of the speaker. What is more, she is, in this sonnet, compared to two male figures, Narcissus and Hyacinth:

To viewe your forme too much, may daunger bee,  
Narcissus chaung'd t'a flowre in such a case.  
And you are chaung'd, but not t'a Hiacint;  
I feare your eye hath turn'd your hart to flint.

Daniel's Eros is also an instance of self-love. The *persona* loves Delia, but he also loves his own suffering, as he says in sonnet 16: "All things I loath save her and mine own anguish." Although he sometimes praises Delia's beauty — her hair and her eyes essentially — he mainly writes about "the sad memorials of my loves despaire" (sonnet 9).

The silent rhetoric of Daniel's sonnets demonstrates perfectly a particular aesthetic that is close to that of some of the continental poets whom he sought to imitate, such as Philippe Desportes, who is commonly described as a mannerist poet by French critics, including Gisèle Mathieu-Castellani. I suggest that the term could also be used for an English poet, and especially since Daniel, in spite of his repeated calls for a national literary identity, was also very much in contact with continen-

tal poets. As we know, France and Italy played an important part in the appearance of a home-grown English literature, simultaneously serving as model and rival. Daniel, for instance, translated Italian works such as Paolo Giovio's book of *imprese*, as well as integrating Italian or French works into his own, as part of a rhetorical strategy of learning through *imitatio*. He turned consciously to continental literature in order to fertilise English literary forms, borrowing themes, motifs, and genres in his project to create English literary works that could compete in the European marketplace: this is particularly obvious in the *Defense of Rhyme*. So, even if Daniel played his part in creating specifically English literary forms, he was also in close contact with his continental models and, in this, is typical of the period.

In *Delia* however, Daniel describes the poetic act as a never-ending toil, which repeats itself and the poetry of others. In sonnet 13, since he is unable to change the statue of Delia into a real woman, writing becomes an everlasting labour ("And still I toile, to chaunge the marble brest/Of her") that leads him to his death ("And so did perish by my proper arte"). The process of writing, re-writing, and imitating is compared in sonnet 9 to the work of Sisyphus: "The never-resting stone of care to roule," which is typical of the Petrarchan lover, the Sisyphus of love poetry. Daniel's *persona* in *Delia* is a Petrarchan lover and hence is doomed to psychological failure, but Daniel's comments on his own poetic work in the sonnet sequence also point to the poetic failure of the Petrarchan model. Stephen Guy-Bray also speaks of "this vision of the sonnet sequence as an ultimately self-destructive enterprise" (Guy-Bray 111) and points to the way the rhyme "papers"/"tapers" in sonnet 49 stresses the fact that the "poems metaphorically embody that which will destroy them" (Guy-Bray 112):

Unhappy pen and ill accepted papers,  
That intimate in vaine my chaste desiers,

My chaste desiers, the ever burning tapers,  
Inkindled by her eyes celestiall fiers.

So paradoxically, the speaker in Daniel's sonnet sequence sees poetry as a constant process of rewriting self-effacing words. His melancholy tone and silent rhetoric are characteristic of a troubled, distressed self, anxious to raise his voice as a poet and to become public, and at the same time conscious of the frailty of his words.

The *topos* of silent rhetoric, as it appears in Daniel's sonnet sequence, contributes to the crisis of the different modes of representation in early modern art and literature. It was a classical *topos* which had appeared in Plutarch's moral works but was widely used at the end of the sixteenth century. For Plutarch, it was supposed to convey the idea that silence can express more than words and that mimetic representation was not necessarily achieved through words. In this case, Plutarch favoured the moral content over eloquence itself, while too much art was construed as morally dangerous. For the poets of Daniel's generation, this was no longer the case. If they favoured art over content, and manner over matter, it was because they sought to express the inexpressible, and sensed the essential frailty of their poetic matter, especially as they were still exploiting the Petrarchan mode of impossible love. Writing about love, in Daniel's *Delia* — as in Sidney's *Astrophil and Stella* — gradually turns into writing about writing, and into a solipsistic mode of expression. Stressing the manner of their art was a way for these poets of asserting their poetic voice, even though with this mode of representation failure was inevitable, because it aimed at exhausting *topoi* until they became empty clichés. This is exactly what Daniel states in the last sonnet of the sequence, which is an acknowledgment of failure, both in love and in writing, in which joys can only be abortive and poetry silent:

The Paradice whereto my hopes aspire,  
From out this hell, which mine afflictions prove.  
Wherein I thus doe live cast downe from myrth,  
Pensive alone, none but despayre about mee;  
My ioyes abortive, perisht at their byrth,  
My cares long liv'de, and will not dye without mee.  
This is my state, and Delias harte is such;  
I say no more, I feare I saide too much.

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### **Résumé**

*Dans sa première édition de Delia en 1592, Samuel Daniel affirme, dans sa dédicace à la Comtesse de Pembroke, qu'il n'a jamais voulu publier ses sonnets et que les circonstances l'ont forcé à le faire. Il révèle ainsi son attitude ambivalente par rapport à la publication, puisque, dans le même temps, on sait qu'il n'a cessé de faire éditer et de remanier ses œuvres. Pourtant, on trouve dans son œuvre de nombreuses références au silence, en particulier dans Delia. Cet article se propose d'analyser les références au silence, ainsi qu'à l'acte d'écrire et de parler dans le recueil de sonnets Delia, et d'examiner leur importance dans la vision qu'a Daniel de son statut de poète et dans son esthétique.*

### **Abstract**

In his first edition of *Delia* in 1592, Samuel Daniel reveals his ambivalent attitude towards the act of publishing, claiming in his dedicatory letter to the Countess of Pembroke that he had never intended to “appeare so rawly in publique.” This assertion is contradicted by the publication of his subsequent works, as well as their numerous reprints during his lifetime. However, Daniel often refers to silence in his poetry, and even more so in *Delia*. This paper explores Daniel's references to silence, as well as to speaking and writing in the sonnet sequence *Delia*, and how they inform his attitude towards his status as a poet, as well as the aesthetic of his poetry.