# **"The Mad Fiddler"** The Critical Edition

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## PESSOA, Fernando (1999). *Poemas Ingleses. The Mad Fiddler*. Edited by Marcus Angioni and Fernando Gomes. Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional – Casa da Moeda. Critical edition of Fernando Pessoa. Major series, volume V, tome III.

In 1999 the Imprensa Nacional-Casa da Moeda published the critical edition of "The Mad Fiddler," edited by Marcus Angioni and Fernando Gomes, under the title *Poemas Ingleses. The Mad Fiddler*. This work is an assemblage of poems in an allegorical drama in eight sections, which Fernando Pessoa wrote between 1911 and 1917. "The Mad Fiddler" had three previous publications, first in a bilingual edition translated to Portuguese and edited by José Blanc de Portugal, under the title *O Louco Rabequista* (Lisbon: Presença, 1988); an Italian edition translated by Amina di Munno, under the title *Il violinist pazzo* (Rome: Lucarini, 1989); and a bilingual edition edited and translated by Luísa Freire, *Poesia Inglesa* (Lisbon: Livros Horizonte, 1995).

Importantly, there is a previous publication history for poems belonging to "The Mad Fiddler," even though the firm Constable and Company rejected the typescript compiled by Pessoa in 1917. Pessoa published two poems: "Meantime," in The Athenaeum (30 January 1920), and "Spell" in the Portuguese journal Contemporânea (May 1923). In the second edition of Obra Poética, edited by Maria Aliete Galhoz and published by Aguilar in Rio de Janeiro in 1965, in the section "ALGUNS POEMAS DE "THE MAD FIDDLER" E OUTROS POEMAS DISPERSOS," there appear the poems "The Abyss," "The End," "Meantime," and "Spell," the latter two being repeated from the journals. In an article by Georg Rudolf Lind, "Descobertas no espólio de Fernando Pessoa," published in Ocidente, vol. LXX, n.º 334 (February 1966) (pp. 57-62), the early Pessoa scholar comments: "The Mad Fiddler" (O Rabequista Louco), um volume dumas 30-40 poesias, compostas entre 1911 e 1916, ordenado pelo próprio poeta e mandado para Inglaterra, sem que tivesse encontrado o interesse do editor. A resposta negativa do inglês estava ao lado da cópia dactilografada" (p. 58). He calls the work post-romantic in the style of Shelley, Wordsworth, and Browning. Lind reproduces the poem "Looking at the Tagus" (p. 59), which he compares to the poem in Portuguese, "Ela canta, pobre ceifeira." Again in Ocidente, vol. LXXIV, n.º 362 (June 1968) Lind publishes "Oito poemas ingleses inéditos de Fernando Pessoa," in which he explains that many of

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the poems of "The Mad Fiddler" were written after the major poems in Portuguese, and that Pessoa's intention was to change English romanticism into spiritualism. The poems are followed by Portuguese translations by Paulo Quintela. Lind published "The Poem," "Suspense," "The Broken Window," "Her fingers toyed absently with her rings" (which he titles "A SENSATIONIST POEM"), and "Soneto," for which the critic sees an origin in "Passos da Cruz", XIII. Also in 1968 in his book *Fontes Impressas da Obra de Fernando Pessoa*, José Galvão published the poem "The Sunflower" in INÉDITO DE FERNANDO PESSOA, followed by a note explaining that he had received the poem directly from the hands of Francisco Caetano Dias, who had found it in "o fundo do famoso baú" (GALVÃO, 1968: 113). The critical edition alters the printed record on the basis of handwritten annotations to typescript 31, one of a number of versions of "The Mad Fiddler" found in the Pessoa Archive.

The criticism that the editors of the critical edition aim at Amina di Munno in her preparation of the bilingual Italian edition (1989) are, first, that she did not take into consideration the modifications, substitutions, and additions that Pessoa made on typed versions of his poems; secondly, that she included poems that Pessoa tried to exclude; and finally that she included all 53 poems in order, ignoring Pessoa's decision indicated in the "cópia final" ["final copy"], with the word "Omit," to withhold six poems ("If I could carve my poems in wood," "Summer Moments," "Rivers," "Isis," "Horizon," and "Elevation"). Munno also failed to alter the titles of certain poems, as Pessoa had marked on a list of contents, "Goblin Dance" to "Elf Dance" and "I feel pale and I shiver" to "Not Myself."

The problem faced by the editors of the critical edition, in view of the many changes and emendations in multiple copies of the poems, is the certainty of which version is the "final copy." What is the status, for example, of the clean copy kept in Pessoa's famous trunk that itself was copied and used for another phase of changes and annotations? Could the poems as sent to Constable and Company be considered definitive? Did typescript 31 precede or follow the rejection by the English press, and if it proceeded why are there no clean copies containing the changes marked in ink on that typescript? How can one be absolutely confident, without a doubt, that Pessoa's "Omit" represents a definitive decision for "The Mad Fiddler"? In several cases, the "Omit" exists alongside a question mark or doubt. In "Summer Moments," for example, the annotation after the typed title "Autobiography in the Sunlight" is crossed out and reads "omit or correct much." "Elevation" carried the notation "Omit or alter altogether." The lines of the poem contain alterations, which would be unnecessary if Pessoa had definitely decided to eliminate the poem. In "The Broken Window," included in the critical edition, Pessoa has noted "insert, perhaps for corrections." In spite of this reservation, the poem appears in the critical edition exactly as it does in Lind's 1968 essay. Yet in other cases, the editors have decided to act on Pessoa's single indication, "omit"

even though the list of poems is unreliable, since the poem "Prayer" does not appear in the index to 31, which is the basis for the choices for the critical edition.

With the appearance of the Nogueira typescript (see Section Documents in this issue), an electrostatic copy of which became the basis of typescript 31, scholars have another lens with which to analyze the development of the critical edition, also in view of what was perhaps a special version prepared for Constable and Company. Another complicating factor is the existence of sheets taken or obtained from the archive in the 1960s, which may include poems from "Outros poemas publicados por José Blanc de Portugal" ("Ship sailing out to sea," "Mother of things impossible," "When shall we rest?" "Wake with the Sun, wake with the moon," and "The Master said you must not heed") or other titles published by Lind?

Some of the alterations to individual poems are significant. In "Not Myself" (also "I feel pale and I shiver"), line 6 has two possible readings, "Unlocks all my soul?" or "Unlooses all my heart?"; and line 16 reads "That I am vainly king" or "That I am fairy king." In several poems, the rhythm and esthetic effect is altered by the choice of variants, as in "Meantime" (also titled "Far Away"), in which the final lines read either "All me a delight, | All away from sight" or "All me a delight, | Far away from sight" or "For me a delight, | Far away from sight." Perhaps no single poem is so affected as "Lullaby," a poem that carries the following note: "The 'Lullaby' quoted is the 134th. Poem in Palgrave's Golden Treasury. It was taken by him from Martin Peerson's Private Music, a Song-Book of 1620. The 'Lullaby' is here given twice over, and the last stanza twice again." Peerson's quatrains with their two-line refrain are thus divided and form a rhythm for the sections of Pessoa's lullaby, with the final quatrain and refrain repeated three times for effect to bring the poem to a rhythmic conclusion. Pessoa noted in typescript 31 that the entire poem should be reproduced after his first lines, then only the refrain repeated subsequently throughout the poem. Perhaps should he have seen a typed version he would not have been so hasty, as the entire poem becomes dull and loses its musical effect, while the two-line refrain repeated throughout the poem is too simple and adds nothing either to the development or the meaning of the poem. Here, a sudden impulse resulted in an unmusical and dull poem esthetically, which the editors could have ignored.

Perhaps the major conundrum facing the editors of a critical edition is that definitive textual decisions must be made, even when the evidence is inconclusive, incomplete, or subject to doubt. The situation is even more acute in the case of a work that Pessoa never published and, as far as one can tell from the many possible arrangements of its poems, never concluded. Its place in the English poems further depends on an analysis of the many English poems that followed "The Mad Fiddler" during the period 1921-1934. And perhaps the material taken or borrowed from the famous trunk in the 1960s, about which Jorge de Sena

complained vociferously, will eventually alter our perception of Pessoa's writing of "The Mad Fiddler?"

What we have now are competing textual records, one in which poems from "The Mad Fiddler" have been published in three journals and two books, including the complete *Obras* by Aguilar, in translations to Italian and Portuguese, and in Freire's *Poesia Inglesa*, which follows the Nogueira typescript, and the Imprensa Nacional-Casa da Moeda critical edition. One can appreciate the careful scholarship in the critical edition, even if the "critical" is not "final."

# *Mad Fiddler* – comparative editions and typescript in Nogueira's private collection:

1. Typescript from Nogueira's private collection.

2. PESSOA, Fernando (1999). *Poemas Ingleses. The Mad Fiddler*. Edited by Marcus Angioni and Fernando Gomes. Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional – Casa da Moeda. Critical edition of Fernando Pessoa. Major series, volume V, tome III.

3. PESSOA, Fernando (1995). *Poesia Inglesa*. Edition by Luísa Freire. Lisbon: Livros Horizonte.

Typescript	Edition (1995)	Critical Edition (1999)
CONTENTS		
I. THE MAD FIDDLER		
The Mad Fiddler The Island Lycanthropy Spell		
Goblin Dance		Elf Dance
Dream "I feel pale…"		Not Myself
II. THE SHINING POOL		
Elsewhere "Go: thou hast nothing The Poem		Sunset The Shining Pool
Looking at the Tagus "If I could carry my poems" Suspense		Moonside (Poem not included)
Fierce dreams of something els Pessoa Plural: 10 (0./Fall 2016)	Se	5

#### III. THE WRONG CHOICE

The Night-Light Lullaby (Poem not included) Summer Moments, I, II, III Emptiness Monotony Sister Cecily	Prayer	Prayer (Poem not included) The Ruined Cloister
IV. FOUR SORROWS		
Rivers Far Away Episode Nothing	Meantime	(Poem not included) Meantime
V. FEVER-GARDEN		
Fever-Garden I, II The Broken Window Isis Ennue L'Inconnue		(Poem not included)
Horizon I, II Her Fingers Played Absently	Her Fingers Toyed Absently	(Poem not included) Her Fingers Toyed
VI. SONGS AFTER SLUMBER.		
The Lost Key The Sunflower I, II The Hours La Chercheuse		Song After Slumber
Song Anamnesis		Awakening
Chalice		The Butterfly
VII. THE DROPPED TORCH		
Elevation To One Singing The Foreself The Bridge The King of Gaps The Loophole The Abyss		(Poem not included)
VIII. THE LABYRINTH		
Deeeee Olympic IO (O /Eall 2010)		

Pessoa Plural: 10 (0./Fall 2016)

Fiat Lux A Summer Ecstasy Mood Sonnet Inversion Summerland The End

# **Textual variants**

Typescript	Edition (1995)	Critical Edition (1999)
I. THE MAD FIDDLER		
<ul> <li>"The Mad Fiddler"</li> <li>First his wild music flowed</li> <li>Into the village that day.</li> <li>He suddenly was in the lane,</li> <li>The people came out to hear,</li> <li>He suddenly went, and in va</li> <li>Their hopes wished him to a</li> <li>The maid and boy felt glad</li> </ul>	in	The middle of that music flowed Into the night that day. They felt him pass in the lane And went out in # to hear. But all that they heard was a pain And a sense of coming fear. The maid and boy felt glad
"Lycanthropy" 16 Was sometime musical.	Was something musical.	Is someway musical
"Spell" 6 O veiled spiritually! 12 Could our twined lives feel sweet?	O veiled spirituality! Could our twined lives fell sweet?	O veiled spiritually! Could our twined lives feel sweet?
<ul><li>"I feel pale and I shiver"</li><li>That power of the moonlight</li><li>Tremulous under the river</li><li>Unlocks all my soul?</li><li>I fade from life's control!</li></ul>		"Not Myself" What power of the moonlight Shaking under the river Unlooses all my heart? Speak to me not! I smart!
II. THE SHINING POOL		
"Go: thou hast nothing to for 20 And dearer thoughts than Fa	-	And dearer thoughts than being gay
"The Poem" 9 Day and night in my myster 10 I dream and read and spell it 12 Its vague completeness seem	over	Day and night as I feel it be I dream its passing making it over That vague completeness seems

The Labyrinth

Inversion Sonnet

to hover

"Looking At the Tagus" (last two quatrains absent)

"Fierce Dreams of Something Else"

- 2 Frenzy to go away
- 3 (O wave in me that swells!)
- III. THE WRONG CHOICE

"The Night-Light"

- 47 Whose lost scent throngs
- 48 Through my sense-screens?
- 61 And life, life's hearse,
- 62 Leaving dreams free,
- 63 Shrink undefined
- 64 Into the unknown.
- 74 Brotherly night,

#### "Lullaby"1

- 1 My heart is full of lazy pain
- 2 And an old English lullaby
- 3 Comes out of that mist of my brain.
- 4 Upon my lap my sovereign sits
- 5 And sucks upon my breast;
- 6 Meantime his live maintains by life
- 7 And gives my sense her rest.
- 8 Sing lullaby, my little boy,
- 9 Sing lullaby, my only joy!
- 10 I would give all my singing trade
- 11 To be the distant English child
- 12 For whom this happy song

was made.

- 13 When thou hast taken thy repast,
- 14 Repose, my babe, on me;
- 15 So may thy mother and thy nurse
- 16 Thy cradle also be.
- 17 Sing lullaby, my little boy,
- 18 Sing lullaby, mine only joy!
- 19 There must have been true

Splendour to go away (Frenzy in me that swells!)

Whose lost colour throngs Round my lost sensuousness? Till cares disperse Like leaves set free Where the quick wind Freshens its moan. Motherly night,

My heart is full of lazy pain And an old English lullaby Comes out of that mist of my brain. (complete text of Peerson's *Private Music* placed here)

I would give all my singing trade To be the distant English child For whom this happy song was made. Sing lullaby, my little boy, Sing lullaby, my only joy!

There must have been true

to hover

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "Note: The "Lullaby" quoted is the 134<sup>th</sup> poem in Palgrave's *Golden Treasury*. It was taken by him from Martin Peerson's *Private Music*, a Song-Book of 1620. The "Lullaby" is here given twice over, and the last stanza twice again." The six-line stanzas from Peerson are typed in red in the document extant in Nogueira's private collection.

### "The Mad Fiddler": The Critical Edition

20	happiness Near where this song was sung to small	happiness Near where this song was sung to small
21	White bands clutching a mother's dress.	White bands clutching a mother's dress.
22	I grieve that duty doth not work	Sing lullaby, my little boy,
23		Sing lullaby, mine only joy!
24	Because I would not be to thee	
25	But in the best I should.	
26	Sing lullaby, my little boy,	
27	Sing lullaby, mine only joy!	
	Oh, what a sorrow comes to me	Oh, what a sorrow comes to me
	Knowing the bitterness I have	Knowing the bitterness I have
	While that child had this lullaby!	While that child had this lullaby
31	Yet as I am, and as I may,	Sing lullaby, my little boy
32	,	Sing lullaby, my only joy!
33	8	
34	0	
35		
36	Sing lullaby, mine only joy!	
37	My heart aches to be able to weep.	My heart aches to be able to weep.
	Oh, to think of this song being sung	Oh, to think of this song being sung
39	And the child smiling in its sleep!	And the child smiling in its sleep
40	Upon my lap my sovereign sits	Sing lullaby, my little boy,
41	And sucks upon my breast;	Sing lullaby, mine only joy!
42	Meantime his live maintains by life	
43	0 5	
44	8 ,, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,	
45	Sing lullaby, my only joy!	
46	I was a child too, but would now	I was a child too, but would now
47	Be the child, and no other, hearing	Be the child, and no other, hearing
48	This song low-breathed upon its brow.	This song low-breathed upon its brow
49	When thou hast taken thy repast,	Sing lullaby, my little boy,
50	Repose, my babe, on me;	Sing lullaby, mine only joy!
51	So may thy mother and thy nurse	
52	Thy cradle also be.	
53		
54	Sing lullaby, my only joy!	
55	Oh, that I could return to that	Oh, that I could return to that
56	Happy time that was never mine	Happy time that was never mine
57	And which I live but to regret!	And which I live but to regret!
58	I grieve that duty doth not work	Sing lullaby, my little boy,
59	All that my wishing would,	Sing lullaby, mine only joy!

Because I would not be to thee

60

61 But in the best I should.	
62 Sing lullaby, my little boy,	
63 Sing lullaby, mine only joy!	
64 Ay, sing on in my soul, old voice,	Ay, sing on in my soul, old voice,
65 So motherfully laying to sleep	So motherfully laying to sleep
66 The babe that quietly doth rejoice.	The babe that quietly doth rejoice.
67 Yet as I am, and as I may,	Sing lullaby, my little boy
68 I must and will be thine,	Sing lullaby, mine only joy!
69 Though all too little for thy self	
70 Vouchsafing to be mine.	
71 Sing lullaby, my little boy,	
72 Sing lullaby, mine only joy!	
73 Sing on and let my heart not weep	Sing on and let my heart not weep
74 Because something a child	Because something a child
could have	could have
75 This song to lull him into sleep!	This song to lull him into sleep!
76 Yet as I am, and as I may,	Sing lullaby, my little boy,
77 I must and will be thine,	Sing lullaby, mine only joy!
78 Though all too little for thy self	
79 Vouchsafing to be mine.	
80 Sing lullaby, my little boy,	
81 Sing lullaby, mine only joy!	
82 Somehow, somewhere I heard	Somehow, somewhere I heard
this song.	this song.
83 I was part of the happiness	I was part of the happiness
84 That lived its idle lines along.	That lived its idle lines along.
85 Yet as I am, and as I may,	Sing lullaby, my little boy,
86 I must and will be thine,	Sing lullaby, mine only joy!
87 Though all too little for thy self	
88 Vouchsafing to be mine.	
89 Sing lullaby, my little boy,	
90 Sing lullaby, mine only joy!	
91 Ay, somehow, somewhere I was	Ay, somehow, somewhere I was
that	that
92 Child, and my heart lay happy asleep.	Child, and my heart lay happy asleep.
93 Now – oh my sad and unknown	Now – oh my sad and unknown
fate!	fate!

[Quatrains 13-16 and 17-20 Joined together in 8 lines]

"Monotony" 13 What vague and cold gusts enter 14 My soul as by a door! 15 My soul is the living centre 16 Of lives that are no more.

Pessoa Plural: 10 (0./Fall 2016)

- 17 Startle yet more each ember!18 Make the fire nearer yet!
- 19 How easy it is to remember
- 20 When memory means regret!
- 39 The red is rose is dead. Such

"Sister Cecily"

- 11 With a lily along her conscious arm
- 12 And a virgin's aureole.
- IV. FOUR SORROWS

"Rivers"

"Far Away"

"Meantime"

- 1 Far away, far away,
- 2 Far away from here.
- 3 There is no running after joy
- 4 Or away from fear,
- 17 Shadows and light,
- 20 Far away from sight

"Nothing"

5	She had left their home, their
	God-bright day
14	And near to God as they

#### V. FEVER-GARDEN

- I.
- 4 Rootless just out of Night and There
- 9 Yet philter-aureole or lay
- 11 The poppies of o'er memory may
- 12 Sping cobwebb-circles lusting thrice II.
- 23 And intermits our heart-beats' track
- 24 Senseward to demon infinites.

#### "Isis"

3 Stark-lovely stand in a mute row

"Horizon" I, II

The red rose is dead. Such

"The Ruined Cloister" With a lily along her lowly arm And a smaller aureole.

(Poem not included)

"Meantime" Far away, far away Far away from here... There is no worry after joy Or away from fear Shadows and light All away from sight.

She had left their home, their brighter day And near to day as they

Rootless just out of Night and then Far philter-aureole or lay The poppies of o'er memory stray Twice cobweb-circles lusting thrice

And out of sequestering lack The last dove in void oak alights

(Poem not included) Start-lovely stand in a mute row

Poem not included)

(End of typescript)