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EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY:
A CRITICAL REVALUATION

by

Walter S. Minot

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PREFACE

I would like to thank various people for the assistance they have given me with this dissertation. I sincerely thank Norma Millay Ellis, the sister of Edna St. Vincent Millay, for her most gracious permission to quote from the poet's works. I would also like to thank the following publishers and individuals for permission to quote from a number of sources: Twayne Publishers, Inc. for permission to quote from Edna St. Vincent Millay by Norman A. Brittin; University of Minnesota Press for permission to quote from Edna St. Vincent Millay by James Gray; Kennikat Press, Inc. for permission to quote from John Crowe Ransom's essay "The Poet as Woman" in The World's Body; Dr. Jean Morris Petitt of Kearney State College, Kearney, Nebraska, for permission to quote from her dissertation, Edna St. Vincent Millay: A Critical Study of Her Poetry in Its Social and Literary Milieu, Vanderbilt University; The Explicator for permission to quote from Arthur Dickson's article, "Millay's Euclid Alone Has Looked On Beauty Bare," (December, 1944); Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc. for permission to quote from Harold Cook's essay on Millay in A Bibliography of the Works of Edna St. Vincent Millay, edited by Karl Yost.

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PREVIEW

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I. THE PROBLEM

This study is an attempt to re-evaluate the place in American letters of Edna St. Vincent Millay (1892-1950), a poet who once enjoyed immense popular success and fame and once was considered either a major literary figure or at least an important minor one by many critics. Today, nearly twenty years after her death, Millay's reputation has so diminished that students of American literature generally do not consider her work worthy of serious scholarship or critical study. They either completely neglect her work or dismiss her as a literary phenomenon of the nineteen-twenties, a popular versifier, just a notch above Joyce Kilmer--or perhaps Edgar Guest. Today Millay does not even enjoy the modest attention that is paid to figures who are studied as interesting examples of a distinctly American culture, figures like Edgar Lee Masters and Vachel Lindsay. In sum, she has no reputation of any consequence.

This general neglect of Millay, as this study will attempt to show, is probably too harsh a judgement on her work, and Millay's accomplishments as a writer deserve a serious and thoughtful reconsideration. The passing of twenty years since her death and fourteen years since the publication of her Collected Poems should make possible a more judicious evaluation of a poet whose reputation has

suffered because of matters which have little or nothing to do with the quality of most of her poetry. These extraneous matters have often obscured the main issue, the quality of her work, and have raised a number of distracting secondary issues. As a result, Millay's work has received little careful consideration.

Among the difficulties in making a thoughtful appraisal of Millay are the extremes to which critics have gone in both attacking and praising her work, the growth of a Millay legend that focused attention on Millay as a personality rather than as a poet, and the decision by Millay to write propagandistic poetry during World War II. These and a number of other issues will be discussed in detail, since a proper understanding of her work will be possible only when secondary issues are seen in perspective. This study will survey the problems which have contributed to the need for re-examining Millay's accomplishment and then to on to review the corpus of her work.

II. UNBALANCED CRITICISM

The lack of balanced and judicious criticism of her work, perhaps as a result of her public personality, made Millay a kind of focal point for controversy throughout her career and even after her death. Those who valued her poetry became fierce partisans in her cause; those who did not value it became equally fierce detractors. As early in Millay's poetic career as 1926, Harriet Monroe

referred to her best lyrics as "the richest, most varied and most precious gift of song which any woman since the immortal Lesbian [Sappho] has offered to the world."¹ And as late as 1952, we hear this hearty praise of Millay from Edmund Wilson: ". . . Edna Millay seems to me one of the only poets writing in English in our time who have attained to anything like the stature of great literary figures"² Such praise of Millay was common during the height of her fame, the nineteen-twenties and nineteen-thirties, when she was considered "the outstanding woman poet today"³ and "undeniably one of the most important of our contemporary poets."⁴

Yet even at the height of her acclaim, there were voices cautioning against excessive praise. Allen Tate, for example, compared Millay to Byron and suggested that neither "is of the first order of poets" but that both "are distinguished examples of the second order, without which literature could not bear the weight of Dante and Shakespeare

¹Harriet Monroe, Poets & Their Art (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1926), p.71.

²Edmund Wilson, "Epilogue 1952: Edna St. Vincent Millay," in The Shores of Light (New York: Farrar, Straus and Young, Inc., 1952), p.752.

³Virginia Moore, "Women Poets," The Bookman, LXXI (July, 1930), 393.

⁴Lucille Kelling, "Contemporary Poetry," The University of North Carolina Extension Publication, IV, No.3 (April, 1938), p.24.

. . . ."5 John Crowe Ransom's comments also indicate an awareness of her limitations: "Miss Millay is the best of the poets who are 'popular,' and loved . . . perhaps as good a combination as we can expect of the 'literary' poet . . . loyal to the 'human interest' of the common reader." While there may seem to be a note of condescension here, Ransom is quick to add, "Her career has been one of dignity and poetic sincerity. She is an artist."⁶

Perhaps because of Millay's propagandistic poetry or simply because of a change in poetic tastes, a critical reaction set in during the early nineteen-forties. Reviewing the Collected Lyrics in 1943, Delmore Schwartz saw her as "dated."⁷ Within two years, however, the critic Marshall McLuhan could openly attack her poetry without fear of being overwhelmed by Millay's defenders, who were now growing fewer. McLuhan's comments were blunt and unsparing:

Edna Millay, for example, has never been anything but a purveyor of cliché sentimentality. She is an exhibitionist with no discoverable sensibility of her own. The pretentious rhetoric . . . won't stand a moment's scrutiny.⁸

⁵Allen Tate, "Modern Poets and Convention," in The Forlorn Demon: Didactic and Critical Essays (Chicago: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953), p.222. The essay was originally published in 1931.

⁶John Crowe Ransom, "The Poet as Woman," in The World's Body (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat Press, Inc., 1964), p.76. The essay was originally published in 1937.

⁷Delmore Schwartz, "The Poetry of Millay," The Nation, CLVII (December 18, 1943), 735.

⁸Marshall McLuhan, "The New York Wits," The Kenyon Review, VII (Winter, 1945), 18.

The following year, another comment fairly summed up the general critical view: "Today it requires patience and industry to unearth felicitous passages from her many volumes"9

The critical reaction which set in in the nineteen-forties has continued to the present, though one can occasionally find a critic who will praise Millay's work. Nor would it be fair to suggest that the adverse criticism was as strong during most of her career. However, it is fair to say that throughout her career favorable critics were prone to make immoderate claims for her.

This inability of critics to reach any sort of agreement on the value of Millay's work can, perhaps, be shown even more clearly if comments on an individual volume of her work are examined. Such an examination will also provide some insights on the charge that Millay never developed as a poet but continued writing the same kinds of poems in exactly the same ways throughout her career.

Of all Millay's volumes of poetry, The Buck in the Snow (1928) probably best illustrates the division among critics. Harold Cook considered the work her best except for Wine from These Grapes,¹⁰ and Edd Parks called it "a

⁹Horace Gregory and Marya Zaturenska, A History of American Poetry 1900-1940 (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1946), p.273.

¹⁰Harold Cook, "Edna St. Vincent Millay--An Essay," in A Bibliography of the Works of Edna St. Vincent Millay, Karl Yost, ed. (New York and London: Harper & Brothers, 1937), p.31.

richer, fuller book than . . . predecessors" and went on to mention the development by which "the emotions, though changed, glow with the same intense flame."¹¹ Brenner, too, saw in the volume old skill and new depth.¹² Kreymborg, though noting a greater gravity of tone and more impersonality, nevertheless felt that "the book does not advance beyond the earlier volumes."¹³

While Kreymborg's comment has a tone of disappointment to it, he did not see an actual decline in the quality of the poetry as Babette Deutsch did:

The . . . trouble seems to be that the poet has already said so perfectly all that she had to say, that now her utterance is redundant. Furthermore, one can match most of the lyrics in this book with previous lyrics of hers, and find, alas! that the earlier ones were more sharply expressed.¹⁴

In a review, Newton Arvin commented that

Again and again . . . Edna Millay has been on the very verge of producing a poem in which something momentous will be said in words that have never . . . been used before. But the poem has not yet been written.¹⁵

¹¹Edd Winfield Parks, "Edna St. Vincent Millay," Sewanee Review, XXXVIII (January, 1930), 48.

¹²Rica Brenner, Ten Modern Poets (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1930), p.80.

¹³Alfred Kreymborg, A History of American Poetry: Our Singing Strength (New York: Tudor Publishing Company, 1934), p.446.

¹⁴Babette Deutsch, "Alas!" New Republic, LVI (November 7, 1928), 333.

¹⁵Newton Arvin, "Turning Old Soil," New York Herald Tribune Books, October 7, 1928, p.5.

This division, then, between the critics with different views is clear. Moreover, it is also reasonably clear that the question of Millay's development was becoming important, if, indeed, not central with many critics. And as one might expect, there was little agreement. Seldom is this disagreement seen so clearly as in the two passages which will be quoted here, passages written within a year of each other:

For a brief time it seemed as though Miss Millay might waste her extraordinary gifts in somewhat 'trivial comments upon love But with every succeeding volume she evinced increasing power, both as a most moving and finished lyricist and as the writer of superb sonnets. She also developed her powers of narrative, which are distinguished. At the present time, by the ardor and integrity of her work, she has achieved an enviable position.¹⁶

In what seems a direct reply to this comment, Fred Lewis Pattee said this:

Her early poems have an intensity, a lyric quality not often to be found of late in American poetry. Her early sonnets are remarkable Already, however, it is seen that she is . . . a poet whose early poems . . . are destined always to hold a place in the anthologies. She has degenerated into mere cleverness. Her "Buck in the Snow" volume, 1928, deserves very little the superlatives poured upon it¹⁷

As the preceding evidence has indicated, Millay's critics varied widely in their assessments of her individual volumes. There was, it is true, a general pattern in

¹⁶John Drinkwater, Henry Seidel Canby, and William Rose Benét, eds., Twentieth Century Poetry (Cambridge, Mass.: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1929), p.406.

¹⁷Fred Lewis Pattee, The New American Literature: 1890-1930 (New York: The Century Company, 1930), pp.308-09.

the criticism. In the nineteen-twenties and nineteen-thirties Millay's work was generally praised, probably too highly; but, by the early nineteen-forties, her reputation had already gone into a serious decline, from which it has not recovered. This evidence has also indicated the importance which many critics have attached to the issue of Millay's development as a poet.

Adding to the problem of unbalanced criticism has been the lack of full-length studies of Millay. No serious and scholarly biography has yet been written. Moreover, until recently, the only book on Millay's poetry was Edna St. Vincent Millay and Her Times which, unfortunately, was written by an overly zealous Millay enthusiast, Elizabeth Atkins.¹⁸ The work claimed so much for Millay in such enthusiastic terms that the critical reader could do nothing but reject it. Ransom, for example, labelled it "an apologia."¹⁹

Of the three dissertations done on Millay, two should provide help in evaluating her poetry. Jean Morris Petitt's study, Edna St. Vincent Millay: A Critical Study of Her Poetry in Its Social and Literary Milieu,²⁰ provides some very helpful background material for understanding

¹⁸Elizabeth Atkins, Edna St. Vincent Millay and Her Times (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1936).

¹⁹John Crowe Ransom, "The Poet as Woman," in The World's Body (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat Press, Inc., 1964), p.76.

²⁰Jean Morris Petitt, Edna St. Vincent Millay: A Critical Study of Her Poetry in Its Social and Literary Milieu, Dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 1955.

Millay's poetry and the tradition in which it was written. John Joseph Patton's dissertation, Edna St. Vincent Millay as a Verse Dramatist,²¹ deals primarily with Millay's verse plays (which will not be considered in this study), but it provides some useful insights into Conversation at Midnight (1937), a long poem written in dramatic form, but not intended for the stage. Grace Hamilton King's early study, The Development of the Social Consciousness of Edna St. Vincent Millay as Manifested in Her Poetry, makes, as the author said, "no attempt to analyze or evaluate her writing except . . . to show the development of a social emphasis" ²² Thus the work is of little help in evaluating Millay's work.

Recently two studies of Millay's work have appeared as parts of standard series. James Gray's work for the University of Minnesota Pamphlets on American Writers²³ is mostly a summary of various views of Millay, without any significantly new approaches. Norman A. Brittin's study for the Twayne Series,²⁴ however, is more valuable. Brittin

²¹John Joseph Patton, Edna St. Vincent Millay as a Verse Dramatist, Dissertation, University of Colorado, 1962.

²²Grace Hamilton King, The Development of the Social Consciousness of Edna St. Vincent Millay as Manifested in Her Poetry, Dissertation, New York University, 1942, p.4.

²³James Gray, Edna St. Vincent Millay, University of Minnesota Pamphlets on American Writers, LXIV (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1967).

²⁴Norman A. Brittin, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Twayne's United States Authors Series, CXVI (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1967).

analyzed the structures of many poems which had not been studied before, and he explicated a good many poems not previously treated. Thus, Brittin has helped to lay a foundation for a revaluation of Millay's work, and his tracing of Millay's career helps fill the gap created by the lack of a scholarly biography.

III. THE MILLAY LEGEND

The second factor which makes a balanced evaluation of Millay's work difficult is the Millay legend, which ultimately may have been the cause of the critical controversies surrounding her work. In many respects, the legend of Edna St. Vincent Millay represented to her time the same thing that Lord Byron's legend represented in his day. Like Lord Byron, Millay became a public personality; and like Byron's poetry, her poetry came to be valued more for its scandalous little morsels that seemed autobiographical than for its poetic craft. In short, Millay's worth as a poet was obscured by interest in her as a personality, just as Byron's real worth was obscured (and perhaps is still distorted) by interest in Byron's life.

Although the comparison of Millay and Byron should not be carried too far, it does suggest how Millay's reputation and perhaps her work were affected by the growth of the legend associated with her name.

The beginning of the Millay legend is much easier to isolate than are its effects. It began as the direct

result of her second volume of poems, A Few Figs from Thistles (1920), in which the poet presented to the world the persona of a sexually liberated, hedonistic, unconventional, and yet completely frank and open female bohemian. The fact that she lived in Greenwich Village--then in its heyday as a center for writers, artists, and other such exotics--was enough to convince the public of the biographical validity of this mask. One poem in particular, "First Fig," came to be considered the essence of her attitude of revolt against conventional society:

My candle burns at both ends;
It will not last the night;
But ah, my foes, and oh, my friends--
It gives a lovely light!²⁵

This quatrain "aroused responsive echoes in many readers who had grown tired of hearing life forever called real and earnest" ²⁶

With the fame, or notoriety, of A Few Figs from Thistles Millay gained an audience which was probably larger

²⁵Edna St. Vincent Millay, Collected Poems, ed. Norma Millay (New York, Evanston and London: Harper & Row, 1957), p.127. All future references to the poems, unless otherwise indicated, will be to this volume and will be indicated by the abbreviation CP and the proper page numbers. This collection is the most convenient compilation of Millay's work, and the poet's sister merely selected the poems from previous sources without alteration. In fact Millay herself did almost no revising of her poems after they appeared in print.

²⁶Carl Van Doren and Mark Van Doren, eds., American and British Literature Since 1890, rev. and enlarged ed. (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1939), p.43.

than that of any other poet in this century. Her popularity, as John Ciardi put it, "was to reach beyond the 'literary' to something resembling the 'public.'"²⁷ Now this audience consisted largely of "misguided partisans" who "have seen too much of their own personalities in her verse to care whether it is great poetry or not; so they proceed to call it great."²⁸ Even those who were more appreciative of literary values tended to praise her poetry because they "disliked the new intellectual poetry."²⁹ In any case, her general audience was not the most sophisticated, and its interest in her was often for non-literary reasons.

Moreover, this unsophisticated audience made no fine distinctions between the legend and the reality. To them, the voice in the poems was Edna St. Vincent Millay, confessing all. They were more interested in the sophisticated gossip of the poems than in the poetic skill of Millay, whose life was different from her legend. As one critic pointed out, "Edna Millay was in part all the things her poems . . . said of her. But her rumored love affairs multiplied, and the stories about her glowed while she sat

²⁷John Ciardi, "Edna St. Vincent Millay: A Figure of Passionate Living," Saturday Review of Literature, XXXIII (November 11, 1950), 8.

²⁸Allen Tate, "Edna St. Vincent Millay," in Reactionary Essays on Poetry and Ideas (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936), p.221.

²⁹Robert E. Spiller, et. al., eds., Literary History of the United States, 3rd ed., rev. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1963), p.1349.

on Bedford Street and wrote and marvelled."³⁰ The facade, at least as far as available accounts indicate, exceeded the reality by a good deal.

These stories brought with them a large popular following but were a mixed blessing; for the legend became the chief concern of Millay's readers and, according to some critics, the chief concern of Millay herself. The legend surrounding Millay loomed so large that critics found it difficult to deal with the poetry apart from the personality. Moreover, many critics believed that the stories adversely affected Millay and that she became "a victim of her own legend,"³¹ a poet who wrote to satisfy the public's taste for the sensational.

Before going on to examine how the Millay legend directly affected the critics' views of Millay, it is worthwhile to examine the charges made by critics that the legend affected Millay herself. As early as 1925, one writer was suggesting that Millay was so preoccupied with the persona she had created that her more recent poetry had become a kind of caricature of this figure.³² Delmore Schwartz blamed her lack of development on her fame,³³ and Louise Bogan

³⁰Beekman W. Cottrell, "Edna St. Vincent Millay," Lectures on Some Modern Poets, Carnegie Series in English, II (Pittsburgh: Carnegie Institute Press, 1955), p.29.

³¹Ibid., p.26.

³²Clement Wood, Poets of America (New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, 1925), pp.212-13.

³³Delmore Schwartz, "The Poetry of Miss Millay," The Nation, CLVII (December 18, 1943), 736.

explained how the Millay legend damaged the poet's work.

In a review of Huntsman, What Quarry? she said,

The present book . . . is a strange mixture of maturity and unresolved youth. What further complicates its expression is the influence of the . . . rôle of unofficial feminine laureate which Miss Millay has had to play . . . to her American public.³⁴

Cargill expressed much the same view.³⁵

Thus, the idea that Millay tried to maintain her legend by writing the same kind of poems that she had written in her second volume is a common one. Much of the criticism relating to the Millay legend focuses on the poet's alleged lack of development.

Whether the legend actually hampered Millay herself to any great degree is difficult to determine. It is clear, however, that she refused to use her own name and instead continued to use the pseudonym Nancy Boyd for her prose sketches in Vanity Fair, even though she was offered more money to use her real name.³⁶ These sketches were admirably suited to foster the legend, had Millay wished to do so; and the offer was made at a time when Millay could have used the money. Years later and again in need of money, Millay rejected

³⁴Louise Bogan, "Verse," New Yorker, XV (May 20, 1939), 80.

³⁵Oscar Cargill, Intellectual America: Ideas on the March (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1941), p.640.

³⁶Miriam Gurko, Restless Spirit: The Life of Edna St. Vincent Millay (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1962), p.134.

a suggestion by her publisher that she bring out a volume called The Love Poems of Edna St. Vincent Millay because she felt such a work would attract readers seeking sensationalism.³⁷ Thus, she was well aware of the dangers of her reputation and apparently did not wish to trade upon it.

A problem that arises when a poet becomes a living legend is a tendency to see the poet as larger than life and to label or categorize him in ways that may seriously obscure the real issue, the quality of the poetry. One label which seemed to fascinate Millay's critics, even the more sophisticated ones, was that of "woman poet." There is some justification for this label, since in quite a few of her poems she adopts a distinctly feminine persona, but in a great many poems her speakers could just as well be masculine. Nevertheless, even serious critics identified the speaker in her poems as Edna St. Vincent Millay, or at least as a woman. This approach to her poetry may have been responsible for the kind of adverse criticism which described her poetry as "a literary exercise in the release of feminine emotion."³⁸

This emphasis on Millay as a woman poet writing from a woman's point of view was common and often was written in her praise (though not always, as the previous

³⁷Allan Ross Macdougall, ed., Letters of Edna St. Vincent Millay (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1952), pp.348-49.

³⁸Horace Gregory and Marya Zaturenska, A History of American Poetry 1900-1940 (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1946), p.269.

quote indicates). Typical of the comments in praise of Millay's womanliness is Harriet Monroe's remark that "taken as a whole, her poems present an utterly feminine personality of singular charm and power"39 Another example comes from Carl Van Doren:

What sets Miss Millay's love-poems apart from almost all . . . by women is the full pulse which . . . beats through them. She does not speak in the name of forlorn maidens or of wives bereft, but in the name of women who dare to take love at the flood40

Such criticism is warranted, of course, when the poems support such an interpretation, but probably too often the issue of Millay's being a woman is irrelevant.

One of the main results of the Millay legend, was that critics' views of Millay's work were apt to focus on the legendary aspects of the poetry and to stop there instead of examining other qualities of the verse. As one commentator said, "The popularity of her poetry has rested unduly on its 'Panlike quality,' its 'impudent philosophy,'"41

The disparity between what many saw in Millay's work and what was actually there was noticed by Babette

³⁹Harriet Monroe, "Edna St. Vincent Millay," Poetry, XXIV, (August, 1924), 266.

⁴⁰Carl Van Doren, "Youth and Wings," in Many Minds (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1924), p.115.

⁴¹(Sr.) M. Madeleva, "'Where Are You Going, My Pretty Maid?'" in Chaucer's Nuns and Other Essays (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat Press, Inc., 1965), p.143. A reissue of a 1925 volume.

Deutsch:

Miss Millay's poetry . . . has found favor with a wide public because it is, after all, behind the times. She uses a traditional technique . . . her clear-eyed irony and the individual character of her verse . . . give it a freshness which surprises without alarming.⁴²

Elizabeth Drew saw Millay's work in much the same light,⁴³ as did Vincent Sheean.⁴⁴ Despite some critics' awareness of these disparities, however, the Millay legend has persisted.

Whatever the truth of the Millay legend, it is clear that it became an important issue and at times seemed the only issue. As a result, much of the commentary on the poet has little to do with the actual qualities and merits of her poetry. Indeed, the legend has made it almost impossible to talk about the poetry without in some way considering the legend. Perhaps, however, the passing of time, which often cools the hottest quarrels, makes it possible now to discuss the poetry without being misled by the persona.

IV. THE PROPAGANDISTIC POETRY

Probably the most difficult problem that a Millay

⁴²Babette Deutsch, This Modern Poetry (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1935), p.98.

⁴³Elizabeth Drew, with John L. Sweeney, collaborator, Directions in Modern Poetry (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1940), p.201.

⁴⁴Vincent Sheean, The Indigo Bunting: A Memoir of Edna St. Vincent Millay (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1951), pp.109-10.

critic, especially a sympathetic critic, has to face is the propagandistic poetry she wrote during World War II in Make Bright the Arrows (written before America entered the war), The Murder of Lidice (1942), and "Poem and Prayer for an Invading Army" (1944). The level of poetic achievement in these works, as most critics have agreed, is extremely low; and it was largely because of these volumes that her reputation diminished rapidly after 1940.⁴⁵ The question, then, in weighing Millay's total achievement as a poet is basically this: how much weight should be given to obviously bad work?

To suggest an answer to this question, it is best to view the background of Millay's propagandistic efforts and to consider, moreover, how this type of verse affected her reputation with the critics.

Early in her career, Millay was primarily a lyric poet whose work was seemingly unaffected by social and political issues. In the late nineteen-twenties, however, she became involved, both personally and poetically, in the Sacco-Vanzetti case which "marked the beginning of a more active espousal of specific social issues."⁴⁶ The poetic results can be seen in The Buck in the Snow. One of the

⁴⁵Norman A. Brittin, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Twayne's United States Authors Series, CXVI (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1967), n.p. (Preface).

⁴⁶Grace Hamilton King, The Development of the Social Consciousness of Edna St. Vincent Millay as Manifested in Her Poetry, Dissertation, New York University, 1942, p.147.