

# ROMANTIC ELIOT: THE RECEPTION OF T.S. ELIOT IN SPAIN IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

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## ABSTRACT

The article explores interpretations of T.S. Eliot by three Spanish poets: José Ángel Valente, Andrés Sánchez Robayna and Antonio Colinas. For them Eliot brought about the renewal of poetry in the early twentieth century. However, contrary to the popular view of Eliot as a Modernist who censured the late developments of Romanticism, Valente, Sánchez Robayna and Colinas regarded his poems as a continuation of Romanticism. The article considers the Spanish authors' essays by analyzing the way they created the figure of Eliot as an heir of Romanticism.

**KEYWORDS:** José Ángel Valente, Andrés Sánchez Robayna, Antonio Colinas, Romanticism, Spanish poetry, renewal.

ELIOT ROMÁNTICO: LA RECEPCIÓN DE T.S. ELIOT  
EN ESPAÑA EN LA SEGUNDA MITAD  
DEL SIGLO XX

## RESUMEN

El artículo analiza cómo tres autores españoles: José Ángel Valente, Andrés Sánchez Robayna y Antonio Colinas, han interpretado la obra de T.S. Eliot. Para estos poetas Eliot fue un revulsivo en la poesía de comienzos del siglo xx, pero, en contra de la idea más extendida según la cual Eliot era un autor vanguardista que rechazaba la poética romántica, Valente, Sánchez Robayna y Colinas lo leen como continuación del Romanticismo. El artículo estudia los ensayos de estos tres poetas españoles en la medida en que crean la figura de un Eliot romántico.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** José Ángel Valente, Andrés Sánchez Robayna, Antonio Colinas, Romanticismo, poesía española, renovación.

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The shadow of T.S. Eliot has loomed large over Spanish poetry<sup>1</sup>, with generations of Spanish poets embracing him as their model. Nobel prize winner Juan Ramón Jiménez, who was closer to the Symbolist movement than the Modernists, nevertheless believed that his own poetry shared Eliot's Modernist concerns. Meanwhile the poets of the 1950s generation, such as Jaime Gil de Biedma and José Ángel Valente, regarded Eliot as the poet who had created the new poetic idiom of twentieth-century poetry.<sup>2</sup> The poets of the seventies, the *Novísimos*, also took him as their master, recognizing in Eliot the poet who renewed the worn-out poetic rhetoric of the end of the nineteenth century. Although Eliot was the master of impersonality and believed that poetic language had been rendered obsolete by the excessive sentimentalism of Romantic and Victorian rhetoric, strangely enough the Spanish poets writing in the second half of the twentieth century, while they differed greatly from his critique of the romantic tradition, considered him an heir of Romanticism.

If, in the first stage of his career, Eliot discussed the need to move beyond an exhausted Romantic aesthetic (Egri 1974, 13), the Spanish poets thought that looking back to the Romantic period would help restore new life to a poetry that had become drained of its essence. This new sensibility was provided by Eliot's Modernist poetics –which, however, the Spanish authors took out of the context in which it had been written, adapting it, against Eliot's doctrine, to their own aesthetic agenda.

In the first half of the twentieth century, Eliot was read as a Modernist poet who, despite his fame and prestige, was poorly understood in Spain. Indeed, *The Waste Land* was among the best appreciated of Eliot's writings by Spanish poets. In his pioneering study, *T.S. Eliot en España* (1996), Barón claims that Juan Ramón Jiménez (1881-1858), Federico García Lorca (1889-1936) and Luis Cernuda (1902-1963) took him to be a father figure who changed the language of modern poetry. He argues that the influence of *The Waste Land* is clearly discernible in Lorca's *Poeta en Nueva York* (1940) (Barón 1996, 19), as well as in Cernuda's "Lázaro" (1940) and "Otras ruinas" (1958) (Barón 1996, 46; 55-59). In the second half of the century, interest in *The Waste Land* was displaced by *Four Quartets*, a poem much more in line with the religious atmosphere prevalent in Spanish society after the Civil War.

In this aesthetic shift, poet José Antonio Muñoz Rojas's essay "Humillación y maestría en los poemas recientes de T.S. Eliot," published in the journal *Arbor* in 1950, played a central role. But Dámaso Alonso, too, maintained his enthusiasm for *The Waste Land*, as we can see in his 1944 collection *Hijos de la ira*.

In the fifties, Spanish poets who regarded Luis Cernuda (1902-1963) as their mentor also became interested in Eliot. As an exile of the Civil War, Cernuda lived in England and was an avid reader of English poets among whom, in his opinion, Eliot held a privileged position. By following Cernuda's literary tastes, Spanish

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<sup>1</sup> See especially the studies of Barón 1996; Rodríguez Guerrero-Strachan 2007, 141-153; Maqueda Cuenca, 2002; Llorens-Cubedo, 2013.

<sup>2</sup> See especially Gruia 2008; Walsh 2003.



poets at home came, via Eliot's poems, into contact with the modernist sensibility. Cernuda set the model for Gil de Biedma (1929-1990) and José Angel Valente (1929-2001). However, following Cernuda's interpretation of Eliot's oeuvre, placing it in the Romantic tradition, Spanish poets interpreted Eliot's Modernist sensibility as a continuation of Romantic aesthetics.

In this article I will explore the literary essays of three Spanish poets, José Ángel Valente, Andrés Sánchez Robayna (1952) and Antonio Colinas (1946), investigate their assessment of Eliot's poetics, and analyze the ways in which they connect him to the Romantics.

It is a truism that Eliot developed his theory of impersonality as a reaction against the Romantic poets' exaltation of the self. While poets such as Wordsworth and Coleridge produced verse that was largely centered on the poet's creation and contemplation of the world, Eliot regarded poetry as a means of writing about the world without the active and direct mediation of the Idealist self of the poet. Rather than viewing the world as a tabernacle for the poet's self, he preferred an indirect form of creation in which the poet looks into the world and discovers elements that can represent any emotion indirectly, as he theorized in this passage on the "objective correlative":

The only way of expressing emotion in the form of art is by finding an 'objective correlative'; in other words, a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that *particular* emotion. (1932d, 125)

Similarly, in "Tradition and the Individual Talent" (1919), he had pointed to the same idea: "The progress of an artist is a continual self-sacrifice, a continual extinction of personality" (1932e, 7). From these words, the reader may infer a total rejection of romantic poetics, although Eliot qualified these statements throughout his life. If, as George Bornstein argues, "Keats, Shelley and Wordsworth became a sort of anti-Trinity for Eliot" (1976, 101), after the 1930s Eliot may have appropriated the Keatsian image to recreate the interplay of reason and emotion he found in the Metaphysical poets (Baker 2003, 58-59). At the same time, Eliot's essay reinforced the historical sense of poetry, as Viorica Patea has argued (2016, 2). This historical sense figured preeminently in the Spanish authors' readings of Eliot's oeuvre in the second half of the twentieth century.

José Ángel Valente sought poetic models that would throw off the shackles of the rhetorical style of poetry that was dominant in Spain following the Civil War. The time Valente spent in Oxford between 1954 and 1958 opened the gates to a new arena of English literature, which until then he had hardly explored. He was stunned by the British Romantics and the Modernists. His interest in these poets had been dictated by Cernuda, then an exile in Mexico, who had read the English Romantics (Rivero Taravillo 2001, 55, 78-82) and had attended one of Eliot's lectures in Glasgow (91). In his British exile Cernuda came to realize Eliot's central role in poetry (111, 126). In his essay "Luis Cernuda y la poesía de la meditación," Valente explores his indebtedness to Cernuda by analysing the importance that the poetry of meditation had for his older colleague. Valente argues that the tradition



of meditative poetry connects early practitioners such as the English Metaphysical poets with William Blake, William Wordsworth, T.S. Eliot, Emily Dickinson and William B. Yeats (Valente 2008b, 138-140). Valente makes reference to Louis Martz's famous *The Poetry of Meditation* (1954), in which the American scholar analysed the influence of religious meditation in the English poetry of the seventeenth century. Valente points out that the core of meditative practice is the combination of mental analysis with the affective will, a union that in the end results in "that particular blend of passion and feeling" (2008b, 139)<sup>3</sup> to paraphrase Eliot's argument, that, for the Metaphysical poets, thought and feeling were not different species of experience (Eliot 1932a, 247-248).

Eliot's theory of imagination starts with recognizing a dissociation between thought and feeling in the post-seventeenth century sensibility. He acknowledges that for Donne a "thought was an experience; it modified his sensibility" (1932a, 247). With a few exceptions, writers only meditated on the topics poetically, but never achieved the creation of a "verbal equivalent for states of mind and feeling" (1932a, 248). However, Eliot "conceived of aesthetic creation as a transforming, unifying process between polarizing realities—feeling and thought" (Patea 2011, 26).

Though Eliot reveals the gap between the Metaphysical poets and Victorians such as Alfred Tennyson or Robert Browning, who do not maintain the unity of thought and feeling, Valente does not seem to take into account the nuance that Eliot refers to in his essay. He rather looks towards the Spanish literary tradition to find modern examples of poetry in which thought and feeling are in unison. He finds a precursor in Miguel de Unamuno (1864-1936), who famously wrote: "Think your feelings, feel your thoughts"<sup>4</sup> (Unamuno 1969, 168). However, when Unamuno expressed his poetic creed, he likened it to that of the English Romantic poets, Wordsworth and Coleridge in particular (Perojo Arronte 2007, 167-174). Valente recognizes the coherence that underlies Eliot's analysis of the Metaphysical poets and, due to his own interpretation of Martz's book, sees Unamuno's poetic doctrine as largely dependent on the Romantics. Valente argues that meditation was destined to create a spiritual mood that does not differ from that described by Coleridge when he theorized on the imagination. In his essay Valente quotes Cernuda's paraphrase of the excerpt from *Biographia Literaria*, in which Coleridge explains the esemplastic imagination. For Valente that esemplastic power is the culmination of the contemplative process, in which the senses and the interior powers of the soul become one (Valente 2008b, 140); although Eliot was referring, rather, to the union of thoughts and feelings.

Valente reads Coleridge, Unamuno, Eliot and Cernuda creatively, and establishes a kinship between them. He uses Martz's analysis of the meditative tradition in poetry to create subtle links. However, by basing his argument on Unamuno's

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<sup>3</sup> The Spanish original reads: "esa 'mezcla particular de pasión y sentimiento'." Translations are mine.

<sup>4</sup> The Spanish original reads: "Piensa el sentimiento, siente el pensamiento."



*ars poetica* and applying it to the Romantic poets, Valente in fact disavows Eliot's critique of Romantic aesthetics. Perhaps following his readings of "Tradition and the Individual Talent," Valente thought that there was a tradition of poetry stretching from the Romantics to the Symbolists and the Modernists, so that Coleridge and Eliot could be included within the same group. The only difference was that in his view Eliot was a Romantic of the second wave alongside Charles Baudelaire, Arthur Rimbaud, Juan Ramón Jiménez, Paul Valéry and Rainer Maria Rilke, among others (Valente 2008a, 96). For Valente, Unamuno's and Eliot's poetics aimed to achieve a unified sensibility in which feeling and thought are recovered and bound together. Precisely because Valente shared Eliot's notions of the dynamics between "tradition" on the one hand, and "the individual talent" on the other, he conceived Modernism as a continuation of Romanticism, one more phase of a never-ending tradition. This is not to say that Valente did not appreciate Eliot's revolution in poetry, rather that he was concerned to explain Cernuda's shift from his early Surrealist verse to his mature poetry of exile, in which the Romantic imprint is present (Perojo Arronte 2007, 174-180), while recognising Cernuda as a modern poet on whom Eliot's influence was clear (Rodríguez Guerrero-Strachan 2007, 146-147). Valente built an argument that made the poetic movements, despite the harsh criticism Eliot had expressed of the Romantics, congenial to one another.

In Andrés Sánchez Robayna's essays on poetry, Eliot figures only discreetly. Robayna views Eliot as a poet in whose poetics thought is central, in a way that goes back to the tradition of Dante, Novalis and S.T. Coleridge (Sánchez Robayna 1999, 189). The essay, "Poesía y poética," was originally a lecture delivered at the University of Texas, Austin, in 1984, and it is a *biographia literaria*, in which the Spaniard reviews the most important moments and literary discoveries of his early formative period. His readings during these years gravitated towards, among others, Stéphane Mallarmé, Octavio Paz, José Lezama Lima, Giuseppe Ungaretti and Wallace Stevens, whom he also translated. His poetics was built on the importance of the poetic word, and on a poetry reduced to its most essential elements (López Fernández 2000). In this lecture Sánchez Robayna merges the idea of the poet-critic and of the poet-philosopher. For him Dante and Novalis, who did not theorize any poetics, can be equated with Coleridge, Eliot and Paz, who developed influential careers as essayists. Robayna's misunderstanding arises both from his reading of Eliot's essays and from his reading of the Romantic poets.

Eliot did devote several essays to the critical process. In "The Function of Criticism" (1923) he asserts: "The critical activity finds its highest, its true fulfillment in a kind of union with creation in the labor of the artist" (1932b, 19), which conforms to the common idea that, starting with Romanticism, literature was both an act of creation and of literary theory. As for Dante, Eliot stresses the importance of the theological thought underlying Dante's *Divine Comedy*. There he sees a distinction between "philosophical *belief* and poetic *assent*" (1932c, 218), a difference which makes Dante's poetry and philosophy two distinct entities, but which also secularizes the theological doctrine present in the poem, turning it ultimately into a matter merely of intellectual pursuit.



As for the Romantic poets, Robayna argues that in the Romantic period there was a renewed union of poetry and thought. As he wrote in “Juan Ramón Jiménez en la perspectiva del fin de siglo,” one key literary current is that of the philosophical musing, analyzed by Friedrich Schlegel in Novalis’s work (2008a, 50). In his essay “Poesía y pensamiento,” a lecture originally delivered in 2006, Sánchez Robayna explores in greater depth his idea of a philosophical poetry, following Valente’s essay “Luis Cernuda y la poesía de la meditación”; the analogical thought that, for Eliot, characterizes the Metaphysical poets is also a central feature of Romantic poetry. Sánchez Robayna mentions Novalis, Giacomo Leopardi and Wordsworth, who perceived that such a reflection established a tight bond between thought and poetry (2008b, 318-319). Sánchez Robayna moves beyond Valente’s analysis of the tradition of Cernuda’s meditative poetry to examine the critical task this poetry carries out. What Eliot called “a direct sensuous apprehension of thought” (Eliot 1932a, 246) is close to Sánchez Robayna’s integration of metaphor and image, imagination and perception, materiality and the sense of the word (Sánchez Robayna 2008b, 327), which is a way of describing what he calls philosophical poetry, a concept in line with María Zambrano’s notion of poetic reason.

Sánchez Robayna acknowledges that Eliot’s poetic credo, formulated in his widely read essays on the Metaphysical poets, is central to the connection between poetry and philosophy. Nevertheless, he also grants that the poetics of Symbolism, a direct heir of Romanticism, had opened up a similar avenue of investigation into the consubstantiality of poetry and philosophy (2008b, 327-328). In his memorable essay “Juan Ramón Jiménez en la perspectiva de fin de siglo,” (1998), Sánchez Robayna denies the influence on Eliot of the French Symbolist poets such as Jules Laforgue. Furthermore, Sánchez Robayna –who bases his argument on Valente’s exploration of Eliot’s influence on Cernuda’s poetry– attributes the connection between Romanticism and Eliot to the latter’s conception of the unity between poetry and philosophy. Sánchez Robayna argues that the English poets of the seventeenth century prefigured the romantic sensibility, and supports his case by exposing the analogy to romantic philosophical poetry which Eliot continued in his verse.

Eliot was one of the poets whom the Spanish poets who began publishing at the beginning of the 1970s read as a path to a renewal of Spanish poetry in the last quarter of the twentieth century. In the anthology *Nueve novísimos poetas españoles* (1970), edited by José María Castellet, the poets included mention Eliot as a poet central to their poetics. Castellet himself acknowledges the Novísimos’s indebtedness to Eliot: “Thus, their masters are Eliot, Pound, Saint-John Perse, Yeats, Wallace Stevens, the French Surrealists, etc.”<sup>5</sup> (2001, 39). When writing about his literary

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<sup>5</sup> The Spanish original reads: “Así, resultan ser sus maestros Eliot, Pound, Saint-John Perse, Yeats, Wallace Stevens, los surrealistas franceses, etc.”



models, poet Antonio Martínez Sarrión (b. 1939) says: “In my particular case, I think an echo of the first Eliot is visible in my poems”<sup>6</sup> (2001, 89).

Félix de Azúa (b. 1944) mentions Eliot when he examines the lack of importance that political ideas may have in a poem (2001, 135). Two decades later de Azúa would return to Eliot. In one brief essay he analyses the popularity the Anglo-American poet enjoys in England. In his opinion, Eliot is a foreign cultural critic who taught the British the importance of culture (1998, 193-195) and, in “Nuevas lecturas compulsivas,” Azúa discusses Andreu Jaume’s translation of *The Waste Land*.

The poet Pere Gimferrer (b. 1945) describes his formative readings and mentions Eliot’s and Pound’s poetry (2001, 152). José María Álvarez (b. 1942) maintains that Eliot was one of the models that the *Novísimos* adopted in their effort to renew Spanish poetry: “We said: our inheritance is not the one that has been accepted by the Spanish poets for so long. And we fortified ourselves in Eliot, in Pound, in Kavafis, in Rimbaud, in Baudelaire”<sup>7</sup> (2001, 54).

Other poets, such as Marcos Ricardo Barnatán, Luis Antonio de Villena and Luis Alberto de Cuenca, were not strictly regarded as *Novísimos*. Nonetheless they also acknowledged Eliot’s importance. Barnatán (b. 1946), for example, produced a poem to illustrate his poetics that includes as a preliminary quotation line 405 from *The Waste Land* – “By this, and this only, we have existed” (Barnatán 1985, 205)–. This incomplete list of names and quotations is intended only to show the number of poets who directly mentioned Eliot in their poetics, a fact that underlines Eliot’s popularity in Spain during the 1970s.

Antonio Colinas’s critical appreciation of Eliot is somewhat different to that of the *Novísimos*. While the latter regards Eliot as a Modernist poet, Colinas realizes that there is a thread that leads from the Romantics to Eliot. Colinas published his first book of poems in 1967, but was not regarded as a true *Novísimo* despite the fact that his poetics is based on tenets similar to theirs, i.e. linguistic renewal and use of cultural references such as allusions to the Renaissance, Venice and Mediterranean cultures, and any other period of the past that might serve as an emblem of literacy and beauty, as exemplified in a large number of the poems collected in *Sepulcro en Tarquinia* (1975). In Colinas’s poetics, Romanticism figures as a central movement in European civilization, a theme which runs through his essays “El romanticismo que surgió de la metrópoli” (2008a) and “El infinito en Leopardi y el infinito poético” (2008b), as well as poems such as “Novalis” and “Noviembre en Inglaterra” from *Sepulcro en Tarquinia* (2011).

While for Valente and Sánchez Robayna the tradition of meditative poetry led from Cernuda’s view of the Romantics to their view of Eliot as heir to Romanticism, Colinas is not interested in the relationship between Romantic

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<sup>6</sup> The Spanish original reads: “En mi caso particular tengo que hablar, creo que es visible en mis poemas, del eco del primer Eliot.”

<sup>7</sup> The Spanish original reads: “Dijimos: nuestra herencia no es la que han venido aceptando los poetas españoles desde hace tanto. Y nos fortificamos en Eliot, en Pound, en Kavafis, en Rimbaud, en Baudelaire.”



philosophical poetry and Eliot's verse. He develops his understanding of Romanticism from an international perspective which is indirectly linked to his conception of the Mediterranean sea as the origin of an important civilization. For Colinas, Romanticism is not only associated with a historical period; it is, rather, a moment in which people attempt to achieve a type of knowledge that encompasses visible and transcendental reality (2008a, 111-112). For Colinas, the Romantics and their heirs sought to achieve a sense of wholeness, and this is indeed illustrated by the transcendental Idealism that bloomed in Germany at the end of the eighteenth century (117-118). Colinas places art at the center of his theory on Romantic absolute knowledge (2008a, 116), and indeed Colinas's idea of the function of art shows a clear affinity with the role of art as conceived during the Romantic period. He paraphrases John Keats on the purpose of art, which is to free man from worries and to elevate his thoughts (2008a, 117). The only significant difference between thought, i.e. Idealist philosophy, and poetry is that philosophical thought belongs to the realm of reason, while the poetic word is in harmony with music (2008a, 119).

The renewal of poetry that Colinas regarded as necessary in the 1970s was also a rejection of the previous Spanish poetic movement, which maintained that poetry was primarily a means of communication, in detriment to the importance that poetic language had in the creative process (Benítez Andrés, 2019). Colinas argued that poetry is a form of knowledge that interprets reality (2008c, 136). There is an obvious connection with his interpretation of the role of art in society, an interpretation that is largely dependent on the role the Romantics attributed to art, and Eliot's view of poetry as expressed in *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism* (1933). In his introduction Eliot does not really accept the notion of poetry as communication. He writes: "If poetry is a form of 'communication', yet that which is to be communicated is the poem itself" (1933, 30). The poem is self-sufficient in itself and requires neither experience nor the reader to attain any sort of completeness. This self-sufficiency is provided by the relationship between the writer and the reader; for Eliot, this creates a transcendent poetic realm that approximates poetry to religion and that, for Colinas, takes the form of the quest for absolute knowledge which he discussed in several essays. Similarly, Colinas argues that the poet metamorphoses reality by means of language to present the world wisely and perennially. There exists the same transcendent urge in Colinas's use of poetry as there is in Eliot's *Four Quartets*, particularly in "East Coker."

In any case, the renewal of poetry for Colinas was achieved by a new conception of the poetic word, as he expounds in "Nuevas notas para una Poética," originally delivered as a lecture in 2004. Poetic language is based on the intensity and condensation that Pound claimed was necessary, and is achieved, as Unamuno had stated, by the union of feelings and thought (2008c, 137). Colinas quotes Unamuno's dictum in summarizing the characteristics of poetic language: it moves the reader, it is intense, it is pure and it has rhythm (2008c, 141). By writing that poetic thought must lie behind the poet's work (2008c, 142), Colinas made reference to Eliot in the essay a few paragraphs later, suggesting that he regarded Eliot as a poet with whom he shares this poetic conception.



Though Colinas does not mention the visual imagination Eliot explored in his essay on Dante (1932c, 204), this type of imagination is present in the poems of *Sepulcro en Tarquinia*, for example in “Simonetta Vespucci”:

Simonetta Vespucci:  
For your two green eyes  
Sandro Botticelli,  
Has taken you out of the sea,  
And for your long plaits,  
And for your long thighs (2011, 155)<sup>8</sup>

This use of the visual image in Colinas’s poetry might bring to mind the notion of the objective correlative, “a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events, which shall be the formula of that *particular* emotion,” as Eliot theorized it in “Hamlet and His Problems” (1932d, 124-125). The visual imagination allows Colinas to reconcile the tenets of modern poetry, as exemplified by Eliot’s verse, with his own poetics, which is largely reliant on a personal reading of Romanticism (Baker 2003).

Another remarkable point of union between Eliot and Colinas is their use of a language that moves towards its purest expression. In his early years, Eliot’s poetical stance was close to Imagism. Poetic language had to be stripped of everything that was surplus, a tenet to which Colinas also subscribes when he discusses Pound’s excisions to *The Waste Land*. The deletion of excerpts that were not necessary for the poem was an exercise in creative liberty (2008c, 145). Much more important is the reduction of poetic language to its essentials: “as years pass by, the poet thins his language, simplifies it, reduces it”<sup>9</sup> (2008c, 143). Both Eliot and Colinas moved from a poetry based on the image, exemplified by “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” and “Sepulcro en Tarquinia,” to the concise and meditative poetry of *Four Quartets* and *Desiertos de la luz* (2008). Eliot’s affective and austere language also helps us understand Colinas’ interest in the American poet. Eliot’s shift in *Four Quartets* towards humility and his later disregard of the Modernist irony present in *The Waste Land* give rise to a poetic language in which affect, even if it is restrained, is nonetheless present (Moses 2005). This shift from Modernist irony to affect is a consequence of Eliot’s later nuanced reading of the Romantics (Egri 1974, 15). Eliot may not have expressed it directly in his poetry, but there is little doubt that Colinas realized that the Modernist sensibility was replaced by a Romantic-like sensibility and language in Eliot’s *Four Quartets*. This would interest Colinas as a way of merging modern sensibility and Romantic aesthetics.

In the second half of the twentieth century, T.S Eliot was read in Spain as an heir of the Romantics due to Valente’s readings of Eliot’s criticism that go back to

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<sup>8</sup> The Spanish original reads: “Simonetta Vespucci: / por tus dos ojos verdes / Sandro Botticelli / te ha sacado del mar, / y por tus trenzas largas, / y por tus largos muslos.”

<sup>9</sup> The Spanish original reads: “cuando avanza en años el poeta va adelgazando su lenguaje, lo simplifica, lo reduce.”



Cernuda. Following Valente's reading, Sánchez Robayna read Eliot as a Modernist and kinsman of the Romantics. Finally, Colinas saw Eliot as a renewer of poetry who maintained an indirect link with the Romantic poets, with both writers rooting poetic expression in the unity between thought and feeling. All in all, Eliot was read as another link in the poetic tradition, much in the sense he himself had theorized in "Tradition and the Individual Talent"; though for the Spanish poets, Modernism was interpreted as a development of Romanticism, rather than as a new movement that criticized and opposed it. This explains why *The Waste Land* did not figure prominently among the readings of the Spanish poets after the 1940s, while *Four Quartets* became the poem most quoted from and cited by Spanish authors during the second half of the twentieth century.

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