
FROM REPUBLICANISM TO ANARCHISM: THE POETRY OF CELS GOMIS

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1. Introduction¹

Cels Gomis i Mestre (Reus, 1841 – Barcelona, 1915), a well-known folklorist, is an author with a rich personality and a considerable vitality in a range of different areas. With a wide and varied literary output, he was not only a folklorist but also a hiker, a poet and a communicator of science. Trained as a civil and a railway engineer, he practised his profession all over the Iberian Peninsula, coming into contact with people from different regions and labourers on building sites. This contact is clearly reflected in all his writing: collections of folklore, ideological texts and the scientific explanations that he wrote for children.

In his youth he was actively involved in politics.² At first, he was attracted to the federal republicanism of Valentí Almirall. In 1869, Gomis was a member of the Federalists Club and he published texts in various federalist newspapers and took part in meetings preceding the so-called Tortosa pact. The failure of the subsequent Federalist revolt forced many of the people involved, Gomis included, to leave Spain. He fled to Geneva in 1870 where he came across anarchist ideas for the first time. This heralded a new stage in his thinking. He also came across the International Workers' Association and Bakunin's International Alliance of Socialist Democracy and, on his return to Madrid, he actively spread the ideas of the Alliance among the workers. He also published pointed articles in the press and essays on the relation between Catholicism and social questions, and the role of the working woman, both burning issues of the day.

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- 1 This study is part of the research carried out by the Universitat Rovira i Virgili's research group Identitat Nacional i de Gènere en la Literatura Catalana, the Grup de Recerca Identitats en la Literatura Catalana (GRILC) (2014 SGR 755), and the project FFI2015-64128-P (MINECO/FEDER), funded by the Ministerio de Economía y Competitividad. I have updated the spelling of the pre-normative texts.
 - 2 For further information about the ideology of Cels Gomis, see Samper (2013: 49-84).

At the end of the 19th century, when he settled with his family in Barcelona, he gave up his public political activity. Even so, his thinking resonates throughout his writing (not only in his more ideological texts), from the beginning to the end of his lifetime and in all his work. His poetry, which is what we are interested in here, can be divided into two main blocks. On the one hand, he wrote poems in the same style as popular Spanish poetry, which largely dealt with love themes and the exaltation of nature, and which he published in the anthologies *Cantares* [Folk songs] (in Spanish) and *Aubades i capvespres* [Dawns and Dusks] (in Catalan).³ On the other hand, he wrote poems that we could refer to as “combative”, in the sense that they reflect his political and social thought. These compositions deal with the same themes as those of the anarchist writers of the age, who were, in the case of Catalonia, the heirs of republicanism. In this regard, Pere Gabriel said the following:

En un primer moment, l'anarquisme naixent apareix confús i molt interrelacionat amb l'obrerisme i el republicanisme, no ja en un sentit polític sinó, anant més al fons, compartint una visió determinada del món, unes determinades concepcions generals sobre la història, la ciència, etc. (Gabriel 1986: 209).⁴

And from the cultural point of view:

A Catalunya –i a Espanya– els distints obrerismes es desenvoluparen i afirmaren dins el marc d'una cultura de base republicana i democràtica. Els distints corrents i formulacions militants (el cooperativisme i el mutualisme, el socialisme reformista, l'anarquisme, l'anarcosindicalisme) afirmaren una especificitat pròpia però no trencaren amb els elements fonamentals ni amb el llenguatge bàsic elaborat pels republicans (Gabriel 2005: 29).⁵

3 For more on this issue, see Palomar (2015: XVI-XXIII).

4 [At first, the anarchism that was emerging was mixed up and interweaved with the working class movements and republicanism. And not just in the political sense. At a deeper level, they shared a particular vision of the world and certain general concepts about history, science, etc.].

5 [In Catalonia – and Spain – the various working class movements developed and became entrenched in the framework of a republican and democratic culture. The various forms in which activism was expressed (cooperativism and mutualism, reformist socialism, anarchism, anarcho-syndicalism) all had their own specificities but they did not break away from the fundamental features or language of the republicans].

The political poetry of Cels Gomis is a good example of this relation between federal republican culture and republicanism, and the left-wing militant working-class movements. Given his ideological evolution, this is hardly surprising. This article analyses Gomis' political poetry that was published in the contemporary press and which follows the aesthetic directives of these movements.⁶

2. Two poems in the *Diari Català*

Between 1879 and 1881, Gomis wrote for the *Diari Català*, the first Catalanist newspaper written in Catalan, which had been founded by Valentí Almirall. Among his contributions there are two poems. The first, entitled “Lo mar” [The Sea], speaks of the force of the people, which the author compares to the force of the waves:

Les ones del mar altiu
la sorrenca platja besen,
afegint-hi cada jorn
nous grans que ses aigües llencen;
mentres que a l'aspre rocam
ne colpeixen amb feresa
esmicant-ne amb los seus colps
les roques més gegantesques.

Lo poble n'és com lo mar:
generós quant se li deixa
lliure d'estorbs lo camí;
fer al trobar resistència.

(Gomis 1880b)

The waves of the high sea
kiss the sandy beach,
and day by day new grains
are thrown up by the waters,
savagely crashing against
the towering cliffs
and its constant pounding
crumbles the largest rocks.

The people are like the sea:
generous when the way
is free of obstacles;
savage when they meet resistance.

This first composition shows the correlation between nature and the people. The viewpoint is rather optimistic in the sense that it praises the virtues of the people by taking the force of nature as an example (in the positive sense).

6 It excludes, then, the aforementioned love poetry, as well as the translations and unpublished compositions that are to be found in his personal collection at the Archive in Reus.

The second poem, entitled “Faula” [Fable], is dated 12 January 1881 in Ocentejo (in the province of Guadalajara). It argues that all professions that pursue the same objective are just as important as one other. Gomis takes as an example the construction of a house and he re-creates the dialogue between an architect, the general contractor and a rubbish collector:

—¡Qui hi ha tant útil com jo! Un arquitecte exclamava, Mirant una de ses obres, I de les més ben deixades.	—Who is more useful than I am! An architect exclaimed, Gazing at one of his works, One he was most proud of.
—Jo, que sóc lo qui l’ha feta, Si bé tu l’has projectada; Li replicà de seguida Un fadrí mestre de cases.	—I am, because I made it, Although it’s true you designed it; Replied at once A young master builder.
—I jo, que una volta llesta, Faig que pugui ser habitada Venint a treure la brossa, Respon un escombriaire.	—And I am, because once it was done, I made it liveable in By coming to collect the rubbish, Replied a rubbish collector.
—No disputeu sobre això, Murmura un vell amb veu baixa: Tots ne són igualment útils Los que en aquest món treballen.	—Don’t argue about that, Said an old man quietly: All those who work in this world Are just as useful as one another.

(Gomis 1881)

The three characters wax lyrical about their own virtues but do not take into account the importance of working together. A fourth character is required (an old man) to express the author’s idea: the work done by each of them is equally important and the result can only be understood as a joint effort. This idea of giving the same value to all jobs is also expressed in a book that Gomis published at the beginning of 1900.⁷ In the introduction, written for schoolteachers, the author defends the equality of the various professions:

Y ante todo y sobre todo, es preciso inculcar a los niños la idea de que la primera y principal de las virtudes es el trabajo, y el peor de los vicios la holganza; hay que enseñarles que la blusa del obrero es tan honrosa como la levita del caballero; que lo que deshonra al hombre no es el

7 I quote from the 11th edition, published in 1933, which is the one I have had access to.

traje, sino las acciones; que no hay profesiones honrosas y degradantes, altas y bajas; que todas son igualmente necesarias y, por lo tanto, en igual grado meritorias (Gomis 1933: 7).⁸

3. Three poems in *L'Avenç*

In 1882 and 1883, Gomis published three ideological poems in *L'Avenç*. The first, dedicated “A una font” [To a Spring] defends liberty by focusing on the water of a spring. As it flows, the water undertakes not only a physical journey but also a journey in time, and it passes Phoenician, Roman, Catalan and Arabian ships as well as historical figures like Columbus and historical events:

Mes tes aigües no mèscolten, I van brollant i brollant, I rialleres saluden Lo sol de la llibertat.	But your waters pay me no heed And they gush and gush And they joyfully greet The sunshine of freedom.
¡Com ne corren pressuroses Per a sortir del barranc! ¡Com ne minven sa carrera A l'arribar a la vall!	How quickly they flow To get out of the ravine! How much more leisurely they meander When they get to the valley!
Les unes corren tranquil·les Per aquell estret canal, I ne fan anar les moles Del molinet d'allà baix;	Some flow calmly Along the narrow channel, And they turn the sails Of the mill yonder;
De la resclosa les altres Ne fugen, i més enllà, Amb les del riu ja confoses, Cent turbines fan anar.	From the dam, others Flee, and beyond, Now blending with the river, They turn a hundred turbines.
Que per tot on van tes aigües Ne fan brollar lo treball, I per tot on aquest brolla, Brolla ensems la llibertat.	Wherever they go, your waters Bring work, And wherever there is work, So there is freedom.

(Gomis 1882a)

8 [And above all else, children need to be taught that the first and foremost of the virtues is work, and the worst of the vices is idleness; they need to be taught that the

The spring's journey ends with an exaltation of work and freedom, which comes from man and his inventions.

The second poem contrasts the ideas of faith and science as being at the heart of human existence, in a three-way dialogue between the poetic I and Faith, Science and, finally, the reader:

Jo de la vida saber volia
tots los secrets,
i com a mestra d'aquesta ciència
prenguí la Fe.
—Viure és nàixer a aquesta vida
per a esperar-ne d'altra millor,
la mestra aquella me deia sempre,
l'ànima nostra naix, mes no mor.

I desired to know
all of life's secrets,
and to learn these things
I turned to Faith
—To live is to be born into this life
and to expect another better one,
Faith always used to say,
our soul is born but it never dies.

Jo de la vida saber volia,
tots los secrets,
per mestra meva prenguí la Ciència,
i ella em digué:
—Res hi ha en la terra que creat sia,
que la matèria sempre és estat;
si tot té límits, com alguns diuen
¿on són los límits de l'ample espai?

I desired to know
all of life's secrets,
and to learn them I turned to Science
and she told me:
—Nothing on earth has been created,
matter is always in one state or another;
if everything has limits, as some say,
where are the limits of outer space?

Digueu-me quina d'aquestes mestres
més raó té;
que jo pensant-hi fins lo judici
crec que podré.
—Si davant nostre l'infinit posen
darrere nostre hi és de segur;
si la matèria no deu morir-ne
és perquè sempre, sempre ha sigut.

Tell me who is most right;
For if I think about it
I believe I shall lose my mind.
—If before us we have infinity
it is certainly behind us;
if matter never dies
it is because it has always been.

(Gomis 1882b)

In these two poems, Gomis ends up siding with science, which he regards as the driving force that increases man's capacity to progress. This is one of the themes of the anarchist poetry of the age (Litvak 1990: 310; Lida 1970), which it shares with the previous republican poetry.

workers' overalls are as honourable as the gentleman's frock coat; that what brings dishonour is not the suit but the actions; that there are no honourable or degrading, worthy or unworthy, professions. They are all equally necessary and, therefore, equally deserving].

The third poem, published in 1883, is entitled “La pàtria de l’home” [Man’s Homeland]. Two years later, on 14 July 1885, Gomis took part in the First Socialist Competition held in Reus:

El Primer Certamen Socialista es va celebrar a la ciutat de Reus el 1885, organitzat pel Centre d’Amics de Reus. El certamen va ser promogut per l’esmentada societat amb la finalitat de contribuir a donar relleu intel·lectual al moviment obrer i a les classes mitges, formades, sobretot, per artesans, professors i petits comerciants que, sovint, s’apropaven a les idees libertàries (Aisa 2007: 188).⁹

The competition was just one of a whole series of cultural activities designed to awaken an interest in culture among the people. Worthy of particular mention is that the anarchist from Reus Josep Lluнас i Pujals opened the competition with a speech in Catalan even though it was customary to discuss serious things, social analysis, the future of the working man, anarchist organisation and theory in Spanish. However, “l’activitat lúdica, el cant, la poesia, podia fer-se en la llengua utilitzada sempre, en català” (Olivé 1994: 79-80).¹⁰ Cels Gomis’ contribution was his reading of the aforementioned poem. Another of the participants, Emili Guanyavents, read the poem “Capitis Poena”, which condemned social violence and capital punishment (Aisa 2007: 196-197). Morales (1991: 55; 2002: 72) mistakenly attributes Guanyavents’ poem to Gomis.

Gomis’ poem shows that the genius of man is more important than frontiers or nations, and extols the illustrious names of history not for their lineage or crown but for their human talent that distinguishes them from others.

La pàtria que jo canto és la del geni,
I la pàtria del geni és tot lo món,
Com les obres pel geni produïdes
De la humanitat tota també són.
(Gomis 1883: 125)

The homeland I sing to is genius,
And the homeland of genius is the
[whole world,
As the works produced by a genius
Also belong to the whole of humanity.

9 [The First Socialist Competition was held in the city of Reus in 1885 and was organised by the Centre of the Friends of Reus. The aim of the competition was to help the process of intellectual change in the working class movement and the middle classes, largely made up of craftsmen, teachers and small businessmen who often latched on to libertarian ideas].

10 [Leisure activity, song and poetry could be done in the language of common use, in

In this regard, the author follows the ideas he had outlined in the article “La Història” [History] published three years previously in the *Diari Català*, and in which he explains the concept of history:

Mentre la Història s'ocupa exclusivament de cert nombre d'individus sols perquè han tingut la sort de nàixer en los esgraons d'un trono o la de pujar per ells, la Història podrà ésser una sèrie de biografies objecte d'emulació per a los uns, d'horror per a los altres, d'exemple per a tots, però no serà la Història de la Humanitat (Gomis 1880a: 385).¹¹

In “La pàtria de l'home” Gomis includes a list of great historical figures: writers such as Homer, Dante and Shakespeare, artists such as Michelangelo and Raphael, philosophers such as Plato and Aeschylus, and scientists such as Bell and Darwin, among others. Gomis argues that these geniuses are universal and that there is a notion of universal homeland that goes beyond borders, political or otherwise:

Com pel geni, per l'hom no deu haver-hi	Like genius, men should not be
Fronteres que el separin en lo món:	Separated by frontiers in the world:
Sent-ne fills tots de la mateixa terra	Since all are children of the same land
De la mateixa pàtria tots ne són.	All have the same mother country.
Lo jorn en què los homes germans siguen	The day when all men are brothers
Ja més fronteres en lo món hi haurà,	No more frontiers in the world will
I la pàtria de l'hom per únics límits	[there be
L'espai que la rodeja ne tindrà.	And a man's homeland will be limited
(Gomis 1883: 126)	Only by the space that surrounds him.

This praise to the benefactors of humanity is another of the recurring themes in anarchist scientific literature and art in general and in anarchist scientific poetry in particular:¹²

Catalan]. For an analysis of Lluнас' speech, see Martí (2015: 878-886). On the most important cultural aspects of this first socialist competition, see Litvak (2001: 280-282) and Abelló (1987: 38-39).

- 11 [While History deals exclusively with a few individuals merely because they had the good fortune to be born on the steps leading up to a throne or to have managed to climb up them, it could be a series of biographies that are the object of emulation by some, of horror by others and an example to everybody, but it will not be the History of Humanity].
- 12 Another example from Catalonia is Josep Aladern (pseudonym of Cosme Vidal i

Imbuidos del positivismo decimonónico, de su sed de certeza y su amor por la realidad, cantaban a aquellos que en su lucha por resolver los misterios del universo persistían en su trabajo a pesar de toda la oposición. Admiran a quienes descubrieron las leyes de la materia, a quienes eliminaron los misterios y terrores del mundo. Los elogian por haber deshecho los mitos, robado los secretos a lo desconocido, surcado el infinito con sus telescopios, analizado las células con sus microscopios, investigado la mente humana para asegurar al hombre su lugar en el universo (Litvak 2001: 362).¹³

4. Song of the Railway Worker

The poems by Cels Gomis discussed so far, as has been seen, follow the aesthetics of the anarchist literature arising out of the previous republican literature. There is one poem in which the connection between the two schools is quite clear: “La cançó del carrilare” [The Song of the Railway Worker]. Gomis published two substantially different versions of the same poem. The first appeared in 1880 in the pages of *Lo Catalanista*, one of the titles used by the *Diari Català* in one of the periods that it had been suspended from publication. The poem is a defence of work. Based on work on the railways, which Gomis was familiar with,¹⁴ in the final lines he describes the importance of work and reflects on the precarious hold that workers have on their jobs:

Rosich) in the anthologies *Impietats* and *Sagramental*, studied by Sunyer (2013). With regard to this defence of science and the claim that the benefactors of humanity should be given greater importance than religious figures, see Sunyer (2013: 283-288).

- 13 [Imbued with 19th-century positivism, with their thirst for certainty and their love for reality, they sang to those who were so insistent in their struggle to solve the mysteries of the universe that they ignored all opposition. They admire those who discovered the laws of matter, and those who did away with the mysteries and terrors of the world. They praise them for having got to the bottom of myths, stolen the secrets of the unknown, cleaved the infinite with their telescopes, analysed cells with their microscopes, investigated the human mind to ensure man's place in the world].
- 14 Remember that he trained as an engineer and that he worked on the construction of roads and a stretch of railway line (see above).

Ja és nostra la victòria.	Victory is ours at last.
¡Visqui sempre el treball!	Long live work!
¿Mes on anirem ara	But where shall we go now
a guanyar lo nostre pa?	to earn our bread?
¡Qui sap! demà, tal volta,	Who knows if tomorrow, perhaps,
tindrem d'anar a captar;	we will have to go and beg;
que encara el dret a viure	the right to live
no està ben bé a rasant.	is by no means.

(Gomis 1880c: 151)

The defence of work in this penultimate verse has connections with the praise of work that Josep Anselm Clavé sang in such compositions as the polka “La Maquinista” in 1867, in which he paints a picture of the life of the working classes (Molas 1991: 68). The first lines set the tone:

La campana al treball crida	The bell signals the start of the day
—Al taller! —A treballar!	—To the workshop! —Time for work!
És lo pa de la família	It is the family's bread
La suor de nostre afany	The sweat of our toil.
—Al taller! —A les encluses!	—To the workshop! —To the anvils!
—Al cargo! —Al torn! —Al banc!	—To the vices! —To the lathes! —To the
Que los timbres més honorosos	[benches!]
Són los timbres del treball.	The most honourable bells
(Clavé 1858-1863; 1902: 165-166)	Are the bells of work.

In this first version of “La cançó del carrilairé” he paints a glowing picture of work and workers as the driving force behind the progress of society. The second version was published four years later in *La Tramontana*, the first anarchist newspaper written in Catalan, directed by Josep Lluanas i Pujals. Marin (2010: 141) i Vicente (1999: 92) have identified Gomis as one of the contributors to this newspaper and, in fact, his name appears as a member of the editorial team, alongside Lluanas himself, Eudald Canivell and Emili Guanyavents in *La Tramontana* of 6 January 1887 (Nettlau 1969: 395). According to Olivé (1994: 92), Gomis' contribution was in name only and he did not write any articles, and this is confirmed by the fact that his signature is noticeably absent. As far as the use of pseudonyms is concerned, Ferré (2007: 148, note 603) identifies Gomis as the author of some poems signed as “Un ganxet”, which is the colloquial term for a person born in Reus. It is not very clear who this

was referring to, however, because both Gomis and Lluнас were from Reus. Thus, Ferré attributes to Gomis “La cançó del miserable” [Poor man’s song] published in issue 28 (1881), while Olivé (1984: 319) attributes it to Lluнас. Jordi Martí i Font, who studied the poetic work of Josep Lluнас i Pujals, regards Lluнас as the author of all the compositions cited by Ferré (Martí 2015: 30-36).

All in all, then, there is only one reference in *La Tramontana* that can be attributed with any certainty to Cels Gomis and it is this second version of “La cançó del carrilaire”. On this occasion it is signed with the pseudonym Campflorit, which he often used.¹⁵ The version that was published in *La Tramontana* is of the same length as the one published in *Lo Catalanista* (12 verses), but the content is different and the tone is more radical. According to Ferré (2007: 149, note 607): “la versificació de *La Tramontana* indica una pregona ideologia revolucionària en comparació del poema de 1880, situat en l’evolucionisme ideològic federal de Valentí Almirall”.¹⁶ He moves on from extolling the praises of work and progress in a generally optimistic tone to criticising the conditions in which workers have to work and the differences between classes, which were only hinted at in the previous version. The last verses are a good example:

Acabat lo jornal, ne tornem cap a casa, i abans d’anar al llit mengem una arengada.	At the end of the day we return home, and before bed we eat herring
Oidà! Oidà! i encara quasi sempre oidà! comprada és al fiat.	Oh joy! Oh joy! And still almost always Oh joy! Bought on tick.
En canvi si algú perd un braç o bé una cama li queda el gran recurs de captar per les places.	But if you lose an arm or a leg you still have the option of begging in the town squares.

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- 15 Gomis uses variants of this pseudonym that range from the double-barrelled Celso Enrique de Campflorit to just Campflorit (Samper 2013: 43).
- 16 [The versification of *La Tramontana* indicates a revolutionary ideology that is much more deeply rooted than in the poem of 1880, which was an evolution of Valentí Almirall’s federal ideology].

Digueu! Digueu! si no és digne d'enveja vejam! qui pren mal treballant!	Please say if he who is hurt while working look! is not worthy of our envy!
Després anem al jaç damunt d'un munt de palla, que aquest és lo sol llit que per al descans nos guarden.	And then we go to sleep on a pile of straw which is the only bed reserved for our rest.
Mal llamp! Mal llamp! i quina sort més negra! mal llamp! no jaure en matalàs!	Damn! Damn! What bad luck! Damn! not to have a mattress to lie on!
¿No sembla ben estrany que qui enriqueix als altres no tingui més recurs que jaure a la palla?	Is it not strange that those who make others wealthy have nowhere else to sleep but on straw?
Mal llamp! Mal llamp! que això ja massa dura vulguem! i aviat s'acabarà.	Damn! Damn! this has gone on for too long and by God! it will soon be over.
(Gomis 1884)	

The criticism of the harsh conditions of the workers is the same as in the poem “En la mina de l’Argentera” [In the Mine in Argentera] by Josep Aladern. As Sunyer has pointed out (2013: 290), the hardships undergone by the workers (as a result of which they have even died) have helped to bring progress, in the form of the railway, which only benefits a chosen few.¹⁷

5. A poem in *La Veu del Centre Català*

The connection between Gomis and Valentí Almirall, which dates back to the time of federalism in 1868, led to his joining the Centre Català [Catalan Centre]. And on 19 May 1888 it was this institution’s

17 In fact, Sunyer reveals that Aladern’s poem had been inspired by a text by Cels Gomis (“Lo minaire” [The Miner]).

publication, *La Veu del Centre Català*, that published “Avant!” [Onward!], a vitalistic poem that celebrates progress by using the poetic images of natural phenomena. With this piece, Gomis exemplifies “el programa d’esquerra del moviment de conscienciació cultural renaixentista, que poc tenia a veure amb una concepció tradicionalista, conservadora, del que havia de ser Catalunya” (Ferré 2007: 148).¹⁸ It is an example of the relation between technological progress and artistic expression that was a feature of anarchist thought (Litvak 2001: 334-340). The poem begins like this:

Deixem ja de cantar-ne—nostres antigues glòries;
 Deixem a nostres avis—en lo fossar tranquils.
 Parlem-ne del pervindre,—que la missió del poeta
 És senyalar als pobles—lo seu esdevenir.
 ¡Via fora! vosaltres,—los que sense esperança
 En l’indiferentisme—viviú endormiscats;
 Los que vostres cors jòvens,—envellits abans d’hora,
 A impuls de cap idea—sentiu esbategar.
 Ensorreu-vos per a sempre—fetes dos-cents-mil trossos,
 Estàtues martmolenques—que no us moveu d’un punt;
 No entrebanqueu la marxa—d’aquells que encara creuen;
 ¡Obriu pas als que us porten—de lo progrés la llum! (Gomis 1888)¹⁹

As Palomar sums up, it is a defence of individual liberty in a framework of popular Catalanism, quite different from the traditional concept:

Al temps que es reclama membre de l’única pàtria possible –la Humanitat– Gomis defensa la llibertat individual i dels pobles des de l’arrelament a una terra i a una cultura, que no considera superior ni inferior a cap altra. Des d’aquesta òptica, defensa un catalanisme basat en l’ads-

18 [The left-wing programme of the movement for the rebirth of cultural awareness, which has little to do with the traditional, conservative concept of what Catalonia should be].

19 [Let us no longer sing – to our old glories / Let our grandparents lie – quietly in their graves / Let us speak of the future – for the mission of the poet / Is to show – the people their future. / Away! You – you with no hope / In indifference – you live as if asleep; / Those of you with young hearts – aged before time / That do not race – at the thought of any idea. / You will be downtrodden forever – smashed into two hundred thousand pieces, / Marble statues – that do not move from the spot; / Do not get in the way – of those who still believe; / Make way for those who bring you – the light of progress!].

cripció popular, en la lliure voluntat de totes les persones de pertànyer a un país i no tant en la recerca d'uns trets diferencials o la mitificació del passat (Palomar 2015: XII).²⁰

This poem by Gomis has thematic similarities with “La nova musa” [The New Muse] that Víctor Balaguer published in *Esperansas y recorts* [Hopes and memories] (Balaguer 1866: 129-131) dedicated to the poet D. Lluís Roca. Balaguer praises “progress and industry”:

¿Podem entretenir-nos en escoltar rondalles,
quan ja lo vapor crusa de l'un a l'altre extrem,
quan la idea és lo ferro que guanya les batalles,
i el fil que parla porta, sens límits i sens valles,
d'un cap de món a l'altre lo llamp del pensament?... [...]

Avui deu lo poeta alçar cants de victòria
perquè radiant ja brilla la civilització.
Aquell que millor canti la fe, la pàtria història,
lo progrés i la indústria, la llibertat, la glòria,
aquell entre els poetes, aquell serà el millor.

(Balaguer 2002: 23-25)²¹

Despite this point of contact, Balaguer “no prodigarà, però, el cant als avenços científics ni tecnològics en la seva poesia i no abandonarà la mentalitat idealista” (Vall 2005: 23).²² Despite the ideological distance between the two authors, this point of contact is important in that it shows the thematic similarities between the ideologies that are today regarded as being poles apart.

20 [At the same time as he claims to belong to the only homeland possible – Humanity – Gomis defends the freedom of individuals and people to have their roots in a land and a culture, which is neither better nor worse than any other. From this viewpoint, he defends a Catalanism based on the involvement of the people, on the free will of all people to belong to a country and not so much on the search for distinctive features or the mythification of the past].

21 [Can we spend our time listening to folktales / when steam is all around us, / when the idea is the iron that wins battles / and the wire that talks takes, with no limits and no barriers, / thoughts from one end of the world to the other? (...) Today the poet must celebrate victory / because civilization is shining radiantly. / He who best celebrates faith, history of the homeland / progress and industry, freedom and glory / will be the greatest of all poets].

22 [Was by no means generous in his praise of scientific and technological progress in his poetry and he never abandoned his idealism].

6. Conclusions

For Cels Gomis, political poetry was one more way in which he could express his ideology. The themes follow the anarchist aesthetic: science as the driving force behind man's progress; the idea that human genius is of greater importance than nations and frontiers; praise of the benefactors of humanity and mechanization. The same themes can also be found in his other writings such as the articles he published in the press or his science books. Gomis did not publish too many ideological poems and,²³ in fact, as we have seen above, the anthologies that he did publish (*Cantares* and *Aubades i capvespres*) take a different approach. Even so, the analysis of these poems reveals the relation between anarchist literature and republican literature, because Gomis deals with themes that link him to previous authors, regardless of the format chosen (verse, journalistic article or text book). Gomis is by no means the only one to have such a close (ideological and thematic) connection with both republican and anarchist ideals but he makes an interesting contribution, albeit a small one, to this politically and ideologically complex but fascinating period in our history.

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23 This is not the case of his unpublished work, which we have not dealt with here. One example in this regard is the lyrics that Gomis wrote (but which he never made public) of the Catalan national anthem "Els segadors" [The Reapers] (Samper 2013: 78-82).

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