

HAIL TO MARSHAL JÓZEF PIŁSUDSKI!

Hail to You! Oh, Leader of the Polish Nation,
Who devoted your life to the Nation,
Already in Your youth you worked honorably
To light the torches of freedom.

Already as a young man, you were imprisoned,
For the cause of Poland, because you loved Her greatly,
You were not afraid of the power of tsardom,
Even though you were youthful – you were strong in spirit.

Your “Ideal” was guided by a star –
The freedom of the Motherland! Your heart was comforted by the thought,
You were exiled – without home or family –
And Your friends were Your great deeds.

You were given to taste the Magdeburg tortures,
Because you refused to swear – to work for the enemies,
God led You back to your Motherland,
When Bolshevism appeared on Her border.

You went forth bravely, You were fearless,
To this bloody battle – of firm defense,
Even with a small handful of impoverished soldiers,
To fight! To be Free! Their resolve was determined.

When a great horde came to march on Warsaw,
The savage Bolsheviks like a black swarm –
Your bravery vanquished them there,
Drove them away, broke their ranks forever.

Oh, genius Leader! But you are called Grandfather,
A tender word... You are so beloved,
By youthful, brave sons of peasants,
When you were leading them to knightly battles.

God had mercy! The fetters were broken,
Great! Mighty! Today is the Polish Republic,
Again the White Eagle, the emblem of the land of the Piasts,
Plays a hymn of freedom... With Polish flags.

And You, proudly today – with your face of a warrior,
Keep watch together with the eagle, guarding the Motherland,

Ready for any action to defend This Mother,
For whose freedom – Her children gave their lives.

Your deeds are like shining stars,
You are, oh Marshal, to Poland like the sun!
You are continually building Her – that she may grow in power,
In order to resurrect the chronicle of Her splendor.

Today, on your name-day, the Poles from overseas,
Send You their wishes... Good health! Success in your work,
Oh, First Marshal, JÓZEF PIŁSUDSKI,
Leader of the Nation! Builder of Poland!

Hail to You, Marshal! May God bless You!
May the Virgin Mary, the Queen of Częstochowa, support you
In all Your deeds, for the good of the Nation,
And may the sun of freedom never set!

By Bronisława Wolnik, 1935
Translated by Joanna Radwańska-Williams, 2024

CZEŚĆ MARSZAŁKOWI JÓZEFOWI PIŁSUDSKIEMU!

Cześć Ci! O Wodzu Narodu Polskiego,
Coś życie swoje poświęcił dla Niego,
Już w Twej młodości pracowałeś godnie,
Aby rozniecić wolności pochodnie.

Już jako młodzian, uwięziony byłeś,
Za sprawę Polski, tak Ją ukochałeś,
Tyś się nie uląkł caratu potęgi,
Choć młodociany – ale duchem tęgi.

Twojej „Idei,” gwiazda przewodziła –
Wolność Ojczyzny! Serce myśl pieściła,
Byłeś wygnańcem – bez domu, rodziny –
Twe przyjaciele, Twoje wielkie czyny.

Każń Magdeburskich dano Ci skosztować,
Boś nie przysięgał – by wrogom pracować,
Bóg Cię sprowadził do swojej Macierzy,
Kiedy bolszewizm, stał na jej rubieży.

Stałeś dzielnie, Ty, nieulekniony,
Na bój ten krwawy – stanowczej obrony,
Choć z małą garstką wojska zbiedzonego,
Walczyć! Być Wolnym! Zdecydowanego!

Gdy pod Warszawą, horda wielka stała,
Dzicz bolszewicka jako czarna chmara –
Twoja odwaga tam ją zwyciężyła,
Precz rozpędziła, na wieki złamała.

Wodzu genialny! Ale Dziadkiem zwany,
Słowem pieśzcoty... Tak jesteś kochany,
Przez młodocianych, dzielnych synów chłopskich,
Gdyś ich prowadził, do bojów rycerskich.

Bóg się zlitował! Rozerwano pęta,
Wielka! Potężna! Dziś Rzeczpospolita,
Znów Biały Orzeł, godło Piastów ziemi,
Gra hymn wolności... Sztandary polskimi.

A Ty, dziś dumny – w swej marsowej twarzy,
Wraz z orłem czuwasz, stojąc na Jej straży,
Gotów do czynu, by bronić Tej Matki,
Za którą wolność – ginęły Jej dziatki.

Twe czyny jako gwiazdy jaśniejące,
Tyś jest Marszałku, dla Polski jak słońce!
Wciąż Ją budujesz – by wzrosła w potęgę,
Ażeby wskrzesić Jej świetności księgę.

Dziś, w dniu imienin, z za morza Polacy,
Ślą Ci życzenia... Zdrowia! Szczęścia w pracy,
Pierwszy Marszałku, JÓZEFIE PIŁSUDSKI,
Wodzu Narodu! Budowniczy Polski!

Cześć Ci, Marszałku! Błogosław Ci Boże!
Niech Częstochowska Królowa wspomóżę,
Wszystkie Twe czyny, dla dobra Narodu,
Wolności słońca, nie będzie zachodu!

By Bronisława Wolnik

ANNOTATIONS

CZEŚĆ MARSZAŁKOWI JÓZEFOWI PIŁSUDSKIEMU: Józef Klemens Piłsudski (December 5th, 1867- May 12th, 1935), Polish military commander and statesman, is revered for his leading role in restoring Poland's independence after the First World War and leading the country through most of the interwar period. See [Józef Piłsudski | Polish Revolutionary, Statesman & Military Leader | Britannica](#) , [Życiorys Józefa Piłsudskiego \(pilsudczycy-gda.pl\)](#), [Józef Piłsudski - Wikipedia](#)

Cześć Ci! O Wodzu Narodu Polskiego,
Coś życie swoje poświęcił dla Niego,
Już w Twojej młodości pracowałeś godnie,
Aby **rozniecić** wolności pochodnie.

rozniecić: This verb means to set light to (the torches) so that they start to burn; to kindle.

Już jako **młodzian**, uwięziony byłeś,
Za sprawę Polski, **tak Ją ukochałeś**,
Tyś się nie uląkł caratu potęgi,
Choć młodociany – ale **duchem tęgi**.

młodzian: This archaic/poetic masculine noun means “young man, youth”, i.e., somebody in his teenage years or early twenties who is already behaving in a manly way. It is related to the adjective **młody** “young” and the feminine noun **młodość** “youth” (the state/age of being young). In contemporary Polish, the alternate form **młodzieniec** can be used to stress these qualities of a young man (in transition from boyhood to manhood).

tak Ją ukochałeś: ‘you loved Her so much’. The verb **ukochać** (here in the past masculine singular, 2nd person) has the prefix **u-** added to the verb **kochać** ‘to love’; this adds a sense of intense and permanent feeling.

Tyś się nie uląkł caratu potęgi: ‘You were not afraid of the power of tsardom’ (i.e., the Russian empire). The verb used here for being afraid is **ulęknąć się** (in the past masculine singular **uląkł się**; the 2nd person ending **-ś** has here been suffixed to the pronoun **Ty** ‘you’ rather than to the verb), which with the prefix **u-**, has the sense of becoming (in this case, not becoming) very afraid, cowered, intimidated. A more common verb for being afraid is **bać się**.

duchem tęgi: ‘strong in spirit’. The masculine adjective used here, **tęgi**, literally means stout.

Twojej „Idei,” gwiazda przewodziła –

Wolność Ojczyzny! Serce myśl pieściła,
Byłeś **wygnanцем** – bez domu, rodziny –
Twe przyjaciele, Twoje wielkie czyny.

Twojej „Idei,”: ‘to your Idea’. The feminine noun **idea** in Polish means a lofty idea, an ideal.

Wolność Ojczyzny! Serce myśl pieściła: The Polish word for Motherland, **Ojczyzna** (here in the genitive singular Ojczyzny) literally means Fatherland; it is derived from **ojciec** ‘father’. The second sentence grammatically reads, **myśl** ‘the thought; grammatical subject’ **pieściła** ‘comforted’ **serce** ‘the heart; grammatical object’. Polish has free word order; the grammatical object has been moved before the grammatical subject for emphasis. The meaning is that the ideal of the freedom of Poland was held very dearly by Piłsudski in his heart.

wygnanцем: This is the instrumental singular case of **wygnaniec** ‘an exile’ (i.e., a person who has been exiled), derived from the verb **wygnąć** ‘to exile, drive away, expel’. Piłsudski was exiled to Siberia for five years as punishment for his political activities, in 1887 at the age of 20. [Józef Piłsudski | Polish Revolutionary, Statesman & Military Leader | Britannica](#)

Każń Magdeburskich dano Ci skosztować,
Boś **nie przysięgał – by wrogom pracować**,
Bóg Cię sprowadził **do swojej Macierzy**,
Kiedy **bolszewizm, stał na jej rubieży**.

Każń Magdeburskich: Piłsudski was imprisoned in Magdeburg in July 1917 by the German authorities, because he refused to have his Polish army (which he had organized) swear allegiance to Germany, as he was fighting for the independence of Poland. [Józef Piłsudski | Polish Revolutionary, Statesman & Military Leader | Britannica](#)

nie przysięgał – by wrogom pracować: Literally, ‘did not swear – to work for enemies’.

do swojej Macierzy: ‘to your own Motherland’. The feminine noun used here for ‘Motherland’, **Macierz** (in the genitive singular case **Macierzy**) is different from the feminine noun **Ojczyzna** ‘Fatherland’ used elsewhere in the poem, which is the usual way of saying ‘Homeland, Motherland’ in Polish. **Macierz** is an archaic word for ‘mother’ and an elevated way of saying ‘Motherland’. See [macierz - definicja, synonimy, przykłady użycia \(pwn.pl\)](#) , [macierz – Wikisłownik, wolny słownik wielojęzyczny \(wiktionary.org\)](#)

bolszewizm, stał na jej rubieży: Literally, ‘Bolshevism stood on her [i.e., Poland’s] frontier’. In the years following the Russian Revolution of October 1917, the Soviet Union tried to consolidate its territory and gain back the Polish lands that the Russian empire had occupied during the partitions of Poland. Poland fought a war with the Soviet Union’s Red Army of the Bolsheviks (the communist revolutionaries) in 1920, and Piłsudski’s leadership as a military commander, with the title Marshal of Poland, is credited as crucial to Poland’s victory in the Battle of Warsaw, called

the 'Miracle on the Vistula'. See [Polish–Soviet War - Wikipedia](#), [Battle of Warsaw \(1920\) - Wikipedia](#) , [Józef Piłsudski | Polish Revolutionary, Statesman & Military Leader | Britannica](#)

Stanęłeś dzielnie, Ty, nieulekniiony,
Na ***bój*** ten krwawy – stanowczej obrony,
Choć z ***małą garstką wojska zbiedzonego***,
Walczyć! Być Wolnym! ***Zdecydowanego!***

Stanęłeś dzielnie, Ty, nieulekniiony: Literally, 'You stood up bravely, You, fearless'. The verb ***stanąć*** 'to start standing' (here in the past singular, 2nd person ***stanęłeś***), related to the verb ***stać*** 'to stand' and ***stawać*** 'to stand up', in this case means to be ready for battle.

bój: This masculine noun for 'battle, fighting' means a serious and protracted fight (in this case, war). There is a feminine noun ***bitwa*** 'battle', which is usually used for a specific battle.

z małą garstką wojska zbiedzonego: Literally, 'with a small handful of impoverished army'. Piłsudski secretly began to organize a Polish army already back in 1908, before the First World War, in anticipation of a war and the possibility of fighting for Polish independence. The army eventually came to be called the Polish Legions (***Legiony Polskie***). Independence was achieved at the end of the war in November 1918. Piłsudski became the Polish head of state immediately upon Poland's independence and held the position until the elections of 1922; however, even thereafter, he continued as the de facto leader of Poland. From 1926 to 1935, he was the Minister of Defense. See [National Independence Day \(Poland\) - Wikipedia](#), [Józef Piłsudski | Polish Revolutionary, Statesman & Military Leader | Britannica](#)

Zdecydowanego: Literally, 'Decided'. This adjective/participle (from the verb ***decydować*** 'to decide; imperfective aspect', ***zdecydować*** 'to decide; perfective aspect') is used here in the genitive singular case and grammatically modifies ***wojska*** (genitive singular of the neuter noun ***wojsko*** 'army, armed forces'). In this context, it means the soldiers were resolved to fight.

Gdy pod Warszawą, horda wielka stała,
Dzicz bolszewicka jako czarna chmara –
Twoja odwaga tam ***ją zwyciężyła***,
Precz rozpędziła, na wieki złamała.

Gdy pod Warszawą, horda wielka stała: Literally, 'When under Warsaw, a great horde was standing'. The Soviet Red Army, which was known for its cruelty (and hence here called a horde), advanced on Warsaw, Poland's capital, in August 1920. It outnumbered the Polish army. The Battle of Warsaw, which was a decisive victory for Poland, is called 'The Miracle on the Vistula'. See [Polish–Soviet War - Wikipedia](#) , [Battle of Warsaw \(1920\) - Wikipedia](#)

ją zwyciężyła: Literally, 'vanquished/defeated her', referring back to the noun ***horda*** 'horde', which is grammatically feminine.

Precz rozpędziła, na wieki złamała: Literally, ‘Scattered/drove away [the horde] far and wide, broke [the horde] for centuries’. The adverb **precz**, which can also be an interjection (something like ‘scram!’), means far away and carries a negative attitude towards the addressee.

Wodzu **genjalny!** Ale **Dziadkiem** zwany,
Słowem pieśczoły... Tak jesteś kochany,
Przez młodocianych, dzielnych **synów chłopskich**,
Gdyś ich prowadził, **do bojów rycerskich**.

genjalny: The masculine adjective **genjalny** (here in an archaic spelling **genjalny**) is derived from the masculine noun **geniusz** ‘genius’. In the English language, genius is usually used as a noun – we say ‘he is a genius’ rather than ‘he is a genius person’ – but only in limited usage, as an adjective, e.g., ‘that’s a genius idea’.

Dziadkiem: ‘Grandfather’ (instrumental singular case of **Dziadek** ‘Grandfather’). This was an unusually endearing nickname for Piłsudski. See [Józef Piłsudski jakiego nie znacie. Niezwykły życiorys Marszałka - Dziennik.pl](#) , [Życiorys Józefa Piłsudskiego \(piłsudczycy-gda.pl\)](#). In the Polish armed forces, which consisted of young men, it was customary to call the commander “father” or “grandfather”. Source: [„Dziadek” Piłsudski. „Naczelnik” czy „prezydent”? \(polskieradio.pl\)](#)

synów chłopskich: ‘peasant sons’. The masculine adjective **chłopski** (here is the genitive plural case **chłopskich**) is derived from the masculine noun **chłop** ‘peasant’, which referred to a male peasant (in contemporary Polish, it also means ‘a guy’).

do bojów rycerskich: ‘to knightly battles’. Centuries ago, a knight (masculine noun, **rycerz**) was usually recruited from the nobility and rode a horse, while peasants were foot soldiers; the reference to ‘knightly battles’ ennobles the reference to peasant soldiers, giving them dignity and importance. The masculine adjective derived from **rycerz** is **rycerski** (here in the genitive plural case, **rycerskich**). The adjective **rycerski** in wider usage can mean ‘noble, chivalrous, gallant’. See [rycerski - definicja, synonimy, przykłady użycia \(pwn.pl\)](#) , [rycerski - Wiktionary, the free dictionary](#)

Bóg się zlitował! **Rozerwano pęta**,
Wielka! Potężna! Dziś **Rzeczpospolita**,
Znów Biały Orzeł, godło **Piastów ziemi**,
Gra hymn wolności... **Sztandary polskimi**.

Rozerwano pęta: ‘The fetters were broken’ or ‘the ropes were torn away’. The plural noun **pęta** refers to the ropes with which the hands and ankles of prisoners, or the legs of horses, were bound together, to restrain them. See [pęta - definicja, synonimy, przykłady użycia \(pwn.pl\)](#) Here, it is a metaphorical image for the country’s lack of independence during the period of the partitions of Poland. See [Partitions of Poland - Wikipedia](#)

Rzeczpospolita: This is the Polish word used for the Polish Republic; in reference to other countries, the word **Republika** is used. Poland during the interwar period between the First and

Second World War is called the Second Republic, because its independence was restored after the 123-year period of the partitions of Poland (1795-1918).

Piastów ziemi: 'the land of the Piasts'. The Piast dynasty was the founding dynasty of Poland as a country, going back to the 9th century. See [Piast dynasty - Wikipedia](#)

Sztandary polskimi: 'With Polish flags'. The masculine noun **sztandar**, here used as a synonym for **flaga** 'flag', is a broader term that encompasses banners and military flags. See [List of military flags - Wikipedia](#)

A Ty, dziś dumny – **w swej marsowej twarzy**,
Wraz z orłem czuwasz, **stojąc na Jej straży**,
Gotów do czynu, by bronić Tej Matki,
Za którą wolność – ginęły Jej dzieci.

w swej marsowej twarzy: Literally, 'in your own Martian/martial face'. The masculine adjective **marsowy**, here used in the feminine locative singular form **marsowej**, means 'like Mars', referring to Mars as the god of war (not the planet). (In contemporary Polish, when referring to Mars the planet, we use the adjective **marsjański**.)

stojąc na Jej straży: Literally, 'standing Her [i.e., Poland's] guard'.

Za którą wolność – ginęły Jej dzieci: Literally, 'For which freedom – Her [i.e., Poland's] children perished'. The plural noun **dzieci** 'children' is poetic/dialectal and has a connotation of endearment; the usual word for 'children' is **dzieci**. In this context, the connotation of **dzieci** is also 'offspring, youth, young generation', since it was predominantly young men, rather than children, who died for Poland's independence.

Twe czyny jako gwiazdy jaśniejące,
Tyś jest Marszałku, dla Polski jak słońce!
Wciąż Ją budujesz – by wzrosła w potęgę,
Ażeby wskrzesić **Jej świetności księgę**.

Jej świetności księgę: Literally, 'the book of Her splendor'. The feminine noun **księga** means 'book' in the sense of chronicle, historical record, a big and important book. Its derived diminutive **książka** is the usual word for any book.

Dziś, **w dniu imienin**, z za morza Polacy,
Ślą Ci życzenia... Zdrowia! Szczęścia w pracy,
Pierwszy Marszałku, JÓZEFIE PIŁSUDSKI,
Wodzu Narodu! Budowniczy Polski!

w dniu imienin: ‘on the day of [your] name-day’. It is traditional in Poland for adults to celebrate their name-day (the feast day of their patron saint) rather than, or in preference to, their birthday.

Cześć Ci, Marszałku! Błogosław Ci Boże!
Niech **Częstochowska Królowa** wspomóżę,
Wszystkie Twe czyny, dla dobra Narodu,
Wolności słońca, nie będzie zachodu!

Częstochowska Królowa: The Virgin Mary, whose most important Polish shrine is in Częstochowa, is symbolically the Queen of Poland. See [Black Madonna of Częstochowa - Wikipedia](#), [The Most Holy Virgin Mary, Queen of Poland - Wikipedia](#)

Wolności słońca, nie będzie zachodu: Literally, ‘Of the sun of freedom, there will be no sunset’.