

General Jozef Zachariasz Bem

**"Lusiurandum patri datum usque ad hanc diem ita servavi"
("I have kept my oath to my father to this day)**



On the night of 10th December 1850, in Aleppo (now Syria), the hero of the three nations: Poland, Hungary and Turkey, General Józef Zachariasz Bem, Bem József, Murad Paşa passed away. At the last hour before the death, he said: "Poland, Poland! I cannot save you anymore" ...

Józef Bem's ashes were brought to Poland on June 30, 1929. During exhumation many cuts and stab wounds on the bones were found testifying his enormous effort suffered in the struggle throughout his life for his beloved Motherland.

Turkey, Hungary, and Poland were involved in bringing the ashes of their hero to Poland. When the coffin was transported through Budapest, a demonstration of several hundred Hungarian brothers gathered paying tribute to the General. His ashes were laid to rest in his native Tarnów, in a mausoleum on an island in the Strzelecki Park. On the grave there was an inscription in the languages of the three countries for which he was the hero: Poland, Hungary, and Turkey (in Arabic).

Shadow, why do you depart, your broken hands upon
your breastplate
Near the torches which with sparks surround your
knees
Your sword, green with laurel, and spattered with the
candle-tears of your people
The eagle darts forward and your horse lifts his hoof
like a dancer
Pennants are waving, fluttering against each other
Like the tents of armies roaming the skies
Trumpets tremble in their weeping and banners
Bow from above with lowered wings
Like dragons, lizards, and birds pierced with spears
As the many ideas which with spears you have
realized

Mourning women go, some lifting up their arms
The sweet smelling hay out of their hands the wind
tears

(Mournful Rhapsody in Memoriam of Bem – Cyprian Kamil Norwid)

(Translation by: D Piotrowska)