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Rudolf Medek (1890–1940). A Poet Warrior

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Abstract: Rudolf Medek was a teacher, a poet, a patriot, a novel writer, a playwright, a soldier, a general and much more. He could be used as an example illustrating some facets of the picture called Czechoslovakia in its First republic. Rudolf Medek was born in January 1890 in Hradec Králové, a garrison town in Eastern Bohemia. During 1915, he deserted from Austro-Hungarian army and fled to Russia where he entered *Česká družina* – a Czechoslovak military unit within the frame of Russian army. He rose in ranks and his involvement in Czechoslovak independence movement changed from the military one to a highly political career in Russian. On the other hand, his nature brought him in a lot of troubles and conflicts. He became one of the most influential Czechoslovak politicians in Siberia and in the spring of 1919, he resigned after a series of fights with opposition within the Czechoslovak army and movement itself. He returned to Czechoslovakia and became the director of *Památník osvobození* (The Monument of Liberation), wrote many books, participated in shooting films and repeatedly entered the Czechoslovak political arena, usually on its rightish side. After the Treaty of Munich, he returned all his high orders to France and to Great Britain. He died at the age of 50, broken by Czechoslovakia's destruction and by his poor health affected by excessive alcohol drinking.

Keywords: Rudolf Medek, biography, writer, soldier, politician, director, national liberation struggle, Czechoslovakia, Russia, Civil War, Czechoslovak Corps, legionnaires

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Рудольф Медек (1890–1940). Поэт-воин

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Аннотация: Рудольф Медек был учителем, поэтом, патриотом, писателем романов, драматургом, солдатом, генералом и много кем еще. Он являл собой образец многогранной картины под названием Чехословакия во времена ее Первой республики. Рудольф Медек родился в январе 1890 года в Градец Кралове, гарнизонном городке Восточной Чехии. В 1915 году он дезертировал из австро-венгерской армии и бежал в Россию, где вступил в Чешскую дружину – чехословацкую военную часть в составе русской армии. Он поднялся по служебной лестнице, и участие в движении за независимость Чехословакии изменило его карьеру военного на политическую – в России. С другой стороны, его характер принес ему множество неприятностей и конфликтов. Он стал одним из самых влиятельных чехословацких политиков в Сибири. Весной 1919 года ушел в отставку после серии столкновений с оппозицией внутри чехословацкой армии и самого движения. Он вернулся в Чехословакию и стал директором «Памятника освобождения», написал много книг, участвовал в съемках фильмов и неоднократно выходил на чехословацкую политическую арену, как правило, на стороне правых. После Мюнхенского мирного договора вернул все свои высокие ордена Франции и Великобритании. Он умер в возрасте 50 лет, сломленный разрушением Чехословакии и слабым здоровьем, разрушенным чрезмерным употреблением алкоголя.

Ключевые слова: Рудольф Медек, биография, писатель, военный, политик, режиссер, национально-освободительная борьба, Чехословакия, Россия, Гражданская война, Чехословацкий корпус, легионеры

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Rudolf Medek was a teacher, a poet, a patriot, a novel writer, a playwright, a soldier, a general and much more. He could be used as an example illustrating some facets of the picture called Czechoslovakia in its First Republic. His life was limited to mere 50 years, he died during the Nazi occupation of his beloved homeland, broken and ill. And most of his writings is nearly forgotten, Rudolf Medek submerged into the shadows, he would probably say about himself. There were published two monographs concerning his life and he appeared in several texts connected mainly with the history of Czechoslovak legionnaires in Russia in 1914–1920¹. The author of this text regards Rudolf Medek as one of the creators of the myth of the Czechoslovak Republic and of the national fight against the Hapsburg dynasty.

Before the War

Rudolf Medek was born in January 1890 in Hradec Králové, a garrison town in Eastern Bohemia. Later, he recalled that as a child he had been surrounded by military traditions of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. We can mention that near Hradec Králové a great battle between Austria and Prussia took place in 1866 and the town was home for an infantry regiment.

Rudolf Medek was born into a family of Václav Medek, a shoemaker². Rudolf's mother dreamt of a career of a priest or a teacher for her son. She died when Rudolf was quite young – Václav soon married her sister – but her wish was respected. Rudolf, a clever boy, went to the teacher's institute in Hradec Králové. The Medeks were numerous, one of Rudolf's siblings – brother Jaroslav – was a printer and

also wrote several books concerning his experience on the Italian front in Austro-Hungarian uniform.

Before WW1, Rudolf Medek's greatest ambition was not to teach schoolchildren in small villages around Hradec Králové, his greatest desire was to publish a poem in the magazine of *Moderní revue*. *Moderní revue* represents a decadent movement in Czech culture and literature at the beginning of the 20th century. And yes, in the end Rudolf Medek published a poem there. Not only one, and he also cooperated with the revue with his comments, essays and some reviews too. Then, he established himself as a fierce debater, loyal to his beliefs and (mostly) his friends.

He also published two books of poems³ when the second one was illustrated with xylographs by Josef Váchal, one of the most important Czech artists of the first half of the 20th century⁴. Then the war came.

A Traitor of the Empire

Rudolf Medek had to attend the military training before the war. However, after a short while in the uniform, he was proclaimed unfit for the service. His pre-war military career was a really short one.

The proclamation of poor health did not interest the committee in 1915. Not really surprised, a cadet Rudolf Medek started another short and unsuccessful stay in Franz Josef's army.

Supposedly – it is based on his own memoirs – Medek waited for the opportunity to flee. Finally, it came. He ran across a quiet battlefield from Austro-Hungarian positions to Russian ones.

He survived.

He was not killed by Austrians and neither Russians mowed him down with their machine guns.

Happy and moved, he was captured by Russian riflemen and taken to their commander. Medek – a

¹ See Katya KOCOUREK, *Čechoslovákista Rudolf Medek. Politický životopis*, Praha 2011; Dalibor VÁCHA, *Srdce tak bohaté na život. Rudolf Medek a jeho doba 1890–1940*, Praha 2017.

² Jiří MATĚJČEK, *Živnostník – Příklad Antonína Vodsedálka, Jana Vognara, Aloise Beera a Václava Medka*, in: Lukáš FASORA – Jiří HANUŠ – Jiří MALÍŘ, *Člověk na Moravě 19. století*, Brno 2008, pp. 380–384.

³ Rudolf MEDEK, *Půlnoc bohů*, Praha 1912; Rudolf MEDEK, *Prsten*, Hradec Králové 1914.

⁴ See e.g. <http://www.vachal.cz/vachal.htm>. Quoted September 30, 2020.

pre-war “lukewarm” Russophile – wanted to help. He imagined himself leading Russian forces to Austro-Hungarian trenches and capturing his original regiment.

Nothing like that happened.

Yes, this one prisoner of war gave the Russian intelligence officer all the intel he had but soon he was transported as any other ordinary prisoner to the hinterland and was on his way to a POW camp, most probably in Siberia.

At that time, Medek had already met a person from *Česká družina*, the first Czech unit within the frame of the tsar’s army⁵. Medek immediately volunteered for the unit but was sent to the train station anyway. He did not come to Siberia that time. After some anabasis, Medek was called to Kiev – the cradle of the Czechoslovak movement in Russia.

He entered the Czechoslovak volunteers’ ranks and had a new dream – to return to the front in Russian uniform and the red-and-white ribbon on the cap. And, of course, to accomplish some heroic deeds.

Officially, as a former soldier of Austria-Hungary, he became a traitor and if captured, he could have been hanged. Not many of his fellow soldiers or predecessors in *Česká družina* were executed that way but some were.

For Russia and Czechoslovakia

Jaroslav Hašek – still a volunteer, not a Bolshevik yet – recognized Medek in Kiev and tried to force him to write for Czechoslovak magazines. Medek did not want. He regarded that activity as not suitable for a hero and he might have felt ashamed of his pre-war poetry. He definitely wrote something for propaganda papers later but he wanted to be a soldier.

He went to the front and participated in some dangerous ambushes, reconnaissance missions and

trench raids. He was decorated with some Russian medals and promoted to a warrant officer. And he did not forget his inclination towards literature, he co-founded a literary magazine in trenches and via post contributed to magazines in Kiev.

His military career – meant: real military career – did not survive the first Russian revolution. He was elected a delegate for the Czechoslovak army and he went to Kiev to guard its political power, to help with building the army.

He did not like it much.

He wanted to stay among his men.

Later, he escaped from the hinterland political world he hated in order to join the Czechoslovak Brigade at its finest hour. The battle of Zborov (July 2nd, 1917)⁶. He begged to be put back to the position of a company commander but he just saw the battle as a *guest* of the staff of the brigade. After the battle (a sole success of the whole *revolutionary offensive*, soon discredited by the breakdown of the front), Medek went to the battlefield to see the Czechoslovak dead, to smell the fragrance of gunpowder and blood spilled for the nation’s freedom. And... he did not write his most famous poem *Zborov* at the battlefield, it is just a legend. He did write it in Kiev after returning to the office. He wrote it over a night and the poem was later published in thousands of copies, it was translated into Russian and printed and given away as presents. Medek’s name became famous among all Czechoslovak soldiers in Russia.

Against the Reds

As a representative of the Czechoslovak Committee in Russia, Medek more observed the war with Bolsheviks than actively participated as a soldier in it. His most important activities could be headlined by his role in Penza during the end of spring 1918. The 1st Czechoslovak Rifle Regiment (and several other detachments) was delayed by the Bolsheviks in that

⁵ For details of Czechoslovak political and military resistance in Russia, see e.g. Vratislav DOUBEK, *Česká politika a Rusko 1848–1914*, Praha 2004; Karel PICHlíK – Bohumír KLÍPA – Jitka ZABLOUDILOVÁ, *Českoslovenští legionáři 1914–1918*, Praha 1996; Robert SAK, *Anabáze. Drama československých legionářů v Rusku 1914–1920*, Jinočany 1996.

⁶ See e.g. Milan MOJŽÍŠ – Michal RAK a kolektiv, *Zborov 1917–2017*, Praha 2017; Jiří FIDLER, *Zborov 1917. Malý encyklopedický slovník*, Brno 2003; Jan GALANDAUER, *2. 7. 1917 Bitva u Zborova. Česká legenda*, Litomyšl – Praha 2002.

town for some time. The 4th Czechoslovak Regiment had a camp nearby.

Czechoslovak army corps was in a difficult situation. There existed an agreement with the Bolshevik government that Czechoslovaks would be transported by rail to Vladivostok and leave Russia in order to fight for their freedom on the Western front in France against Germans. However, Bolshevik side of the agreement was not really a reliable one. Czechoslovak Bolsheviks were persuading Moscow that the Czechoslovak corps could stay in Russia in Bolshevik service as its soldiers loved Russia, they were socialists (at least) and they did not want to leave for France.

The truth was more complicated. Yes, there were some minor groups in the corps which wanted to stay – some of those soldiers had stayed in Ukraine (most notably soldiers from Czech emigrant families), some deserted and strengthened the Czechoslovak Bolshevik movement, there could be mentioned future world-famous writer Jaroslav Hašek. However, it was only a minor fraction of the whole body.

Czechoslovak Bolsheviks pressured on the Czechoslovak army corps and prepared conditions for a clash between Czechoslovak legionnaires and (not exclusively Czechoslovak) Bolsheviks.

One of the most important battlefields of the coming war was Penza.

While some Czechoslovak train transports had already reached Vladivostok, the others were stationed from Penza to Irkutsk. Nervousness. First conflicts. Propaganda. Anger.

It is hard to state which side of the coming war was more responsible for the bloody outcome. It is likely to say that the situation drew both sides into the war and it is hard to see any possible paths leading to a peaceful solution.

The Russian officers in the Czechoslovak units in Penza disagreed with the new Czechoslovak strategy. Czechoslovaks wanted to reach Vladivostok at any cost. Russian colonels and generals in their service argued that it was not possible.

Rudolf Medek put them in *home-jail* which was more protective custody at that time than anything

else. And people around him – especially Josef Švec, newly appointed commander of the Czechoslovak 1st Rifle Regiment – decided to attack the Red garrison in Penza and then leave the town. The battle was short and fierce, Czechoslovak won not easily but quickly.

Penza group then survived many horrific battles and finally in summer 1918 joined other groups⁷.

Almost a Minister of a Russian Government

Rudolf Medek represented one of the most important figures in Czechoslovak political milieu in Russia. There could be found some news that he was to be appointed a minister of all-Russian government supported by Czechoslovaks. However, we really do not know whether it was meant for real or it was just a gesture.

During his time in Irkutsk and in the echelon of the top Czechoslovak political and military figures in Russia, Medek again met his former secretary Jindřich Skácel. They lived near to each other as Jindřich Skácel worked as a personal aide for Czechoslovak general Jan Syrový, the commander of Czechoslovak army in Siberia⁸.

It is known that in November 1918 Medek wanted to attack newly established admiral Kolchak's regime. It did not happen. Czechoslovaks

⁷ Dalibor VÁCHA, *Horké léto 1918. Čechoslováci ve víru ruské občanské války*, Praha 2018; Compare Victor Miroslav FIC, *Československé legie v Rusku a boj za vznik Československa*, Brno 2007.

⁸ General Jan Syrový lost his eye just before the famous battle of Zborov (July 2nd, 1917). He rose in military ranks and functions quite quickly during 1917–1919, however, some gossipers claimed that his career was based more on his likeness with the legendary Czech medieval warrior Jan Žižka (also one-eyed) than on Syrový's skills. In the inter-war period, Syrový acted as an important figure in Czechoslovak army and at the end of the time was appointed the Czechoslovak Prime minister, just before WW2. His image was stained by a meeting with Adolf Hitler when Prague was taken by Germans. After WW2 he was jailed and after being released from prison, he lived as a poor old man, forced to work until the end of his life. See Jiří FIDLER, *Zborovský Žižka. Armádní generál Jan Syrový*, in: Jiří FIDLER, *Generálové legionáři*, Brno 1999, s. 256–274. See also Jindřich SKÁCEL, *S generálem Syrovým v Sibiři*, Praha 1923.

learned to live with Kolchak and some of them even joined his army, most notably general Radola Gajda⁹.

A Bitter Way Home

Medek's position in the Czechoslovak pseudo-government in Russia weakened in 1919 as he was regarded by common soldiers as the person who tried to force them to fight Bolsheviks again. He also refused all "democratic" tools in the army and followed general Rastislav Štefánik's guidelines that the Czechoslovak Siberian Army was at that time an integral part of Czechoslovakia and answered directly to its army commanders and Parliament.

Medek possibly wanted the best for the Czechoslovak Siberian Army, however, many disagreed with him. The final coup came during the end of the spring 1919 when the revolt of Irkutsk took place.

Previously forbidden elections for all-army assembly were to be held in spite of the orders of military command and political leaders. And the elections were held. The delegates should have gathered in Irkutsk but the military command proclaimed all the delegates who wanted to join this gathering outside the law. Illegal delegates could be arrested, could be listed as deserters, couldn't be fed and dressed and equipped on the way to Irkutsk by any Czechoslovak units.

The delegates finally gathered in Irkutsk and pre-discussed their assembly. Major political figures of Czechoslovak Siberia – Bohdan Pavlů (mockingly nicknamed Bohdan I The Great)¹⁰ and Rudolf Medek opposed the idea of the assembly again.

Nobody obeyed their orders and nobody listened to them. Delegates and a part of the Czechoslovak army in Russia simply did not trust them.

⁹ See Antonín KLIMEK – Petr HOFMAN, *Generál Radola Gajda. Vítěz, který prohrál*, Praha–Litomyšl 1995. For some interesting contemporary articles and reports on Kolchak and so-called „White Siberia“ see Pavel FINK, *Bílý admirál. Profil kolčakovštiny. Poznámky a dokumenty. Ze zápisníku válečného korespondenta*, Praha 1921; Pavel FINK, *Mezi mohylami. Kniha „Bílý admirál“ díl druhý. Glossy a materialy. Ze zápisníku válečného korespondenta*, Praha 1922.

¹⁰ For Bohdan Pavlů see: Robert SAK, „*Mohutný sen*“ Bohdana Pavlů, in: Robert SAK, *Co čte a nač myslí historik*, České Budějovice 2008, s. 175–221.

There was issued an order to arrest all delegates. However, there consequently occurred a very different turn of events. Irkutsk hosted a Home for crippled soldiers inhabited by several dozens of physically or mentally challenged Czechoslovak legion's veterans.

A number of delegates sought shelter in the Home and veterans swore to protect them. Soon after, other – now active military – units stepped up and promised to protect the delegates. What started as a political quarrel could easily change into a full-scale civil war between factions in Czechoslovak legion.

Insurgents occupied the printing house and also the editorial building of the most important Czechoslovak media in Siberia and Russia – *Československý deník* (*The Czechoslovak Daily*). Even though no battle took place – everything in Irkutsk ended quite peacefully and insurgents gave themselves up – politically, there was necessary to do something¹¹.

Two of the most important figures of Czechoslovak army in Siberia offered their resignation. Pavlů's resignation letter was turned down, Medek's was accepted. He was about to leave Russia sooner than he had expected. He went to newly established Czechoslovakia. He went home, at last.

The Most Beautiful Country in the World

Nobody expected Rudolf Medek to become a regimental or divisional commander of the domestic Czechoslovak army. However, the army wanted to utilize Medek's name and fame. He started to work at the Ministry of Defense in the "human resources" department¹². Soon after, a more appropriate position was found for him.

He was appointed the head of a new army museum. Památník národního osvobození (National

¹¹ For Czechoslovaks in Russia in 1919 see Dalibor VÁCHA, *Prokletá magistrála. Čechoslováci na Sibiři v roce 1919*, Praha 2019.

¹² For the topic of Czechoslovak legionnaires' return home and their lives there see Jan MICHL, *Legionáři a Československo*, Praha 2009; Dalibor VÁCHA, *Až půjdem po Václaváku... Obraz návratu československých legionářů do vlasti v jejich vzpomínkách a autobiografických románech*, Soudobě dějiny 1–2, 2018, s. 55–84.

Monument in Vítkov) was not only a museum of Czechoslovak resistance and establishing the Czechoslovak republic. Památník also included archives, activities connected with collecting and publishing sources (and pieces of art) and organizing public events. There was planned a “national cemetery” for important figures, which was not really fulfilled as the president Liberator Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk (quite logically within the frame of his philosophy) declined the possibility to be buried there. And finally, TGM was buried according to his wishes in the chateau Lány.

Where?

What?

Where could be Medek put?

What could he do?

All knew that Medek could not be a commander of regiment, all supposed that further military study and the rank of general (he became one in 1931) would never improve his skills and his often non-military behavior. A short stay at the Ministry of Defense thus resulted in a position really suitable for this officer and writer planning to create a great book on Czechoslovak deeds in Russia (the book changed subsequently into 5 volumes and in its author’s nightmare).

Rudolf Medek also took interest in veterans’ organization *Československá Obec legionářská* and soon helped to create its counterpart and competition *Nezávislá jednota čs. legionářů*. Those two organizations fought each other for the influence over numerous legionnaires – veterans. Nowadays, *Československá Obec legionářská* is renewed and it organizes a lot of commemorating activities, even in Russia¹³.

Medek as a bard of the Czechoslovak war in Russia

Medek’s prose concerning his military experiences became a part of the official discourse about Czechoslovak foreign resistance. He published at least five bestsellers – partly autobiographical – which spanned from the time before the war until the return of Czechoslovak legion home. *Ohnivý drak*

(*Fiery Dragon*), *Veliké dni (Magnificent Days)*, *Ostrov v bouři (An Island in a Storm)*, *Mohutný sen (A Great Dream)* and finally *Anabase (Anabasis)* were published again and again in great number of issues. It seemed that each and every family must have had at least one copy of this Medek’s *Legionnaires’ Epopée*.

This was not all.

Only the list of his books of that time is astonishing. After publishing the final part of the *Epopée* he was probably in depression as the books were awarded and simultaneously criticized (for their lack of artistic value). Medek’s books were all somehow connected with Russia and WW1. He also wanted to literary communicate with Jaroslav Hašek’s *Josef Švejk* which resulted in the novel *Legenda o Barabášovi (The Legend of Barabáš)*. This book is quite interesting but it does not compete with *Josef Švejk* very well.

Medek co-created a great *Trio* of the most important legionnaire-authors. Men who were both veterans and writers. Two next writers of the *Trio* were Josef Kopta and František Langer. Medek – especially by critics – regarded as the least talented but the most prolific. However, there were many other veterans-writers including Rudolf Vlasák, Adolf Zeman, Pavel Fink who constituted a specific, diverse and heterogenous group¹⁴.

When the Czechoslovak Republic turned ten in 1928, the National Theater in Prague joined the celebrations with a brand new patriotic play. The play was written by Rudolf Medek and was named simply *Plukovník Švec (Colonel Švec)*. The audience was excited, the theater was satisfied with the box office sales and a part of literary or theater critics were praising Medek’s work. Švec committed suicide in October 1918 as he (probably) felt betrayed by his soldiers and by his commanders, Medek knew him well. Švec in Medek’s play is more a symbol than a documentary figure¹⁵.

¹⁴ See e. g. *Legie a múzy. K historii československých zahraničních vojsk v letech 1914–1920*, Literární archiv. Památník Národního písemnictví v Praze 40, Praha 2008.

¹⁵ See Jan MICHL, *Kult sebevraha-hrdiny plukovníka Švece*, in: Jan RANDÁK – Petr KOURA (eds.), *Hrdinství a zbabělost*

¹³ See <http://www.csol.cz/>.

More politics than literature? Could be. There emerged some critics (and some really influential) who rejected his play as poorly written. And more importantly, Medek as a sympathizer of rightish political circles became a target for leftists including some former legionnaires. The public dispute soon turned into a battle over the right to interpret history. It is necessary to point out that Medek never presented himself as a historian and usually stressed his freedom to interpret the past in his own artistic and ideological style.

The 1930's became a battlefield of nationalist and political fervors and Medek stayed there as one of the most enthusiastic warriors. And he was not a victim, he loved to attack and his attacks were not always the clean ones. When he thought that he was right, nothing could stop him.

Broken Dreams

Love for his nation. Love for his state. Love for his republic. During the summer of 1938, Medek struggled with his damaged health but he also sang the song of resistance, of standing up all challenges presented by the Nazi Third Reich and Bohemian Germans in the Sudetenland. His legionnaire novels were re-published (and also many of those written by his co-veterans) and a blockbuster film called *Zborov* was being prepared, shot and went to the post-production. There had been shot film *Plukovník Švec* based on his play some years before (1929).

Rudolf Medek was sure that Czechoslovakia had to defend itself. He was also sure that the western allies would step up and help the country in the heart of Europe.

After the Munich Agreement in September 1938, Medek was a broken man with poor health and difficult position in society. He went to shadows, to hospitals, he showed the hatred for president Beneš and – it was last of his great gestures – he returned his medals (and they were only high and precious) to the countries which he saw as traitors and cowards – to France and Great Britain.

v české politické kultuře 19. a 20. století, Praha 2008, s. 162–173.

He was seen in public less and less often. Only fifty of age, his body started to betray him completely. Wild life full of alcohol was coming to a painful end. He died on August 22, 1940. Miroslav Rutte, a poet and a journalist, wrote: "A poet of manliness and honor has passed away."

Legacy?

Thanks to his second wife Eva Slavíčková, Rudolf Medek belonged to the wider family of the first Czech president. However, legendary president Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk and Medek did not get on really well. Thus, only Mrs. Medkova and both their sons visited the chateau of Lány, Rudolf did not go, it was safer, he did not argue with aging President Liberator in that case.

Both Medek's sons had names which revoked his love for Russia. The older one Ivan (born 1925) tended towards music – he loved music and he worked as a musicologist or a music journalist. He emigrated from Czechoslovakia in 1978 after he signed Charta 77 and was persecuted by the Czechoslovak Secret Police (StB). After his return home (1989), he entered the politics in a way. He worked at the ministry of culture and then (1993) he entered the service of the Czech president Václav Havel, during 1996–1998 he worked as Havel's chancellor. He died in 2010.

His younger brother Mikuláš (born 1926) inherited inclination to fine arts as his mother's father was famed and famous artist Antonín Slavíček. Mikuláš Medek became an important fine artist of the second half of the 20th century. His works are owned by prestigious world galleries and also by known private collectors. His career was also negatively influenced by the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia. He died young, in 1974.

The first child of the couple, a girl Eva, was born in 1922 but she died in 1924 which brutally affected the devastated parents' lives, not their relationship.

Rudolf Medek's life and works were reminded in the years 1945–1948 quite often and after the February Communist Coup of 1948 the frequency of Medek's name in Czechoslovak public space decreased. After 1953, there was *forgotten* and *forbid-*

den everything positive connected with the establishment of Czechoslovakia in 1918 and with Czechoslovak resistance movement during WW1. Masaryk's, Kopta's, Langer's and of course Medek's books were again removed from public libraries and publishing plans¹⁶. By the way, it resembled the very similar action by Nazi occupiers from 1939. The legionnaires' tradition was deformed by "historians" of Marxist origin and they were a target of a very concentrated and strong ideological offensive¹⁷.

¹⁶ See D. VÁCHA, *Některé aspekty reflexe československých legionářů marxistickými historiky. Zborov, Bachmač 1918 a vystoupení proti bolševikům*, in: Bohumil JIROUŠEK a kol., *Proměny diskursu české marxistické historiografie*, České Budějovice 2008.

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A short Prague spring of 1968 (and some years before) opened several topics connected with legionnaires and Medek's name appeared in public again. After 1989, Medek was sometimes reminded but we have to admit that this person of Czechoslovak modern history stands again in the shadows now. Only a fraction of his works was re-published, mainly his poetry as his prose seems to be lost for a modern reader altogether with Medek's time¹⁸.

¹⁷ E. g. Jiří MUŠKA – Jiří HOŘEC, *K úloze československých legií v Rusku*, Praha 1953.

¹⁸ See Rudolf MEDEK, *Odvrhnutý básník*, Praha 2002. Rudolf Medek's son Ivan participated on editing this book.

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