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SOLVING THE PROBLEM OF ESTABLISHING THE CAUSE OF DEATH
OF HUNGARIAN AND CZECH KING LADISLAV V

The author set out to reanalyse the question of the cause of death of Hungarian and Czech king, Ladislav V, on 23. November 1457. From the time of the king's death in 1457 until the mid-1980s, there was great dispute over whether the king died of natural causes or was instead poisoned by a someone close to Jiří z Poděbrad, perhaps even by Jiří himself. In 1986, Czech anthropologist Emanuel Vlček published the results of a study of the king's remains, which unequivocally excluded poisoning as cause of death, and furthermore specified a natural cause of death: acute non-Hodgkins lymphoblastic hemoblastosis. Since a number of theories disproving Vlček's conclusions have appeared, and because it had been thirty years since Vlček's research, the author, in collaboration with medical doctors, set out to either confirm or disprove Vlček's findings. Materials left over from Vlček's research (primarily radiology images) were subjected to new analysis by not only experts who participated in the previous research, but also by experts who were not a part of the previous analysis, and would thus not be influenced by the former findings.

The new findings corroborated Vlček's former determination of cause of death. King Ladislav most likely died of acute B-lymphoblastic leukemia (official terminology according to the WHO classification of hematic and lymphatic tumours, from 2008).

The author supplements his text with answers to additional questions regarding the illness and death of the king. He refutes, in collaboration with doctors, the claim that Ladislav's mother, queen Elizabeth of Luxembourg, suffered the same cause of death.