

# Rak czy kiła krtani, polityka czy błędna diagnoza - problem choroby cesarza Fryderyka III

Cancer or syphilis laryngis, politics or diagnostic failure - problems of Emperor Frederick's III disease

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The case history of the German emperor Frederick III, who died of laryngeal cancer in 1888, is briefly reported. In spite of fact, that the German laryngologists the patient's pathologic changes diagnosed as laryngeal cancer in early stage, the ultimate diagnosis was made too late for surgery to have any effect. This delay was due to the differences in opinions between the attending laryngologists; particularly between that of the English prominent laryngologist Morell Mackenzie and the Germans, prof. Gerhardt and prof. Bergmann. The roles of the British Queen Victoria as well as her daughter, the wife of Prince Frederick, the princess Victoria, in decisions about the treatment of the disease, are discussed. The behavior and the personality of Sir Morell Mackenzie played also a very important role in the course of the disease. Some medical facts and symptoms render it probable that syphilis was the underlying reason for the development of cancer. Crown Prince Frederick was a pipe smoker for at least 30 years before he died at the age of 57 years, so it may be possible, that the Emperor's laryngeal cancer was induced by tobacco. There are some suggestions, that the premature death of the King of Prussia and German Emperor Frederick III could be a critical turning point in European's history.