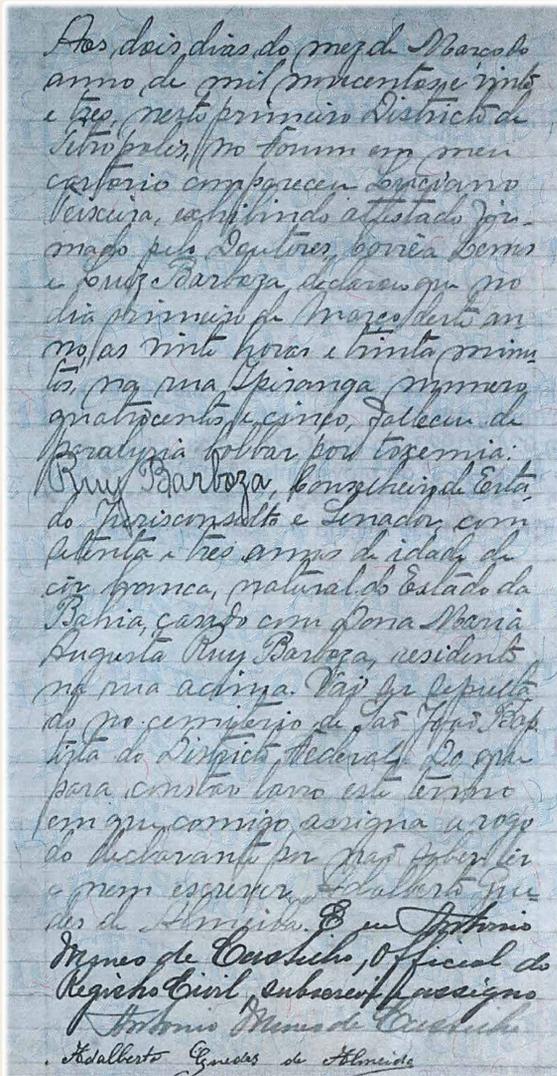


# Death

After so many struggles, the master's organism was weakened. At the age of 77, the fighter had withdrawn to his villa in Petrópolis, and spent the last days of his glorious existence reading and studying, alongside his friend and wife, his idol, and his goddess of all times. "Sometimes — writes Mr. Luiz Viana Filho — warming his weak body on the gentle mountain sunlight, he went for a few walks around town. He walked slowly and quietly. What thoughts fled through that spirit marked by the sufferings of childhood, the conflicts of youth, and the disappointments of the summer of his life, now that he approached the threshold of eternity? Perhaps it conjured some so dear faces that had already plunged into the mystery of death..."

On March 1, 1923, Rui — suffering of bulbar palsy — surrendered to God his pure and noble Spartan. He received, as a good Catholic, the comfort of the Church. It was all over. Of the giant that had imprinted his mark on an age in the republican history of Brazil,

there was nothing left but a cold, inert body, brought down by death. There was everything. Rui Barbosa, the gladiator of freedoms, the supreme evangelizer of so many generations, the immaculate guide of a people, had vanished forever. The drama of his life had ended wistfully, in stark contrast to his past. He had died as a righteous man, as a saint, without being able to fight against the destiny that had closed the book of life for him. One thing, however, remained indelible in the minds of Brazilians, something that neither death nor destiny can destroy: the example he left us. (...) Rui Barbosa continues to be an annoying man to the violators of republican ideals, because his words still resonate, ardent, burning, strong, and demolishing. (...) An influence that was not limited to his time, but that extends to us and will extend into the future (PALHA, Américo. *História da vida de Rui Barbosa*. Rio de Janeiro, Minerva, 1948, pp. 77-78).



Certidão de Óbito de Rui Barbosa. À direita, a transcrição do atestado, linha por linha.

On the second day of the month of March of the year of nineteen hundred twenty-three, in this first District of Petrópolis, Luciano Teixeira attended my registry office bearing the certificate signed by Doctors Corrêa Lemos, and Luiz Barbosa declared that, on the first of March this year, at eight thirty in the evening, on Rua Ipiranga number four hundred and five, he died of bulbar palsy due to toxemia: Rui Barbosa, State Councilman of the Jurisconsult and Senator, seventy-three years of age, white, born in the State of Bahia, married to Dona Maria Augusta Rui Barbosa, resident on the above-mentioned street. He will be buried at the cemetery of São João Baptista in the Federal District. In witness whereof, I have drafted this deed, which I signed and also signed on behalf of the deponent, Adalberto Guedes de Almeida, as he cannot read or write. And I Antonio Nunes de Conselho, notary of the Vital Statistics Office, subscribed and signed Antonio Nunes de Conselho Adalberto Guedes de Almeida



A snapshot of Rui Barbosa's corpse in the presence of the doctor responsible for making his death mask and Rui's admirers.



Pictures of Rui Barbosa's death mask.

Officially, Rui Barbosa's cause of death was Bulbar Palsy due to Toxemia. Bulbar palsy results from a lesion or lesions to the motor centers of the lower motor neuron. Toxemia is an intoxication caused by the accumulation of toxins in the blood, an accumulation usually caused by insufficient kidneys or liver functions. The first symptoms of the disease are changes related to breathing and speech. The patient suffers difficult to breathe, not only when is active, but also at rest. The voice gets weak and shows signs of hoarseness. We believe that the muscle retractions and contractions recorded by Rui Barbosa's death mask can provide additional information regarding other occurrences besides Bulbar Palsy. But we need to form a multidisciplinary team for a more detailed study of this matter. Doctors, coroners, archaeologists, physiologists, and computer science professionals can, together, help to clarify these issues.