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Statement from the Graduate Program in Social Anthropology on the fire destroying the National Museum / UFRJ

In the year commemorating the 200th anniversary of the foundation of the National Museum and the 50th anniversary of the creation of the Postgraduate Program in Social Anthropology (PPGAS), the fire devastating the Palace of São Cristóvão has thrown the institution into a new and unexpected phase of existence.

The challenges involved in the coexistence, in a historical early nineteenth century building, of a diverse and vigorous scientific life with scientific collections, a historical archive, laboratories, libraries and classrooms have been numerous. All the more so in a situation defined by a continual lack of resources over the years, and especially after the brutal cuts recently made in the federal budget for culture, education and science.

PPGAS was the first postgraduation program to be founded in Brazil, an institution of national and international renown where knowledge is produced, where junior researchers from Brazil and other parts of the world receive training, and from where objects, debates and approaches are disseminated that dynamize anthropology and the other social sciences. We founded the journal *Mana. Estudos de Antropologia Social*, built up one of the leading libraries in the area, participate in the discussion and formulation of public policies, and assist the struggles to recognize social rights – from the demarcation of indigenous and quilombola lands to, more recently, the implantation of affirmative action policies for indigenous and black students. In this way, we contribute to renewing the output of the social sciences, dedicated to the democratizing role performed, in our country, by high quality public universities.

Mutilated by the fire and the consequent loss of most of our precious heritage, we are endeavouring to rebuild the conditions needed to maintain our academic and scientific vitality, setting our sights not only on the continuation of our activities but on the construction of a new future.

We thank the innumerable manifestations of solidarity and support received from individuals and institutions the world over. They nurture and bolster our desire for a vibrant rebirth.