


Caring and repressing: 25 years of public policies in *Cracolândia**

Ygor Diego Delgado Alves^{1,2}

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6730-3255>

Pedro Paulo Gomes Pereira¹

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0298-2138>

Objective: this article seeks to describe and analyze interventions in São Paulo's *Cracolândia* region, accompanying decades of public policies, from the rise of open *crack* cocaine consumption as a social problem in 1995 until the middle of 2020. **Methodology:** the bibliographic research allowed recording the interventions in these 25 years of *crack* trade and consumption in the region. **Results:** the research showed how policies act simultaneously to provide care and repress *crack* users. **Conclusion:** we can divide the first 25 years of *Cracolândia*'s existence into two major periods, with regard to government interventions: the first, from 1995 to 2012, marked by violent operations; and the second, from 2013 to 2020, characterized by programs, although violence has persisted as a mark of a prolonged necropolitics in the region.

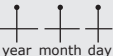

* Supported by Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico (CNPq), Grant # 150500/2020-3, Brazil.

¹ Universidade Federal de São Paulo, São Paulo, SP, Brazil.

² Scholarship holder at the Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico (CNPq), Brazil.

Descriptors: *Crack*; Crime; Public Policy; Violence.

How to cite this article

Alves YDD, Pereira PPG. Caring and repressing: 25 years of public policies in *Cracolândia*. SMAD, Rev Eletrônica Saúde Mental Álcool Drog. 2023 Jul.-Sept.;19(3):28-37 [cited ]. Available from: .
<https://doi.org/10.11606/issn.1806-6976.smad.2023.191864>

Cuidar e reprimir: 25 anos de políticas públicas na Cracolândia

Objetivo: este artigo busca descrever e analisar as intervenções na Cracolândia paulistana, acompanhando as políticas públicas, desde o surgimento da cena aberta de consumo de *crack* como um problema, em 1995 até meados de 2020. **Metodologia:** a pesquisa bibliográfica permitiu registrar as intervenções nesses 25 anos de comércio e de consumo de *crack* na região. **Resultados:** a pesquisa mostrou como as políticas atuam, simultaneamente, para oferecer cuidado e para reprimir os usuários de *crack*. **Conclusão:** pode-se dividir os primeiros 25 anos de existência da Cracolândia em dois grandes períodos, no que diz respeito às intervenções do poder público: o primeiro, de 1995 a 2012, marcado por operações violentas; e o segundo, de 2013 a 2020, caracterizado por programas, embora a violência tenha persistido como marca de uma prolongada necropolítica na região.

Descritores: *Crack*; Crime; Políticas Públicas; Violência.

Cuidar y reprimir: 25 años de políticas públicas en Cracolândia

Objetivo: este artículo busca describir y analizar intervenciones en la región de *Cracolândia* de São Paulo, acompañando décadas de políticas públicas, desde el auge del consumo de *crack* abierto como problema social en 1995 hasta mediados de 2020. **Metodología:** la investigación bibliográfica permitió registrar las intervenciones en estos 25 años de comercio y consumo de *crack* en la región. **Resultados:** la investigación mostró cómo las políticas actúan simultáneamente para brindar atención y reprimir a los consumidores de *crack*. **Conclusión:** podemos dividir los primeros 25 años de existencia de *Cracolândia* en dos grandes períodos, en lo que respecta a las intervenciones gubernamentales: el primero, de 1995 a 2012, marcado por operaciones violentas; y el segundo, de 2013 a 2020, caracterizado por programas, aunque la violencia ha persistido como marca de una necropolítica prolongada en la región.

Descriptorios: *Crack*; Crimen; Política Pública; Violencia.

Introduction

In this article, it was sought to make an approximation to the available literature on the *Cracolândia* and the various policies that followed between 1995 and 2020, when it was observed that there was no study that covered this interval. A single work⁽¹⁾ that sought to schematize, through a diagram, the succession of interventions in the region was found, however, only from 2005 to 2015. Another study⁽²⁾ dealt with the interval 1995-2014⁽³⁾. Thus, there were no works that contain an analytical description of the succession of policies imposed on crack users in the territory from 1995 to 2020.

As shown below, the practices are proposals and care actions, however, almost always accompanied by repressive measures. Certainly, the repressive policies, adopted during most of the existence of *Cracolândia*, could be better interpreted if considered that, in Brazil, the social problems linked to the use of crack are associated with the precarious participation of drug users in most social spheres⁽⁴⁾. *Cracolândia* appears, then, linked to the extreme inequality of Brazilian society and to urban problems that, for decades, have plagued the city of São Paulo. In this extreme context, the idea of necropolitics is used, which concerns the production of death on a large scale and would be one of the characteristics of a world in systemic crisis that, instead of cultivating life, makes vital massacres and aims at the "material destruction of human bodies and populations judged as disposable and superfluous"⁽⁵⁾. *Cracolândia* appears, thus, as an extremity that needs to be controlled, and the crack user synthesizes what must be sometimes sanitized, sometimes the object of violent actions⁽⁶⁾.

The proposals tend to move between care and repression. Prohibitionism, which would aim at a utopian elimination of drug use and production⁽⁷⁾, always seems to entail repressive practices on crack users. However, even in a prohibitionist context, programs such as *De Braços Abertos - DBA* (With Open Arms), *Recomeço* (New Beginnings), and *Redenção* (Redemption) emerged in *Cracolândia*. The first one involved a policy based on harm reduction, which proved to be able to provide a package of rights and welfare actions to program beneficiaries. New international trends have pointed to harm reduction as an ethical paradigm guiding care⁽⁷⁾. Thus, the *DBA* would have as a consequence the reduction of harmful crack use and the improvement of access to health care⁽⁸⁾, which confirms the importance of integrated social policies in addressing the problem⁽⁹⁾.

Although the 3rd National Household Survey on Drug Use⁽¹⁰⁾ has revealed that 0.1% of the sample has consumed crack in the last thirty days, which

does not indicate that there is a crack epidemic in the country, as there was not among Brazilian students⁽¹¹⁾, *Cracolândia* is still seen as a "threat, a walking danger of transmissibility" and contamination⁽¹²⁾. That makes the crack consumer and *Cracolândia* itself subject to the repressive actions of the public power move in the center of São Paulo. The territorialities of drug users are usually marked by instability and geographic mobility, precisely caused by violent police repression⁽¹³⁾, characteristics of public policies that are to be described below. Thus, this article will describe and analyze the interventions in *Cracolândia* in São Paulo, following the public policies, since the rise of the open scene of crack consumption as a problem, in 1995, until mid-2020. From this effort, it is intended to scrutinize the possibility of dividing this long period into distinct phases, which allows us to identify the nexus between care and repression.

Methodology

The bibliographical research method was used. For the bibliographical survey scientific articles, books, and news from newspapers and magazines that dealt with drug consumption in the central region of the city of São Paulo and, more specifically, in the area that became known as *Cracolândia* were selected. In the end, the focus was on the academic and journalistic production that dealt with the period from the mid-1990s to 2020, verifying the portion of media treatment given to the region and the public policies that followed. The search for the texts was performed using the following keywords: *Cracolândia*, *De Braços Abertos*, and *Redenção*. The *Recomeço* program was not included in the search due to the fact that it is not an integrated policy⁽⁹⁾ for *Cracolândia*. The Google search tool was used with customized date ranges for media news, laws, decrees, and documents, and the Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO) and Google Academic databases were used for scientific articles. In the latter, initially, the word *Cracolândia* was searched, and later the terms *De Braços Abertos* and *Redenção* were used. The search in SciELO was carried out in all indexes using the word "*Cracolândia*" and the string "*Cracolândia AND De Braços Abertos*", and "*Cracolândia AND Redenção*".

This work is not a systematic review, but, it is important to have some clarification about the retrieved materials. A Google search for the word "*Cracolândia*" generated three results for the period 1990-1995; 30 for 1996-2000; 50 for 2001-2005; 130 for 2006-2010; 90 for 2011-2015; and 90 for 2016-2020. The search "*Cracolândia De Braços Abertos*" generated one hundred results and "*Cracolândia Redenção*" generated 60 results. The material obtained from Google was analyzed according to the following criteria: 1) inclusion: publications in Portuguese, English, and

Spanish, about *Cracolândia*, published between 1990 and 2020; 2) exclusion: coming from a non-official source; being material published by newspapers and magazines without editorial board. Given the inclusion and exclusion criteria, three hundred publications were identified as relevant. Approximately 2100 results were obtained for “*Cracolândia*” in Google Scholar; 456 for “*Cracolândia De Braços Abertos*”; and 190 for “*Cracolândia Redenção*”. The articles were analyzed according to the following criteria: 1) inclusion criteria: publications in Portuguese, English and Spanish about *Cracolândia*, published between 1990 and 2020; 2) exclusion criteria: being a course conclusion work; being a slide presentation; being a work presented in a congress. Given the inclusion and exclusion criteria, a total of 2005 papers were identified as relevant. All 11 results for the word *Cracolândia* in SciELO were included, as well as the two results for the string “*Cracolândia AND De Braços Abertos*”. There were no results for “*Cracolândia*” AND “*Redenção*”.

The articles from Google Scholar and SciELO were read in the same order, at a five-year interval, from 1990 to 2020, in the Google news search tab. After reading and summarizing the material, the data were grouped by similarity. The material was analyzed according to thematic and chronological parameters, based on the theoretical framework of Salvador⁽¹⁴⁾, generating three categories of analysis: 1) *Cracolândia* in the media; 2) organized crime and repression in *Cracolândia*; 3) *De Braços Abertos* and *Redenção* programs. A timeline was built in which we could visualize the set of successive

public policies directed to people who attend or live in *Cracolândia*. The concept of necropolitics was adopted as a reference for analysis⁽⁵⁾.

Results

Cracolândia appears in the media

In 1995, the newspaper *O Estado de São Paulo* located, for the first time, an open scene of crack use in the Santa Ifigênia neighborhood⁽¹⁵⁾. The media spotlight led to discussions and *Cracolândia* became an urban and health problem to be solved. To this end, in 1997, Operation Zero Tolerance began, led by the then governor Mário Covas (PSDB Brazilian party). The operation caused the displacement of crack users to a few blocks in the same neighborhood⁽¹⁶⁾. In subsequent years, crack use persisted and, by the end of the 1990s, it was considered a problem associated with the presence of “homeless children”⁽¹⁶⁾. In a short time, at the beginning of the 21st century, more precisely in 2001, the neighborhood was taken by *Cracolândia*.

At that time, the Public Ministry filed a lawsuit against civil police officers of the Department of Investigations on Narcotics (DENARC), for extorting drug dealers on *Protestantes* Street, located on one of the limits of the scene. Months earlier, the director of the same DENARC had declared to the Parliamentary Inquiry Commission (PIC) of the Legislative Assembly that he had the satisfaction to say that “we achieved, fortunately, the eradication of *Cracolândia*”⁽¹⁷⁾. Figure 1 attempts to show some of this course of action.

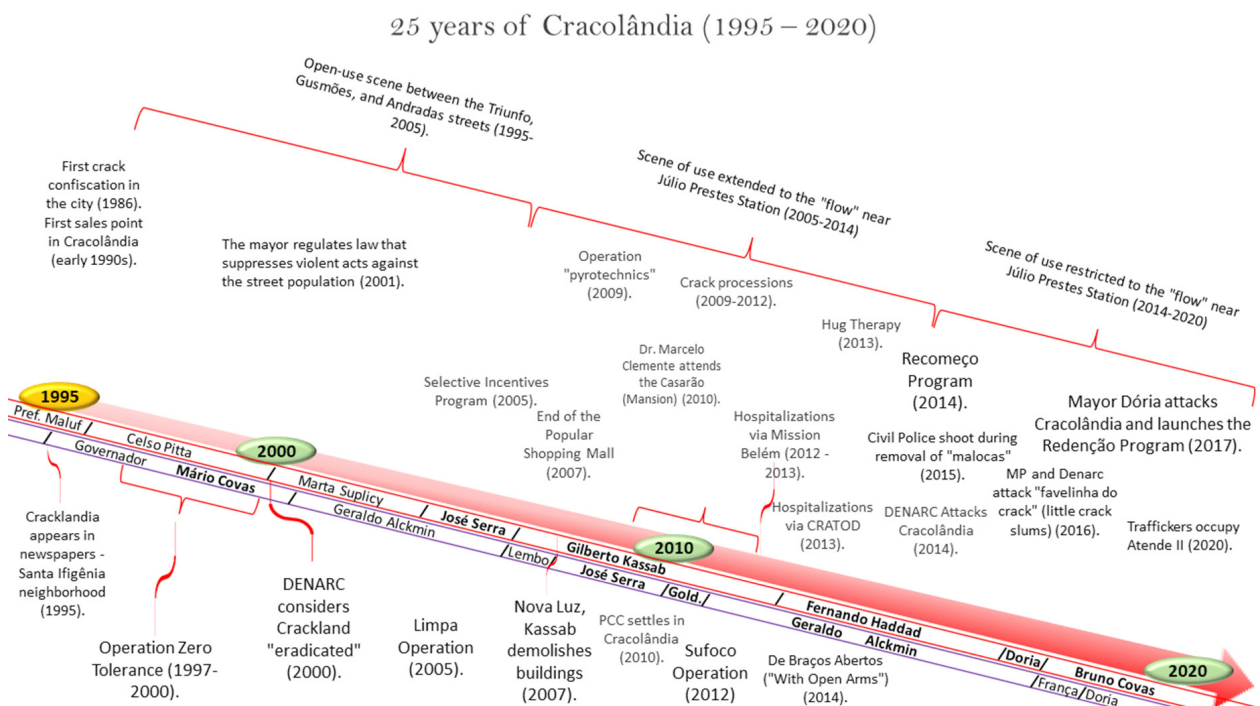


Figure 1 - Timeline of 25 years of Cracolândia (1995 - 2020)

In the years 1999 to 2000, the state government, in partnership with the City Hall under Celso Pitta (under the Brazilian party PTN), carried out three police raids a week in the Santa Efigênia region, arresting 2100 people, an average of 175 *per month*⁽¹⁶⁾. Such actions were objects of criticism that indicated the inefficiency of the measures and their violence. The interventions in *Cracolândia* would suffer an interruption during the subsequent municipal administration of Mayor Marta Suplicy (then under the Brazilian party PT), between January 2001 and December 2004. The mayor, as soon as she took office, signed a decree regulating a bill that, among other measures, ensured the suppression of violent or vexatious acts against the street population⁽¹⁸⁾.

As Marta Suplicy's successor, José Serra (under PSDB) created his own program for *Cracolândia*: the *Limpa* (Cleaning) Operation or *Cracolândia* Plan. This operation would have an impact on the drug trade and consumption as it would displace part of the drug scene to the Julio Prestes Square. Serra enacted, in December 2005, a law that instituted a Selective Incentives Program for the region adjacent to Luz Station, in order to attract real estate capital. The Program comprised 105 thousand square meters in the Santa Efigênia neighborhood and about 750 properties⁽¹⁹⁾ that could be demolished. When his vice-mayor Gilberto Kassab (PSD) took office as mayor, the Selective Incentives would be expanded to 269.3 thousand square meters, giving rise to a new program, *Nova Luz* (New Light, in reference to the neighbourhood name, Luz), through decree no. 48.349, dated May 16, 2007⁽¹⁶⁾. Kassab even personally demolished some properties in the so-called operation called Operation *Derruba Quarteirão* (Block Demolishing)⁽²⁰⁾ and was even photographed driving a tractor. On the occasion, he declared that: "There is no more the old *Cracolândia* [...]"⁽¹⁶⁾.

However, the scene and the crack use did not disappear and, in July 2009, it fell to the Civil Police, linked to the State Department of Public Safety, the task of extinguishing *Cracolândia*. An operation was organized that resulted in the referral of 265 people to municipal "care centers", without realizing that there was room for only sixty. The secretary in charge, Alda Marco Antônio, declared that she had not been informed in advance and the municipal secretary of Health, Januário Montone, classified the action, through a note, as a "pyrotechnic show"⁽¹⁶⁾. A few months later there would be the demolition of the old bus station, deactivated in 1982, which was occupied by a Popular Shopping Mall. Behind the walls that should have been demolished, but were not, and among the abandoned debris, a crack scene of approximately 200 to 400 people has emerged⁽¹⁵⁾. They were crack users expelled by the *Derruba Quarteirão* Operation and that had started to sparsely frequent the

Julio Prestes Square. The birth of the "flow", the name given to the most concentrated area of the open-use scene, could be located in this moment of occupation of the old bus station site.

Organized crime takes over *Cracolândia* and repression intensifies

The concentration of crack users in an open scene of use coincided with the arrival of organized crime. The First Command of the Capital (PCC), a criminal organization that emerged after the inauguration of Mário Covas as governor of the state, settled in *Cracolândia* in 2010⁽²¹⁾; even before the demolition of the houses on the corners of Dino Bueno Alley and Helvetia Street, which began to house drug dealers and crack users, after their expulsion from the former Popular Shopping Mall.

The failure of the "pyrotechnic show" of July 2009, dedicated to the removal of the open crack scene, did not inhibit another similar action. In January 2012, *Sufoco* (Suffocation) Operation would be detonated, part of the Integrated Operation Legal Center of the state government of Geraldo Alckmin (PSDB) and the municipal government, under the second Kassab administration (PSD). Hundreds of police raids and arrests were made; police cars were thrown at people who were running towards the sidewalk, only to be chased and run over by motorcycles⁽¹⁸⁾. Many of the internments made in this political context were of crack users forced to accept this option "instead of being arrested as dealers"⁽²²⁾. Such actions were justified by the then coordinator of Drug Policy, of the State Department of Justice and Defense of Citizenship, Luiz Alberto Chaves de Oliveira: "How can you get the user to treat him/herself? It is not through reason, it is through suffering. The person who seeks help can no longer stand that situation. Pain and suffering make the person ask for help"⁽¹⁸⁾.

One of the main results of the Suffocation Operation or Operation Pain and Suffering, as it was also known, was to end, by judicial decision, the so-called crack processions, which had been for years moving people from one place to another while they consumed the drug. The unsuccessful Suffocation Operation apparently ended up giving way to the so-called "spirituality"⁽²²⁾ in *Cracolândia*, through an agreement established between the state government and the Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Belém Mission. Its intervention in the territory of Luz consisted in approaching, through former drug users converted to Christianity, the locals who used crack and convince them to "be interned in a house of the entity"⁽¹⁶⁾.

The failure of the 2012 police operation, apparently, also opened an opportunity for doctors and members of the judiciary, in mid-2013, to implement joint action inside the Reference Center for Alcohol,

Tobacco and Other Drugs (CRATOD), located in the Luz neighborhood. Crack users were referred by the health team of the recently opened *Recomeço* Program, located in an 11-floor building in the center of the open scene of use, for "psychiatric hospitalizations without the proper activation and organization of out-of-hospital services"⁽²³⁾, which caused the closure of the initiative in 2014. The Fresh Start would offer showers, toilets, barbershops, a sports center, and a variety of workshops and training opportunities; it would remain to transfer patients to detox clinics and therapeutic communities⁽²⁴⁾.

From the *De Braços Abertos* to the *Redenção* program

Two personal initiatives seemed to indicate a new direction for Cracolândia in the sense of an integrated public policy⁽⁹⁾, the *DBA*. For this reason, this article will be more detailed in describing its emergence and main characteristics. The first initiative was of the social worker, Maria Albertina França, and the second was of the physician Marcelo Clemente⁽²¹⁾, who, then only 27 years old, was part of team 8 of the Basic Health Unit (BHU) República. In 2010, Clemente attended, in an unprecedented way, inside the scene of use, however, he died shortly after pulmonary edema. The social worker Maria Albertina França or Dona Tina, as she was called by *Cracolândia* dwellers, in 2013, at the age of seventy, visited the scene of use weekly, sometimes alone and at night, to hug people. In understanding with the Municipal Health Department (MHD) and the Public Defender's Office, the social worker began to meet with the municipal government in order to, in her words, "take the contributions of the residents of *Cracolândia*"⁽¹⁶⁾. From this experience, the name of the *De Braços Abertos* program emerged, based on harm reduction⁽⁸⁾, and that proposed to change the repressive character that, as we have seen, was common to the actions of public authorities in *Cracolândia*.

Thus, the city government, under the management of Fernando Haddad (PT), had installed, in mid-2013, a new facility on Helvetia Street, the Integrated Center for Social Reintegration *De Braços Abertos*, called *Ponto de Apoio* (Support Spot). By the end of the year, it had 16 health teams on the street. However, it was not until January 15, 2014, that the *DBA*⁽¹⁶⁾ came into being. This initiative transferred a little more than 300 people who lived in shacks on Helvetia Street and Dino Bueno Alley, near the Júlio Prestes Station, mostly occupied by crack users, to nearby hotels. Three meals a day would be guaranteed to them in a restaurant of the state program *Bom Prato* (Great Dish), also located in the surroundings of the same station. The next day, January 16, the beneficiaries of the new program were in uniform and with work equipment in hand, ready to perform janitorial

functions around the neighborhood, for which they would be paid on Fridays.

The *DBA* "was composed of three axes of action by offering a 'package of rights' that included: 1) Housing/food; 2) Work fronts/professional qualification; and 3) Assistance: health and social assistance"⁽²⁵⁾. To the beneficiaries of the program, vacancies were made available in collective hotel rooms, most of them close to the "flow", being one of these hotels located in a more distant neighborhood. The work fronts were carried out through the *Operação Trabalho* (Work Operation) Program, instituted in 2003 by mayor Marta Suplicy, and occupied four hours a day with activities generally focused on cleaning and sweeping public spaces.

A little over a week after the beginning of the *DBA*, exactly eight days, on January 23, 2014, in the afternoon, the first of a series of repressive actions was triggered in *Cracolândia*, by institutions under orders of the state government, Military Police (MP) and Civil Police. On April 29, 2015, an agreement between the city government and leaders of the "flow" frequenters was broken by the state government, through the MP, which shot with firearms wounding two people⁽¹⁶⁾.

The last major violent action of the Military Police and DENARC during Haddad's administration took place on August 5, 2016, 11 days before the beginning of the mayoral campaign, in which Haddad was defeated by João Doria Jr. Moreover, the replacement of the *DBA* by its successor, the *Redenção* Program, occurred after "[...] a mega police operation carried out in *Cracolândia*, on May 21, 2017"⁽²⁵⁾; the new municipal program intended to work in consonance with the *Recomeço* Program.

On June 21, 2017, the *Redenção* program made one month of launching with the return of crack users, practically, to the original point from which they had been expelled. They returned to the square located at the corner of Helvetia Street and Cleveland Alley, nicknamed, since then, the *Cachimbo* Square, exactly fifty meters from the corner of the same Helvetia Street and Dino Bueno Alley, the original spot from where they had been removed 31 days earlier. What would be left of the *Redenção* Program in the "flow" would be a piece of equipment added to the old *DBA* facilities, at 53 Helvetia Street, the Atende II. There were dozens of beds in containers with separate modules for women and the LGBT population. The space kept the old *DBA* tent and served the three meals for free, with the difference that there was no longer the resource of sending people to hotels, nor work and income.

Before it was dismantled, the situation at Atende II deteriorated to the point that the equipment was used as a drug storage facility by drug traffickers. Staff considered themselves hostages of drug traffickers while

working daily in the small building that had once been the headquarters of the *DBA*⁽¹⁶⁾. On April 8, 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic had killed 371 people in the state of São Paulo, the city government promoted the

removal of people hosted in *Atende II* in a crowded bus, bound for the Integrated Therapeutic Hosting Service, of the MHD and Social Assistance and Development, about three kilometres from *Cachimbo Square* (Figure 2).



Figure 2 - *Cachimbo Square* on *Cleveland Alley* in March 2020

Discussion

Relevant research findings

It was seen how the people who frequent or live in *Cracolândia* are submitted to the actions of the public power, either in the form of operations or programs, which put them in constant movement in the region⁽¹³⁾, considered as something to be suppressed and as a problem to be solved. Crack users have become the target of practices that are intended to provide care, such as outreach teams, which are sometimes accompanied by repressive measures.

Since the beginning of public policies for *Cracolândia* one can observe the use of state violence in operations such as “zero tolerance”, obeying a logic of social cleansing that aimed to exclude those considered undesirable. Governments succeeded each other and, in a process that would take a quarter of a century, the open crack scene extended from a few streets in the *Santa Ifigênia* neighborhood to include the *Júlio Prestes Square*, to later be restricted to the surroundings of this same square.

Here is an attempt to produce a synthetic picture of the policies carried out in *Cracolândia*, by successive state and municipal governments, which ended up

shaping it the way it is presented at the end of the second decade of the 21st century. It is possible to notice a period of 15 years, from 1997 to 2012, in which the actions of the public power are marked by violent operations, without greater concern for health care and social assistance for crack users. Only in 2013, with the *DBA Tent*, a first attempt was made to treat the occupation of that space by an open scene of crack use as an issue to be solved by a package of rights⁽⁸⁾; in a public policy that was intended to be integrated⁽⁹⁾.

The public authorities could have started, in 2013, a new era of policies for *Cracolândia*, ending the initial stage of 15 years, marked by operations without major consequences, besides the practice of violence, as was the case of *Limpa* (2005) and *Sufoco* (2012) operations. The City Hall and the state government seemed to have opted for a new era, characterized by programs such as *DBA*, *Redenção*, and *Recomeço*, but this was not the case. The *Redenção* program, in *Cracolândia*, was melancholically terminated with the occupation of the equipment, which had previously served the *DBA*, by organized crime. The *Recomeço* program, which remains with its headquarters in the scene of use, not integrated into social policies⁽⁹⁾, does not aim to offer housing and access to income for the hundreds of people who crowd into the “flow”.

Critical comparison with relevant literature and interpretation of findings

In the mid-1990s, crack consumption in the territory that would be called *Cracolândia* became the object of media exposure; the year 1997 inaugurated a long period of operations, almost exclusively repressive, which would last until 2012. These operations would not only have an impact on the displacements⁽¹³⁾ of the scene of use through the territory, the so-called crack processions. *Limpa* Operation, in the mid-2000s, would also bring consequences for some small hotels that, according to Raupp and Adorno⁽²⁶⁾, would cause “modifications in the circuits of crack use”. Again, according to these authors, what stood out in this proposal was its character of “cleaning”⁽²⁶⁾ and control. The main issue would be real estate, that is, to change the urban contour of downtown São Paulo.

Another consequence of the occupation of streets, squares, abandoned buildings, and small hotels by crack users was the installation of organized crime in *Cracolândia*, represented by the arrival of the PCC. The physician Marcelo Clemente, known for the work developed outside the doctor’s office, in the middle of the “flow”, witnessed the arrival of the PCC in the territory and has always seen it associated with corrupt police officers⁽²¹⁾.

With *Cracolândia* occupied by organized crime, the operations followed one after another until reaching their peak in January 2012, with *Sufoco* Operation, also known as Pain and Suffering. The number of police approaches and arrests, which reached hundreds, and the police vehicles thrown at people, made an author⁽²⁷⁾ observe that it was an operation “that barely hides the militarized logic of fighting the enemy and occupying their territories. Despite the violence, *Sufoco* Operation failed, it proved to be devoid of planning. If necropolitics is, in the emblematic case of the Nazi concentration camps, characterized by the use of a certain rationality of the instrumental type⁽⁵⁾, in *Cracolândia*, the actions of the public power, until then, are marked by improvisation⁽²⁸⁾.

The fact that this research extended until 2020 allowed the research team to go beyond previous works⁽¹⁻²⁾ that proposed to produce timelines on *Cracolândia*. It was possible to verify that the *DBA*⁽⁶⁾ with its proposal of access to housing, health care, and income, could have started a new period for the public power interventions in that territory. Although this analysis does not allow us to affirm that a logic of harm reduction⁽⁷⁾ has been imposed, the interventions started to be marked by the execution of programs (*DBA*, *Recomeço*, and *Redenção*) and no longer by operations characterized, almost exclusively, by violence, which persists. With the end of ATENDE II, what seems to have been imposed in

Cracolândia was the logic of prohibitionism⁽⁷⁾, of fighting a supposed epidemic⁽¹⁰⁻¹¹⁾ with repressive practices that usually generate instability and mobility⁽¹³⁾.

Conclusion

We can divide the first 25 years of *Cracolândia*’s existence into two major periods, as far as public power interventions are concerned: the first, from 1995 to 2012, marked by violent operations (*Zero Tolerance*, *Derruba Quarteirão*, *Limpa*, *Sufoco* or Pain and Suffering); and the second, from 2013 to 2020, characterized by programs (*DBA*, *Recomeço*, and *Redenção*), although violence persisted.

These 25 years of history show how the crack user, who occupies the central region of São Paulo, could be triggered as an object of repressive practices by successive governments. In *Cracolândia*, violence appeared in coexistence with practices and promises of care; the nexus of this coexistence can be found if considering that in the periphery of capitalism, biopolitics, which in Foucault’s formulations would be dedicated to the production and maintenance of life, gives way to the production of death - the necropolitics⁽⁵⁾. Public policies for *Cracolândia* in the first 25 years of its existence, from 1995 to 2020, were marked by repressive practices, in permanent necropolitics, even with the implementation of programs aimed at caring for crack users.

References

- Frúgoli H Junior, Chizzolini BB. Relações entre Etnografia Face a Face e Imagens do Google Street View: Uma Pesquisa sobre Usuários de Crack nas Ruas do Centro de São Paulo. *Gesto Imagem Som* [Internet]. 2017 [cited 2020 Aug 12];2(1). Available from: <https://doi.org/10.11606/issn.2525-3123.gis.2017.129197>
- Rui T. Fluxos de uma territorialidade: Duas décadas de “cracolândia” (1995–2014). In: Kowarick L, Frúgoli H Junior, organizators. *Pluralidade Urbana em São Paulo: Vulnerabilidade, Marginalidade, Ativismos Sociais*. São Paulo: Editora 34; 2016. p. 225-8.
- Rui T. Diritti e repressione nella “cracolândia”. *Riflessioni a partire dal programma De Braços Abertos. Cartografie sociali. Riv Int Sci Sociali* [Internet]. 2019 [cited 2020 Sep 18];6. Available from: <https://universitypress.unisob.na.it>
- Arenari B, Dutra R. A construção social da condição de pessoa: premissas para romper o círculo vicioso de exclusão e uso problemático do Crack. In: Souza J, organizator. *Crack e exclusão social*. Brasília: Ministério da Justiça e Cidadania; 2016. p. 191-208.
- Mbembe A. Necropolítica: biopoder, soberania, estado de exceção, política da morte. *Arte Ensaios*. 2016 [cited 2022 Mar 18];32:123-51. Available from: <https://revistas.usp.br/smad>

- ufrj.br/index.php/ae/article/view/8993/7169?fbclid=IwAR2SAvwKICKMhUpLkAXp540_2BYPGYGhsEOvVA1NVdmgYcnbUt1Gv6fJt24
6. Magalhães TRP. Campos de disputa e gestão do espaço urbano: o caso da "cracolândia" paulistana [Dissertation]. São Paulo: Universidade de São Paulo; 2016 [cited 2021 Oct 27]. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.11606/D.8.2016.tde-22082016-121815>
7. Teixeira MB, Engstrom E, Ribeiro JM. Revisão sistemática da literatura sobre crack: análise do seu uso prejudicial nas dimensões individual e contextual. *Saúde Debate*. 2017;41:311-30. <https://doi.org/10.1590/0103-1104201711225>
8. Teixeira MB, Lacerda A, Ribeiro JM. Potencialidades e desafios de uma política pública intersetorial em drogas: o Programa De Braços Abertos, de São Paulo, Brasil. *Physis*. 2018;28:1-25. <https://doi.org/10.1590/S0103-73312018280306>
9. Garcia, L, Kinoshita, RT, Maximiano, V. Uma perspectiva social para o problema do crack no Brasil: implicações para as políticas públicas. In: Bastos FI, Bertoni N. Pesquisa nacional sobre o uso de crack: quem são os usuários de crack e/ou similares do Brasil. Rio de Janeiro: Fiocruz/ICICT; 2014. p.147-55.
10. Bastos FIPM, Vasconcellos MTL, De Boni RB, Reis NB, Coutinho CFS. III Levantamento Nacional sobre o uso de drogas pela população brasileira. Rio de Janeiro: Fiocruz/ICICT; 2017.
11. Nappo AS, Sanchez ZVDM, Ribeiro LA. Avaliação e conduta em situações específicas: troca do sexo por crack. In: Ribeiro M, Laranjeira R, organizators. O tratamento do usuário de crack. Porto Alegre: Artmed; 2012.
12. Medeiros R. A epidemia do crack: a quem interessa. In: Sudbrack MFO, Conceição MIG, Silva IM, Lordello SR, organizators. ABRAMD: compartilhando saberes. Brasília: Technopolitik; 2015. p.208-24.
13. Peiter P, Belmonte P, Teixeira M, Cobra G, Lacerda A. Homeless crack cocaine users: Territories and territorialities in the constitution of social support networks for health. *Soc Sci Med* [Internet]. 2019 [cited 2020 Nov 22];227:111-8. Available from: <https://www.arca.fiocruz.br/handle/icict/35435>
14. Salvador AD. Métodos e técnicas de pesquisa bibliográfica. Porto Alegre: Sulina; 1986.
15. Costa C Junior, Souza G. Vizinhos da Cracolândia: a memória de quem viu um mundo paralelo se erguer na região da Luz. São Paulo: Edição dos Autores; 2014.
16. Alves YDD, Pereira PPG. Sob fogo cruzado: antecedentes, construção e desmonte do programa De Braços Abertos na Cracolândia paulistana. Salvador: Cetad/UFBA; 2019.
17. Simões R. CPI do narcotráfico – relatório final. Diário Oficial do Estado de São Paulo. 2002 Jun 22 [cited 2017 Oct 16]. Available from: http://www.al.sp.gov.br/repositorio/arquivoWeb/com/cpi_narcotrafico_relatorio_final.pdf
18. Alves Y. Jamais fomos zumbis: contexto social e craqueiros na cidade de São Paulo. Salvador: EdUFBA/Cetad; 2017.
19. Bastos S, Salles M. História urbana e hospitalidade: o bairro de Santa Ifigênia/São Paulo. In: Anais do XIX Encontro Regional de História: Poder, Violência e Exclusão; 2008 Sep 8-12; São Paulo, Brazil. São Paulo: ANPUH; 2008.
20. Silva SL, Adorno RCF. A etnografia e o trânsito das vulnerabilidades em territórios de resistências, registros, narrativas e reflexões a partir da Cracolândia. *Saude Transform Soc* [Internet] 2013 [cited 2021 Aug 02];4(2):21-31. Available from: <http://incubadora.periodicos.ufsc.br/index.php/saudeettransformacao/article/view/2240/2628>
21. Clemente M. A Cracolândia dia a dia. São Paulo: Giostri; 2016.
22. Trigo A. Estado laico, acolhimento religioso: as discrepâncias no atendimento aos dependentes químicos em São Paulo. Último Andar [Internet]. 2015 [cited 2021 Oct 27];26:35-47. Available from: <https://revistas.pucsp.br/index.php/ultimoandar/article/view/26123>
23. Souza, BR. Internação psiquiátrica compulsória: estudo exploratório a partir da experiência no Anexo Judiciário no CRATOD. *Rev Jur Esc Sup Min Pub São Paulo*. 2015;8:149-70.
24. Ribeiro M, Duailibi S, Frajzinger R, Alonso ALS, Marchetti L, Williams AV, et al. The Brazilian "Cracolândia" open drug scene and the challenge of implementing a comprehensive and effective drug policy. *Addiction*. 2016;111(4):571-3. <https://doi.org/10.1111/add.13151>
25. Teixeira MB, Lacerda A, Ribeiro JM. Potencialidades e desafios de uma política pública intersetorial em drogas: o Programa "De Braços Abertos" de São Paulo, Brasil. *Physis*. 2018;28(03):e280306. <https://doi.org/10.1590/S0103-73312018280306>
26. Raupp LM, Adorno, R. Circuitos de uso de crack na região central da cidade de São Paulo. *Ciênc Saúde Coletiva* [Internet]. 2011 [cited 2017 Nov 22];16(5). Available from: <http://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=63018749031>
27. Magalhães TRP. Campos de disputa e gestão do espaço urbano: a Operação Sufoco na "cracolândia" paulistana. *Ponto Urbe*. 2017;21. <https://doi.org/10.4000/pontourbe.3615>
28. Alves YD, Pereira PPG. Necropolítica, drogas e ações governamentais na Cracolândia. *Barbarói* [Internet]. 2021 [cited 2022 Mar 18];1(60). Available from: <https://online.unisc.br/seer/index.php/barbaroi/article/view/15442>

Authors' contribution


Study concept and design: Ygor Diego Delgado Alves, Pedro Paulo Gomes Pereira. **Obtaining data:** Ygor Diego Delgado Alves, Pedro Paulo Gomes Pereira. **Data analysis and interpretation:** Ygor Diego Delgado Alves, Pedro Paulo Gomes Pereira. **Statistical analysis:** Ygor Diego Delgado Alves, Pedro Paulo Gomes Pereira. **Obtaining financing:** Ygor Diego Delgado Alves, Pedro Paulo Gomes Pereira. **Drafting the manuscript:** Ygor Diego Delgado Alves, Pedro Paulo Gomes Pereira. **Critical review of the manuscript as to its relevant intellectual content:** Ygor Diego Delgado Alves, Pedro Paulo Gomes Pereira.

All authors approved the final version of the text.

Conflict of interest: the authors have declared that there is no conflict of interest.

Received: Oct 27th 2021

Accepted: Dec 21st 2022

Corresponding Author:
Ygor Diego Delgado Alves
E-mail: antropologiaygor@yahoo.com.br
 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6730-3255>

Copyright © 2023 SMAD, Rev. Eletrônica Saúde Mental Álcool Drog.
This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons CC BY.
This license lets others distribute, remix, tweak, and build upon your work, even commercially, as long as they credit you for the original creation. This is the most accommodating of licenses offered. Recommended for maximum dissemination and use of licensed materials.