
The Struggle Against the Anti-Gender Agenda in Brazil: The Potential of Transfeminism

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Abstract:

In Brazil, women, LGBTQIA+ individuals, Black communities, and Indigenous peoples experience systemic oppression and violence, perpetuated by a misogynistic, LGBTQ-phobic, and racist social structure designed to maintain control over the most vulnerable groups. The restriction of rights under the pretext of ultraconservative ideologies has become a key mechanism for exerting such control. In recent years, Brazil has seen the rise of a political agenda marked by anti-gender, racist, and LGBTQ-phobic narratives, primarily driven by religious fundamentalist movements. Two central tenets of recent state policies in this context deserve particular scrutiny: the promotion of the "traditional family" as the cornerstone of political discourse and the intensification of efforts against the so-called "gender ideology." This study examines the rise of the anti-gender agenda in Brazil, offering a critical analysis informed by the theoretical framework of Paul Preciado. The primary aim is to engage in a critical exploration of the ethical and political conditions facilitating the expansion of the anti-gender agenda while advocating for transfeminism as a point of resistance to this agenda.

Keywords:

Transfeminism; Anti-gender; Neoconservatism; Far-right; Brazil.

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Introduction

This study aims to examine and critically engage with the ethical and political conditions that enable the advancement of the anti-gender agenda in Brazil. To provide a comprehensive critique, it draws on the theoretical framework of Paul Preciado (Preciado 2018a, 2013, 2018b). Furthermore, it advocates for Transfeminism as a pivotal movement in resisting and countering the anti-gender agenda.

For the fifteenth consecutive year, Brazil has ranked as the country with the highest number of LGBTQIA+ homicides globally. In 2022, one LGBTQIA+ person was murdered every 32 hours. That year alone, at least 151 transgender individuals lost their lives, including 131 homicides and 20 suicides, according to the 2023 Report on Deaths and Violence Against LGBTQIA+ Individuals in Brazil (Benevides 2023). Furthermore women who undergo abortions in countries where the procedure is illegal have higher death rates compared to those in countries where it is legalized, as reported by the latest World Health Organization report (Cresswell et al. 2025).

Anti-gender movements have been organized since the 1990s and can be understood as a reflection of demands that began to be integrated into both political discourse and everyday life from the 1980s and 1990s onward, including the advocacy for the rights of women and LGBTQIA+ communities (Miguel and Biroli 2014). This phenomenon is particularly pronounced in Brazil but is also evident on a global scale, especially over the past two decades of the 21st century. In Brazil, one of the most prominent figures associated with this movement is Damares Alves, a former minister in Jair Messias Bolsonaro's government and a current senator.

In Brazil, anti-gender movements have significantly undermined democratic values, driven by political representatives aligned with conservative ideologies (Biroli, Tatagiba, and Quintela 2024). The anti-gender agenda advanced during the Bolsonaro administration, particularly under the leadership of former minister Damares Alves centering around two key themes: the notion of the traditional family and gender ideology.

Within this context, it is unsurprising that far-right and conservative regimes actively promote an anti-gender agenda under the guise of combating so-called gender ideology (Butler 2024). The ascendance of the far-right, bolstered by neoconservative and religious fundamentalist discourses, has profoundly hindered the advancement of policies supporting women and the LGBTQIA+ community in the country (Biroli, Tatagiba, and Quintela 2024).

Meanwhile, the consequences of this agenda are devastating: pregnant individuals succumb to unsafe and illegal abortions, LGBTQIA+ individuals endure daily violence and death, children face abandonment, and women are subjected to femicide (IPEA 2025).

In this setting, this study is structured to examine the ethical and political conditions underpinning the advancement of the anti-gender agenda in Brazil, particularly during Bolsonaro's administration. It then analyzes this scenario through the theoretical framework of Paul Preciado. The selection of Paul Preciado's thesis for this study was motivated by their provision of philosophical arguments that align closely with the objectives of this paper. Finally, the study highlights transfeminism as a resistance against this agenda.

Ethical-Political Conditions of Anti-Gender Agenda in Brazil

The advancement of the anti-gender agenda is growing daily in various countries around the world, occupying strategic positions concerning the development of public policies and global political discourses (Kuhar and Paternotte 2017). This agenda has become part of the political platforms of numerous candidates for elected offices in different parts of the planet. For this study, the references consulted on the anti-gender agenda include (Corredor 2019; Butler 2024; Kuhar and Paternotte 2017; Graff and Korolczuk 2022; McEwen and Narayanaswamy 2023), as well as Brazilian authors (Biroli 2022, 2023, 2024; Manso 2023). To understand the factors contributing to the advancement of the anti-gender agenda in Brazil, news reports and public statements were reviewed.

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Within this agenda and across these various contexts and actors, there is a common element: the anti-gender agenda advocates for the preservation of the concept of the “traditional family”, which is a father, mother, and their children in a heterosexual monogamous marriage (Butler 2024, 82). This is a key term used by various groups to oppose gender equity, sexual and reproductive rights, LGBTQIA+ rights, sexual education for young people, and campaigns against hate crimes targeting women and the LGBTQIA+ community (McEwen and Narayanaswamy 2023).

The anti-gender phenomenon can be understood as a narrative that highlights the dangers that the alleged gender ideology could pose to the future (Graff and Korolczuk 2022). This narrative undergoes various stages to consolidate and emerge as a transnational phenomenon. Before delving deeper into this analysis, it is important to emphasize that the foundation of this movement is built on rigid moral principles, often influenced by religious practices (McEwen and Narayanaswamy 2023).

The narrative, which permeates public and private spaces, both real and virtual, domestic and political, encompasses a wide range of topics (Graff and Korolczuk 2022). Among these, we highlight the advocacy for a biologically determined definition of gender and the social roles of men and women; the promotion of maintaining the traditional family structure, consisting of father, mother, and children; the claim that schools and teachers are indoctrinating children through the so-called gender ideology; and the equivalence of reproductive rights, such as legal abortion, to homicide, among other issues (Corredor 2019).

The rise of conservative movements began to gain prominence worldwide, particularly following the 2008 crisis and the "revolutionary" movements of the 2010s. Examples of these movements include Occupy Wall Street and the so-called Arab Spring. Various institutions and actors have expressed opposition to gender ideology in different ways. Notable examples include the Vatican and several leaders of neopentecostal churches in different regions of the world (Butler 2024, 9–10).

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In Brazil, this movement began to gain greater prominence from the mid-2010s onward (Manso 2023). A significant milestone was Judith Butler's visit to the country in 2017. The philosopher came to Brazil to participate in a seminar on the topic of democracy and was met by protesters who, shouting, held up signs calling her a witch and demanding an end to the so-called gender ideology. This episode became emblematic for highlighting a broad movement opposed to gender studies, which, alongside other initiatives such as the Escola Sem Partido (School Without Party) movement, declared war on the alleged ideological indoctrination present in Brazilian society, particularly in schools and universities (Butler 2024)

Judith Butler's visit to Brazil was not the catalyst for the anti-gender movement in the country. To understand the advancement of this agenda within the Brazilian context, we focus on the period from 2016 to the present. The choice of this timeframe is justified by its significance as a critical ethical-political milestone in Brazil's recent history. In 2016, former President Dilma Rousseff¹ was removed from office through an impeachment process, leading to the rise of Vice President Michel Temer to the presidency².

It is important to emphasize that the impeachment did not occur in isolation but was preceded by intense political and economic disputes, which were exacerbated since the June Journeys of 2013³. This period was marked by widespread civil protests across the country, which significantly contributed to the polarization of the national political landscape. The impeachment process of Dilma Rousseff was characterized by several determining factors; among them, the misogynistic attacks directed at the former president and the rise of antifeminist movements, which emerged as central elements in this context.

¹Dilma Rousseff was the first and, to this day, the only female president in the country.

² Available: <https://www12.senado.leg.br/noticias/materias/2016/12/28/impeachment-de-dilma-rousseff-marcao-de-2016-no-congresso-e-no-brasil>

³ The June Journeys began on June 6, 2013, when protesters in São Paulo fought against the increase in public transportation fares. In less than two weeks, the entire country began to experience much larger mobilizations. The mobilization of tens of thousands of people in the streets began to be contested by right-wing and far-right groups, which, years later, contributed to the impeachment process of former President Dilma Rousseff.

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Against this backdrop, Brazilian politics became marked by heightened ideological disputes, the 2018 electoral period brought to light an unprecedented phenomenon: the exponential use of the sharing of fake news as a tool for political propaganda, disseminated through websites, messaging apps, and social media platforms (Zaganelli and Maziero 2021). Although different political groups used fake news during the campaign, the focus was on the information spread during Jair Messias Bolsonaro's presidential campaign. The news disseminated ranged from claims of a supposed communist threat faced by Brazil to lies related to the government policies of former President Dilma Rousseff and the then-presidential candidate, Fernando Haddad.

Among the information disseminated, prominent claims included that the previous government had distributed a supposed "Gay Kit" in public schools, intending to encourage children to "become" homosexual and that the materials promoted pedophilia⁴. These fake news stories were widely used as part of a narrative campaign constructed by this anti-gender agenda, serving as a central strategy for ideological and political mobilization (Zaganelli and Maziero 2021).

In light of this national political scenario that emerged with the impeachment of former President Dilma Rousseff, the rise of "Bolsonarism",⁵ marked by the election of former President Jair Messias Bolsonaro, and the appointment of Damares Alves to the Ministry of Women, Family, and Human Rights (MMFDH), we can affirm that these events were catalysts for the expansion of the anti-gender agenda in Brazil. During Jair Messias Bolsonaro's government, these positions regarding the "specter" of gender ideology were already aligned with practices promoted by religious institutions to which he, many of his supporters, and former Minister Damares Alves were linked (Manso 2023).

⁴ Available: https://brasil.elpais.com/brasil/2018/08/29/politica/1535564207_054097.html

⁵ Bolsonarism, a phenomenon that predates the 2018 presidential elections and persists to this day, requires complex analyses for its definition and understanding. Three main approaches stand out: the discursive, the sociological, and the public opinion perspective. For further study, reading the text by João Feres Júnior and Camila Almeida de Paula (2025) is recommended.

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Since the election of former President Jair Messias Bolsonaro, Brazil has witnessed the strengthening of neoconservative groups and the consolidation of an anti-gender agenda as a central issue in national politics. This neoconservative project manifests itself in both public and private spheres, producing a range of negative impacts, especially for women and the LGBTQIA+ community (Biroli, Tatagiba, and Quintela 2024).

Under the leadership of Damara Alves at the Ministry of Women, Family, and Human Rights, the anti-gender movement expanded through the repeal of various public policies, the suppression of acquired rights, particularly sexual and reproductive rights, and support for movements that fight against the rights of women and the LGBTQIA+ community (Medeiros and Araújo Júnior 2024). One notable statement was made shortly after the victory and inauguration of Jair Messias Bolsonaro, when the former minister declared that "boys wear blue and girls wear pink"⁶, demonstrating her essentialist view of gender and the direction her administration would take. We can also mention movements such as Pro-Life, Gay Cure, and the Ex-Gays Movement of Brazil (MEGB), which had the prioritized support of former minister Damara Alves, even while she held the position in the ministry.

In addition to her actions as a minister, Damara Alves also echoed the anti-gender narrative on different occasions. In a public hearing on the criminalization of homophobia, for example, Damara stated that the judiciary and other relevant bodies were adopting activist stances on gender issues. In one of her statements, the former minister clearly expressed her opposition to what she calls gender ideology, emphasizing her aversion to the terms and discussions related to gender issues:

I take a stance on the issue of gender ideology and echo the views of many gay activists because the way gender ideology was implemented in Brazil has not even provided support for the protection of LGBT rights. When gender ideologues say that no one is born a man, that

⁶ Available: <https://g1.globo.com/politica/noticia/2019/01/03/em-video-damara-alves-diz-que-nova-era-comecou-no-brasil-meninos-vestem-azul-e-meninas-vestem-rosa.ghtml>

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no one is born a woman, they are also sending the message that no one is born gay, that it is a social construct. This concerns me greatly — she emphasized (Brasil 2019).

Actions and policies opposing abortion have always been central flags in Jair Messias Bolsonaro's politics, particularly through the actions of Damare Alves. During her tenure at the Ministry, Damare unequivocally expressed her opposition to treating abortion as a public health issue. In 2020, Damare included Brazil in the Geneva Consensus Declaration, an international alliance of countries opposed to abortion and advocating for the protection of life from conception. However, Brazil ceased to be part of the Geneva Consensus alliance in January 2023⁷. Currently, Damare Alves, now serving as a senator for the Federal District, continues to promote her anti-abortion campaign, supporting initiatives such as those from the National Movement for Citizenship for Life – Brazil Without Abortion.⁸

Despite the election of President Luís Inácio Lula da Silva in 2022, it is not possible to view the present with optimism regarding gender issues. Anti-feminist and anti-gender movements persist in the political landscape and daily life. Anti-abortion bills, which flirt with the anti-gender agenda and are still supported by Damare Alves, circulate in the Chamber of Deputies and Senators. Notably, we can mention the anti-abortion movement, recently revived by Bill No. 1.904/2024, which sets the maximum limit for legal abortions at 22 weeks of gestation and proposes a simple homicide penalty for abortions performed after this period. The penalty would even apply to abortions in cases of pregnancies resulting from rape⁹.

The anti-gender agenda promotes interventions based on a notion of morality grounded in an idealized model of the "traditional family." These interventions can be seen in the implementation of policies that oppose the right to abortion and the rights won by women

⁷ Available: <https://www.generonumero.media/reportagens/novo-governo-direitos-reprodutivos/>

⁸ For more information about the movement, see <https://www.brasilsemaborto.org/>.

⁹ Available: <https://www.camara.leg.br/noticias/1071458-projeto-de-lei-preve-pena-de-homicidio-simples-para-aborto-apos-22-semanas-de-gestacao/>

and the LGBTQIA+ community. These actions have resulted in severe setbacks in the field of reproductive rights, exacerbating structural inequalities and reinforcing mechanisms of exclusion and control. Flávia Biroli (Biroli 2022) links the criminalization of abortion and violence against women to the democratic crisis and the rise of the far-right worldwide.

The crises of political systems and the struggles that emerge within them, such as the weakening of democracies, the rise of ultraconservative groups, political measures that flirt with fascism and authoritarianism¹⁰, strengthen groups, and narratives that intensify different forms of violence against minority groups (Biroli 2022). Among these forms, we highlight the implementation of political and economic austerity measures, the resurgence of projects that threaten acquired rights, especially those of minority groups, and the use of various tools to re-establish control and political power. Furthermore, we observe the growing questioning of the legitimacy of democratic processes and political institutions, creating a scenario of instability and regression in democratic principles.

The weaponization of this fearsome phantasm of “gender” is authoritarian at its core. Rolling back progressive legislation is surely fueled by backlash, but backlash describes only the reactive moment in this scene. The project of restoring the world to a time before “gender” promises a return to a patriarchal dream order that may never have existed but that occupies the place of “history” or “nature”—an order that only a strong state can restore. The shoring up of state powers, including the powers of the courts, implicates the anti-gender movement in a broader authoritarian project. e targeting of sexual and gender minorities as dangers to society, as exemplifying the most destructive force in the world, in order to strip them of their fundamental rights, protections, and freedoms, implicates the anti-gender ideology in fascism. (Butler 2024, 7-8).

¹⁰ Although not the focus of this text, it is important to highlight the news regarding the attempted coup planned by members of Jair Messias Bolsonaro's government. In November 2024, the Federal Police indicted former President Jair Bolsonaro (PL) and former members of his government for conspiring to carry out a coup d'état in the country. The investigation indicated that the suspects planned to use serious threats to restrict the free exercise of the judiciary's power and prevent the inauguration of the legitimately elected government, with the aim of securing an advantage related to maintaining the then-president's hold on power.

As Butler states, the anti-gender agenda is just one example of the ethical-political aspects of the moral crisis in the Brazilian context. This agenda is not limited to "denouncing" alleged crimes attributed to gender ideology; it also demands that political actors commit to preserving a moral framework considered the most "acceptable" for the progress of the nation. This framework is deeply rooted in traditional standards of family, gender, education, politics, justice, and truth. In the next section, the themes presented in this one will be analyzed in light of the thesis of Paul Preciado.

Brazil's Anti-Gender Agenda through a Paul Preciado Framework

To better understand the roots of this conservative and anti-gender phenomenon, and how it has long sought to subjugate women and gender dissidents through mechanisms of body control, this text will draw on the references of Paul Preciado (Preciado 2018a, 2013, 2018b) for philosophical arguments that may contribute to a critical analysis of this scenario.

It is important to emphasize that this analysis seeks to bring some of Preciado's theses, based on the central question the text aims to address: what could be the possible ethical-political conditions that sustain the advancement of the anti-gender agenda promoted by conservative groups? By ethical-political conditions, we understand the potential causes of certain scenarios that are or may be, rooted in moral principles that guide political decisions and actions, directly impacting the lives of individuals.

In seeking to understand the reasons behind the oppression and control of the bodies of women and gender dissidents, Paul Preciado (2004) developed the concept of *dysphoria mundi*. This thesis argues that, in capitalist and heteropatriarchal societies¹¹ *dysphoria* can function as both a technology and a mode of being that resists capitalist, heteropatriarchal,

¹¹ In this work, the use of the term heteropatriarchal was chosen as it serves as a critique of the heterosexual regimes that are perpetrated in capitalist societies, primarily because they are considered the "natural" and "traditional" forms of sexual/affective relationships between individuals.

and conservative domination. In order to maintain such power, it became necessary to preserve the social relations that supported the advancement of capitalism. The author argues that recontextualizing the notion of dysphoria can be useful for better understanding the contemporary world and the ongoing conflicts between opposing forces—progressive and conservative—that remain deeply entrenched today.

Therefore, Paul Preciado (2018a), focuses his critiques on the heteronormative structures that hierarchize individuals by class, race, gender, and sexuality. Based on a countersexual contract (Preciado 2018a), the author advocates for the potential of gender dissent as a way of being against capitalist, masculinist, and colonial domination. He adds, “the new political organization of labor cannot be achieved without a new political organization of sex and sexuality” (Preciado 2018a, 13).

The author further reinforces the critique of the labor performed by women in the context of hetero-patriarchal capitalism, asserting that in this scenario, it is inevitably sexualized:

One thing is clear: the work of taking care of bodies in our society has fallen to women. They take care of men’s bodies as well as those of other heterosexual women. That is what is hidden behind the Marxist notion of the “sexual division of labor.” It’s not just about women being assigned to the sphere of reproduction and men to that of production. It seems a lot more complex than that. The women carry out a fundamental task without which the erotic political equilibrium of heterosexuality would crumble: bodies to which female gender has been assigned take responsibility for a generalized political dermatology. They take care of the skin of the world. One keystone of the heterosexual system is a scrupulous exclusion of the production of sexual pleasure from the framework of cares lavished on women by women. On the other hand, when women take care of men, all care becomes potentially able to be sexualized (Preciado 2013, 325-326).

According to Preciado, sexuality can be understood as a political dimension, almost like a language, where the foreigner does not know or cannot communicate through the codes of

this form of language (2018a, 8). This linguistic political dimension is entirely constructed under sex-colonial capitalism. That is, "sex colonial capitalism automates sexuality, increasing (mostly unpaid) sexual labor and productivity but also the production of mainstream sexual identities that become the target of political and economic governance" (Preciado 2018a, 10). This means that sexuality (as a linguistic political dimension), under a heteromale regime, is characterized by a binary linguistic code, which becomes an object of economic and political control.

Regarding this binary sexuality, Preciado directs his critique when he states:

The logic of sexual binarism as well as the difference between homosexuality and heterosexuality are the effects of subjugation of the chaotic potency of each singular body to a process of sexual reproduction industrialization. Bodies are recognized as human only as they are potential producers of ovules or spermatozooids to be located within a Fordist-family chain of production and reproduction (Preciado 2018a, 22)

Binary gender and heteronormativity are the regulatory marks of sexuality and gender identities. In capitalist societies, it is only under these conditions that society can be organized; that is, through heteronormative mechanisms of normative discourse, power relations, and everyday practices are constituted. In this way, the maintenance of power relations between the dominant and the dominated will occur only through the heteronormative nuclear family, as a normative institution that fosters social reproduction. Preciado states that "[...] the productive dimension of sexual and domestic services provided by the dominant classes of women, by the working classes, and by colonized bodies occurs nearly unperceived (in terms of its specificity of gender, class, and race)" (Preciado 2013, 310).

For Preciado, it is countersexuality that must act to denaturalize traditional notions of sex and gender. Especially when anti-gender policies and actions, like those occurring in Brazil, take over public and private discourses and spaces, particularly by bringing into the

debate the conservative structures of the ideology of the traditional family (Preciado 2018a). In presenting his critique of heteronormative capitalism, Paul Preciado contributes to this discourse by arguing that, within such a system, distinct forms of production and reproduction are constructed on essentialist and naturalized foundations derived from the categories of man/woman, family, and heteronormativity (Preciado 2018a, 23).

Thus, in *The Countersexual Manifesto* (2018a), Preciado takes heterosexuality as a theoretical assumption, viewing it as a normative political regime of discourses, social practices, and subjectivities. By bringing up the nuclear family, for example, he discusses countersexuality and gender dysphoria as sociopolitical technologies aimed at denaturalizing and deconstructing/demystifying notions of gender. From his philosophy, he proposes the establishment of a new countersexual contract and new ways of existing. The author substantiates this argument by argue that:

[...] we are confronted with a new form of authoritarian neoliberalism [...]. On the other hand, and this is where the uncertainty becomes productive, the institutions and practices of patriarchal, sexual and racial legitimation of the old regime are beginning to fail as the same time the new forms of contestation and struggle are emerging: NiUnaMenos, MeToo, Black Lives Matter, the trans, non-binary and intersex movement, the movement for 'disabled independent living', struggles against the police violence, digital rebellion, political ecology... (Preciado, 2025, p. 29).

Critically highlighting the conservative structures of capitalism, Paul Preciado (2018b) advocates for a transfeminist movement that does not reproduce the essentialist discourses of ultraconservative groups, but rather strengthens the struggle of feminist and LGBTQIA+ movements, dismantling traditional gender binaries and advocating for the recognition of gender diversity in society and law. This will be discussed in the next section.

Transfeminist Movements and Their Resistance

Before presenting how transfeminism can be a key in the fight against the advance of the anti-gender agenda, it is important to revisit some issues regarding essentialist feminism, to mark the main agendas of each movement and their true interests. For this section, we will use the debates developed by (Bassi and LaFleur 2022; Jesus 2013, 2014, 2018).

Unlike what is proposed in this paper, essentialist feminists are those who stem from the notion that the definition of gender is based on biological sexual determinism, which conditions individuals to experience a binary way of life (Bassi and LaFleur 2022). Furthermore, the way these individuals live is also determined by their birth biological condition and, for these reasons, it should be seen, from its natural conception, as a characteristic that directly affects them. In this direction, it is expected that the body, that is, the biological sexual determination, has a certain status that should not be questioned, as doing so would affect the true and only forms of possible socialization (Jesus 2014).

Two groups of essentialist feminists who defend this biologizing conception of gender stand out. The first case is radical feminism or TERF (trans-exclusionary radical feminism). TERF originally emerged in the 1970s by groups of English-speaking feminists, experiencing exponential growth, especially due to the space it gained in the media (Thurlow 2024). The second case is that of the so-called critical gender feminism (Bassi and LaFleur 2022). This movement particularly protested against a supposed Gender Theory that camouflaged itself in intellectual spaces, especially within universities, presenting itself as a movement that purportedly fights for social justice, but in reality, indoctrinates students to imagine a world without gender (Williams 2016).

Both movements share ideals common to conservative movements, as they place on their agendas the position of a defenseless woman who is always at risk and needs to be protected, reinforcing a biological idea of fragile sex. Or when they refer to the "golden age" in which genders were what they were born to be, or what they seemed to be (Bassi and LaFleur 2022).

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Therefore, essentialist feminism may be closer to conservative regimes than we might think. The anti-gender conservative discourses and those of essentialist feminisms seek to "naturalize" heterosexuality and cisgender identity. In the same way, essentialist feminisms, by perpetuating one of the oldest and most erroneous ideas of the natural character of femininity/masculinity, exclude from their agendas those individuals who do not wish to conform to the imposed gender norms.

In their renowned article *TERFs, Gender-Critical Movements, and Postfascist Feminisms*, the authors highlight the statement made by Judith Butler to *The Guardian* in 2021:

Anti-gender movements are not just reactionary but fascist trends, the kind that support increasingly authoritarian governments. The inconsistency of their arguments and their equal opportunity approach to rhetorical strategies of the left and right, produce a confusing discourse for some, a compelling one for others. But they are typical of fascist movements that twist rationality to suit hyper-nationalist claims. The anti-gender movement is not a conservative position with a clear set of principles. No, as a fascist trend, it mobilizes a range of rhetorical strategies from across the political spectrum to maximize the fear of infiltration and destruction that comes from a diverse set of economic and social forces. It does not strive for consistency, for its incoherence is part of its power. (Bassi and LaFleur 2022, 17).

In different parts of the world, groups composed of the transgender population are increasingly present in the struggles against the anti-gender agenda. Whether through public demonstrations or activism on social media, such groups occupy spaces in the fight for the rights of transgender people and the LGBTQIA+ community, as well as advocating for rights that intersect gender, race, and class (Jesus and Alves 2012). Koyama defines transfeminism as "a movement by and for trans women who view their liberation to be intrinsically linked to the liberation of all women and beyond" (Koyama 2003, 245).

Jaqueline Gomes de Jesus (2018) states that we can understand transfeminism as a feminist strand that focuses its struggles on the many forms of gender identification. It

allows for the expansion of its demands to include plural forms of existence, including transgender people. The author further emphasizes that:

Transfeminist thought is being constructed in Brazil, which means that it is not merely being imported as a pre-elaborated body of knowledge; rather, it is being re-signified and adapted to the voices and realities of trans women, trans men, travesties, and other trans people in these Brazilian lands. This is extremely positive in terms of creativity and protagonism in the adaptation of a theoretical framework to a specific cultural and human context, as opposed to the colonialist tendency of internalizing and submitting to the concepts of cultural metropolises. (Jesus 2013, 6, own translation).

The transfeminist movement in Brazil expands beyond feminism(s), but not against them. Like Black feminism, transfeminism works to broaden and diversify its agendas and its spaces of struggle. It seeks to counter the binary and essentialist impositions of sex/sexuality and gender that are primarily reproduced by conservative groups and their anti-gender agenda (Jesus 2014). It is part of a growing trend within feminist movements to consider intersections in their agendas and to make space for the histories and struggles of various women, including Black women, travestis¹², and trans women, around a project aimed at the emancipation of all women (Jesus and Alves 2012).

Transfeminism recognizes the intersection of various identities and self-identifications of individuals, as well as the nature of oppression against bodies that do not conform to the racist and sexist ideals of society. It seeks to empower people's bodies as they are (including trans individuals), whether idealized or not, disabled or not, regardless of any interventions of any kind. It also seeks to empower all sexual expressions of transgender people, whether

¹² People who live a construction of the female gender, opposite to the sex designation assigned at birth, followed by a physical transformation of a permanent nature, identifying in social, family, cultural, and interpersonal life through this identity (Antra, own translation).

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they are asexual, bisexual, heterosexual, homosexual, or hold any other possible sexual identity (Jesus and Alves 2012, 15, own translation).

In their fight for the rights of travesties and trans people, groups work to establish support networks in the sectors of healthcare, education, public safety, and human rights. They carry out awareness campaigns to educate the population against transphobia and work towards improving the quality of life and preserving the lives of travesties and trans people. Despite certain advances in the field of rights, Brazil continues to be the country with the highest number of murders of travesties and trans people for the 15th consecutive year (Benevides 2024).

In this sense, transfeminism is a coalition movement. This means that its goal is not to replace other feminisms but to work alongside these other currents in combating the essentialism of sex/sexuality and gender and in the fight against the anti-gender agenda. Transfeminism seeks to strengthen other feminist movements more broadly and inclusively, with one of its main demands being the alliance between trans women and cisgender women fighting for trans people's rights (Kaas 2016).

Conclusions

As presented throughout the text, it was possible to identify that the advancement of the anti-gender agenda, especially in Brazil, has been occupying various spaces in political and civil life. This agenda reinforces the reproduction of a biologizing and essentialist idea of gender, intervening in political action and democratic dynamics concerning access to rights, particularly sexual and reproductive rights for women and LGBTQIA+ people. This agenda has moralizing roots based on religious principles and conservative standards regarding social relations, especially concerning the family constitution, highlighting a heteropatriarchal aspect regarding the submission of women and the marginalization of gender dissident subjects.

Therefore, in this text, we draw on the thesis of Paul Preciado to better understand the roots of this anti-gender movement and their diagnoses regarding oppressive moments like the ones we are witnessing. From this analysis, we turn to authors who advocate for a transfeminist stance as a tool of resistance and collective struggle against the attacks and violence perpetrated by ultraconservative groups.

The anti-gender agenda and the rise of conservative groups have taken over, primarily, political spaces around the world. In Brazil, this agenda is directly linked to conservative groups, such as Bolsonarism. When analyzing anti-gender actions and policies, especially during the government of former president Jair Messias Bolsonaro, it became clear that strategies of confrontation are needed in movements that do not reproduce the same essentialist codes as these groups. Thus, the potential of transfeminism was presented as a movement that counters trans-exclusionary feminisms, which has not broken away from essentialist gender structures and, for this reason, aligns with anti-gender movements.

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