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Technologies and Management of Power and Law: Analytical Review of Homonationalism, Femonationalism and Reactionary Feminisms

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I. Introduction

At the end of the 20th century, new forms of articulation between human rights, political subjects and state power projects emerged in Western countries, driven by globalization, international law and the advance of neoliberalism. In this context, movements known as identity movements stood out, followed by reactionary forces, the so-called wars on terror, migration crises and the growth of nationalist governments. It was a context of political and governmental instability that affected social groups in different ways, including the re-discussion and proposals for setbacks in the field of human rights (Brown, 1995; 2015; 2019).

In the United States of America, this debate is marked by the case Roe v. Wade. In 1973, in the case Roe *v.* Wade, the United States Supreme Court recognized that the constitutional right to privacy included a woman's decision to terminate a pregnancy, representing a milestone in reproductive rights, but it was based on weak legal grounds, such as the right to privacy, without fully incorporating the notion of reproductive justice. In 2022, with the case Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization, the Court reversed the decision, returning to the states the power to legislate on abortion. As Rosalind already warned Petchesky (1984), legal protection was unstable, as it did not directly confront the patriarchal power structures that control women's bodies, revealing the limits of the liberal approach to feminist demands for autonomy and equity.

In 2025, two episodes also stand out from the Global North: still in the United States, policies were adopted to restrict the rights of trans people, such as the end of the recognition of gender self-identification and the recommendation to replace medical treatments with behavioral therapies for young people with gender dysphoria, contrary to the consensus of experts (The White House, 2025). In the United Kingdom, the Supreme Court ruled that, for legal purposes, the terms "woman" and "sex" refer exclusively to the biological sex at birth. This decision excludes trans women from the legal definition of woman, directly affecting their rights in areas such as access to women-only spaces, participation in women's sports, and representation in public policy (Supreme Court of the United Kingdom, 2025).

In the Brazilian context, recent years have been marked by a coordinated movement of political groups that promote actions, discourses and policies that aim to combat, restrict or delegitimize women's human rights, gender identities, gender diversity and the rights related to LGBT+ people. These actions are called Anti-Gender Offensives or Anti-Gender Offensive Policies. These offensives generally question the theoretical and legal distinction between understandings of sex and gender, promote the deconstruction of concepts of gender identity and may include attacks on discourses, legislation, pedagogical practices and cultural expressions that value or recognize gender and sexuality diversity (ABIA *et al*, 2021).

This type of action also promotes legal actions against rights guaranteed by international human rights conventions and against their regulation in locations and institutions. An example of this is the case of an organization, based in the South of Brazil, that filed reckless lawsuits in the Brazilian Federal Court against

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universities that had regulated affirmative action for people who dissent from the hegemonic gender identity. The lawsuits were filed against legal documents and national and international human rights guidelines, which were reaffirmed in the decisions in the judicial grounds that denied the requests made (FURG, 2023; AGU, 2023)[1]. These offensive actions are not isolated and are part of this set of government policies, promoted by ultraconservative and extremist groups, which are presented as legislative proposals and social mobilizations that aim to restrict the rights of trans, non-binary populations and other gender expressions, in addition to attacking neutral language and the use of specific protocols in the areas of health and education, reinforcing a traditional and binary view of gender (ABIA et al, 2021).

The action also exemplifies a strategy that uses the language of rights to combat human rights themselves. This is manifested, for example, in the defense of bills that guarantee freedom of conscience for doctors who refuse to perform legal abortions, even in cases provided for by law, or by using resources that selectively use terms such as life, family and liberty. The defense of life is invoked to justify the criminalization of abortion in any circumstance, disregarding the rights of women and girls. Religious freedom is mobilized to deny recognition of civil rights to same-sex couples or to maintain discriminatory practices. The family is reduced to a heterosexual, monogamous and patriarchal model, excluding the diverse family arrangements that exist in society (Corrêa, Petchesky & Parker, 2008).

The use of the language of rights as a tool to restrict or deny human rights has been analyzed by several feminist authors and scholars in the field of sexual and reproductive rights. In case studies, for example, Débora Diniz (2016) analyzes how the discourse of protecting life was used to delegitimize abortion in risky situations, such as in the context of the Zika virus epidemic, ignoring women's rights to health and dignity. From a macropolitical perspective, Wendy Brown (1995) warned in the 1990s that the language of rights can be used to maintain structures of domination, instead of promoting emancipation, revealing how legal discourse itself can be colonized by antidemocratic and exclusionary projects. In addition, several elements help to understand the contemporary political scenario, characterized by the rise of far-right discourses and practices. The articulation between historical, economic, and moral conditions over time has contributed to the creation of fertile ground for the emergence of antidemocratic forces. In this context, traditional morality and neoliberal conceptions of economics play a central role in shaping political subjectivities aligned with authoritarian logic. This process is expressed through systematic attacks on culture, politics, legislation and the collective capacity for democratic action itself (Brown, 2019).

Other authors present theoretical elucidations from other perspectives, seeking to present an understanding for this context of disputes in language and government policies (Spivak, 1988; Mohanty, 1988; Butler, 2004). Specifically, the movements and instrumentalization of the state apparatus and legal language have been followed by scholars based on discussions of gender and feminism. Among these scholars, Jasbir Puar, Sara Farris and Sophie Lewis, who reflect on how progressive discourses can be incorporated by institutions and governments without altering their structures of domination – or, even, are managed to reinforce them.

Jasbir Puar (2007/2017) uses the category Homonationalism to reflect on how the defense of LGBT+ rights has become a rhetoric for proving civilization in the West, serving to justify anti-immigration policies, racism, and militarization, especially against Muslims. Sara Farris (2017), in turn, systematizes the category Femonationalism to denounce the selective use of feminist discourse to justify control over immigrant and racialized populations, especially muslim women, under the argument of freeing them from their cultures. Sophie Lewis mobilizes and organizes the expression Reactionary Feminisms, differentiating Traditional Feminism from Enemy Feminism, but understanding that both instrumentalize the law to reinforce conservative, racist, and colonialist discourses. They use the law to maintain hierarchies of gender, race, and class, justifying exclusions and oppressions. Furthermore, these feminisms are often based on a legalistic construction that legitimizes discourses of biosexuality, xenophobia and fascism under the guise of defending true women, using the law to banally (or even perversely) reinforce the oppressive status quo (Lewis, 2025).

In an essayistic proposal, this study aims to contribute, with a qualitative approach and thematic analysis, to the understanding of this context within the scope of feminist social movements and the discussion of the instrumentalization of Law for the interests of ultraconservative and exclusionary agendas. In the study architecture, for theoretical selection, the method of narrative bibliographic review procedure is used; for information selection, the method of thematic analysis is used. As an auxiliary resource in the systematization of content, a digital document reading assistant based on artificial intelligence was used, which was guided, supervised and used in an ethical and responsible manner, maintaining the critical and interpretative analysis as the exclusive responsibility of the researcher.

[1] When judging these cases, the Federal Regional Court of the 4th Region of Brazil suspended the preliminary injunctions initially granted, reaffirming university autonomy and recognizing the legal validity of affirmative actions both in light of the Federal Constitution and international regulations for the protection of human rights (AGU, 2023; FURG, 2023).

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As theoretical references, therefore, Jasbir Puar, Sara Farris, and Sophie Lewis are singled out in this review for theorizing the analytical categories Homonationalism, Femonationalism, and Enemy Feminism.

These categories are presented as contextual manifestations of power relations, which also seek to understand (a) the modus operandi, strategies and articulation network (b) some effects of the micropolitical relationship and (c) form of instrumentalization of Law. To this end, the review addresses an overview of the authors' theoretical categories, with emphasis on their definition and epistemological and theoretical bases. Next, descriptions of the modus operandi, relational effects and instrumentalization of Law are presented. Finally, we attempt to present lines of convergence of the manifestations of the mentioned categories.

II. Overview of the Authors' Theoretical Categories

Following the advent of neoliberal policies and the intensification of globalization, there has been a growing appropriation of progressive discourses by states and governments that, paradoxically, maintain repressive, racialized and exclusionary practices. Statements related to the exaltation of LGBT+ rights, gender equality or the protection of women are often strategically mobilized to support security policies, migratory exclusion or international legitimacy. This phenomenon, identified and criticized by authors such as Jasbir Puar (2007/2017), Sara Farris (2017) and Sophie Lewis (2025), reveals, based on specific manifestations, a tension between discourses of emancipation and practices of social, racial and territorial control.

a) Homonationalism, by Jasbir Puar

In the European and American context, the advancement of LGBTQIA+ rights has been presented as a symbol of Western civilization and modernity. At the same time, this same discourse has been used to justify anti-immigration policies, especially against Muslim populations. This process is described by Jasbir Puar with the category Homonacionalismo, developed in the work Ensamblajes Terroristas.

For Jasbir Puar, the terms “ensamblajes “or” assemblages” refer to dynamic and heterogeneous processes of connection between bodies, symbols, institutions, discourses and affects. These terms represent an approach that emphasizes the mutable and relational character of social organizations and subjects, highlighting how different elements continually come together, articulate and disarticulate to produce reality, identity and power. In this work, they are used to analyze how different elements — such as laws, security discourses, cultural representations, affects, racialized bodies , sexualities, institutions and political practices — combine and operate together to shape security policies, racialization and queer normativity, forming processualities that construct the structures of power and discipline (Puar, 2017). It is in this process that the manifestation of Homonationalism is identified.

Homonationalism consists of the discursive resource of selective inclusion of LGBTQIA+ subjects (mostly white, cisgender and nationalized), in which the image of a modern and tolerant West is created. In the same sense, focusing on the discursive field of Westernism (Spivak, 1988), the idea of a backward and dangerous East is also reinforced. In effect, Homonationalism describes how Western countries incorporate LGBT+ rights as a way of reinforcing nationalism and justifying xenophobic, Islamophobic or imperialist policies. Example: a country claims to be modern because it supports LGBT rights, while at the same time criminalizing immigrants from Muslim countries under the justification that they are backward or homophobic (Puar, 2017). The author cites the Netherlands as a country that uses the image of a gay-friendly culture as a justification for rejecting Islamic immigrants, arguing that they are incompatible with European liberal values (Stallone, 2019). Similarly, she mentions Israel, which resorts to pinkwashing, promoting its image of tolerance towards sexual diversity while supporting apartheid policies against the Palestinian population, hiding, under the discourse of inclusion, violent practices of occupation and segregation (Iriqat, & Owda, 2025).

Drawing on post-structuralist and post-colonial studies, Jarbis Puar investigates how, linguistically, queer, racial and gender identities are regulated and used in discourses on security, terrorism and nationalism. From this theoretical perspective, it is possible to understand hegemonic narratives, especially around the racialization of Muslim and South Asian populations in contexts of securitization, as well as the consolidation of Homonationalism in the queer and racial context. In the book, the author also addresses how this logic reinforces white supremacy and the normalization of certain sexualities, while marginalizing or pathologizing others (Puar, 2017).

In this way, homonationalism also reinforces narratives of nation, racism, and supremacy by highlighting bodies and subjectivities considered normative or Westernized as symbols of civilization, tolerance, and progress of the nation-state, while racialized and sexualized populations are considered threats or deviants and are marginalized or pathologized. This narrative deepens as a narrative that associates modernity, security, and legitimacy of the state with the inclusion of LGBT+ bodies considered acceptable, usually those of white, Western, and normative individuals, while marginalizing or criminalizing racialized populations, often Muslim or of non-Western origin. This logic promotes a kind of national pride shaped by a heteronormative and

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racialized conception, in which sexual diversity is used as a symbol of the country's progress, but only when it fits the standards considered acceptable by the state. Thus, Homonationalism functions as a strategy to legitimize certain policies of security, exclusion and racial supremacy, using the idea of an acceptable sexuality as a vector to defend the national and imperial project (Puar, 2017).

b) Femonationalism, by Sarra Farris

Farris analysis of the context introduced in this study introduces the category of Femonationalism in the work In the Name of Women's Rights (2017). This term contributes to the understanding of how feminist agendas are appropriated by conservative and even far-right governments. In this manifestation, it is clear that the defense of women – or in the name of women – becomes an argument to reinforce policies of control over racialized populations, as in the case of the ban on the Islamic veil in French schools, which is justified in the name of protecting Muslim girls (Farris, 2017).

Farris points out that these demonstrations represent an instrumentalized feminism that, instead of promoting the autonomy of women in their plurality, reaffirms a Eurocentric, white, liberal and nationalist logic. This is a pattern that was highlighted in Brazil during the Bolsonaro government, in which discourses on family, protection of women and christian values were mobilized simultaneously with the refusal of effective policies to combat gender violence, the dismantling of support structures and the persecution of feminist social movements (Almeida, Sobral, Lima, & Sardenberg, 2023).

In this sense, Femonationalism is useful for thinking about how feminist discourses are co-opted by nationalist, racist and neoliberal projects, especially in Europe. In her training, Farris mainly uses the ideas of Antonio Gramsci, especially the concept of common sense and the formation of hegemony, to understand how meaning, symbols and images are consolidated in the production of the social imaginary, and incorporates the notion of ideological formations as structures that sustain and reproduce political-economic interests, taking as a reference the works of Louis Althusser on ideology and ideological state apparatuses. This framework allows us to understand how Femonationalism functions as an ideological construction that mediates diverse interests, articulating nationalism, neoliberalism and feminism in a logic of reproduction of inequalities and aestheticization of gender and race stereotypes (Farris, 2017). Farris highlights the notion of modularity of different social formations, which she relates to the idea that Femonationalism is a fragile convergence, influenced by global and local forces, and that manifests itself through discourses that produce and reinforce stereotypical images of non-Western Others, especially Muslims, as passive victims or oppressors. Furthermore, it also warns of a type of symbolic politics that uses gender equality as a tool, but to reinforce xenophobia and racism, reinforcing a critical perspective of analysis of ideology and discursive regimes (Farris, 2017).

As an ideological formation that emerges at the intersection of right-wing nationalism, neoliberalism, and feminism or gender studies, Femonationalism instrumentalizes gender equality as a strategy to reinforce racist and Islamophobic stereotypes, while promoting the stigmatization of Muslim men and non-Western migrants as oppressors or victims, through a discursive logic that seeks to consolidate a homogeneous Western identity protected against the Other (Farris, 2017).

c) Enemy Feminism, by Sophie Lewis

Pointing out the ambiguities and contradictions of contemporary feminist movements in her work Enemy Feminisms, Sophie Lewis (2025) argues that there is a tendency within these groups to construct internal or external enemies, often based on differences in race, class, sexuality, gender or nationality. In this analysis, Lewis distinguishes two distinct approaches within the feminist spectrum, each with its own specific characteristics and functions: Traditional Feminism and Enemy Feminism.

Lewis identifies Traditional Feminism as one that seeks to promote equal rights and opportunities between women and men within the current patriarchal system. Thus, it focuses on institutional and legal reform, which seeks to change laws, policies, and cultural practices that discriminate against or marginalize women, such as labor laws, reproductive rights, and combating gender-based violence, among others. Its goal is inclusion and recognition, seeking to guarantee women rights similar to those of men, often supporting quotas, protective legislation, representation quotas, among other instruments of social reform. Lewis describes that this feminism recognizes patriarchy as a problem and works to contain it; however, without necessarily questioning its origin or deeper power structure. Thus, it accepts the idea that women are, in some way, victims of a system that can and should be reformed. Thus, ambiguously, it promotes action within the capitalist system, in which, often, there are changes that do not challenge the bases of economic or colonial exploitation, focusing on equal rights within the existing system (Lewis, 2025).

Enemy Feminism refers to those feminist currents or movements that represent a radical opposition or are contrary to Traditional Feminism, often by challenging its bases, interests or by incorporating discourses and practices that may reinforce oppression or be contrary to full emancipation. These strands have objectives that may conflict with the real liberation of women, sometimes acting as obstacles by exercising

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functions of coercion or imposing patriarchal restrictions under feminist claims, as in the case of TERFs (trans-exclusionary radical feminists) or counterrevolutionary feminisms that promote the isolation of certain groups or the exclusion of specific gender experiences. In such a context, they sometimes act as agents of colonialism, eugenics or oppression, supporting practices and discourses that reinforce colonialism, cishetero-normativity, racism or other forms of inequality, even claiming to act in the name of feminism (Lewis, 2025).

Furthermore, these strands include movements or discourses that seek to maintain or reinforce gender and power hierarchies, such as anti-feminist and transphobic discourses, which subjugate or exclude trans or diverse people, as well as other marginalized groups under the justification that they do not represent true feminism. Therefore, Lewis highlights that they also position themselves against some forms of feminism that threaten the status quo, such as Marxist or anti-colonial feminisms or those that defend the deinstitutionalization of gender and capitalism, proposing radical alternatives to social organization (Lewis, 2025).

As a theoretical basis, Enemy Feminisms is based on a combination of currents of thought that dialogue with Marxism and anti-colonialism. It develops a critical analysis of contemporary feminism, especially those currents that it considers reactionary or reactionary, and proposes a vision that seeks to decolonize, decommodify and communize care and resources, in addition to criticizing fascist and colonialist alliances within feminism. From this epistemological perspective, it emphasizes the need to understand feminism not as a fixed or ideal position, but as a social and political practice that must be continually evaluated and transformed, taking into account its material effects and its relations with other structures of power (Lewis, 2025).

III. Thematic Analysis of Manifestations of Technologies and Power Management

Homonationalism, Femonationalism and Reactionary Feminisms are understood here as categories presented by the authors studied as contextual manifestations of power relations and social and state organization. For this thematic analysis, their manifestations are examined regarding (a) modus operandi, strategies and articulation network (b) some effects of the micropolitical relationship and (c) form of instrumentalization of Law.

a) Modus Operandi, Strategies and Coordination Network

According to Puar (2017), Homonationalism operates as a political and symbolic regime instrumentalizing the selective inclusion of normative LGBTQ+ subjects (generally white, Western, and aligned with neoliberalism) to legitimize agendas of security, social control, and racial exclusion. In this context, its *modus operandi* is structured around a conditional inclusion that reinforces heteronormative and racialized norms, while simultaneously covering up or justifying the marginalization of bodies that do not conform to these norms.

This inclusion presents itself as a sign of progress and tolerance, but it is intrinsically linked to the construction of a national ideal that associates normalized sexuality with modernity, civilization, and state security. It thus manages, as a central mechanism, the normalization of acceptable sexual identities, promoting a controlled sexuality that fits the parameters of the Western nation-state. This strategy also reinforces whiteness as the norm in a narrative of tolerance that differentiates the civilized us from the barbaric other (Puar, 2017).

The rhetoric of rights and freedoms is thus instrumentalized to justify security interventions, border policies and military actions, naturalizing the exclusion of non-normative populations as a measure of civilizing self-preservation. Events, media campaigns and national symbols of sexual tolerance are, in this context, used as ideological showcases that mask the permanence of colonial and racist structures, anchored in the logic of state supremacy and the militarization of the borders of citizenship (Puar, 2017).

Homonationalist groups employ narrative and symbolic tactics to reinforce a dichotomy between normal, safe subjects and threatening subjects. The celebration of white, Western gays as icons of modernity and order is combined with the criminalization of racialized and dissident populations, who are associated with social and terrorist risks. According to the author, cultural production (including films, series, official speeches and advertising campaigns) reinforces the idea that selective LGBT+ inclusion represents a victory of civilization over barbarism, erasing dissenting and precarious voices (Puar, 2017).

The network of articulations that supports this project is vast and transnational, integrating government institutions, corporate media, NGOs, intellectuals aligned with the hegemonic discourse, and digital platforms. Security agencies and anti-terrorism policies are central to maintaining this network, which transforms normative LGBT+ bodies into symbolic capital for the State. At the same time, NGOs and movements that adopt neoliberal agendas reinforce the logic of conditional inclusion and collaborate with the legitimization of exclusions. The author highlights that academic discourse, in turn, can contribute to this mechanism when it produces knowledge that articulates progress and sexual normativity with nationalist and security projects (Puar, 2017).

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For Sara Farris, the *modus operandi* of Femonationalism is based on the construction of binary narratives — such as oppressor versus victim — generally directed at Muslim men and women and, by extension, migrants from the Global South. These discourses are sustained by a logic of gender securitization, in which the figure of the Other (the foreigner, the Muslim, the immigrant) is represented as a threat to the Western order, especially to women's freedom (Farris, 2017). It is, therefore, an instrumentalization of feminism in favor of exclusionary agendas and the reinforcement of the hegemonic Western imaginary, whose strategies are mainly discursive and media-based, with mass narratives, associated with visual symbols and the production of common sense, which present Islam as synonymous with misogyny, and Muslim women as victims who need to be saved by the West. According to the author, this rhetoric finds an echo in both traditional media and institutional campaigns, with the participation of public feminists who, by reinforcing such stereotypes, legitimize exclusionary discourses under the pretext of defending women's rights (Farris, 2017).

Femonationalism network is formed by a heterogeneous but functional alliance between right-wing nationalist parties, sectors of liberal feminism, representatives of neoliberal policies and major media outlets. These actors, although they maintain their own projects and interests, converge in the construction of a common narrative that associates cultural backwardness, gender violence and the threat to the social order with Islamism and immigration. This articulation occurs both at the institutional level (such as in the support for exclusionary legislation) and at the symbolic and discursive level, through the circulation of images and representations that reinforce an ideology of control and social security (Farris, 2017).

According to Sophie Lewis (2015), as Reactionary Feminism, Traditional Feminism operates as a reformist and adaptive force within capitalist and patriarchal structures, rather than proposing their rupture. To this end, it articulates itself with neoliberal and conservative values, seeks specific adjustments to the current system, focusing on the expansion of formal rights and the institutional inclusion of some women, especially white, cisgender, heterosexual and middle-class women.

It prioritizes institutional and discursive strategies that avoid direct confrontation with the foundations of oppression (such as private property, the sexual division of labor, and structural racialization), opting instead for moralizing and individualizing language. It thus focuses on behavioral changes or expanding access to specific rights, such as legal abortion or equal pay, revealing a logic of fragmentation of demands that disregards their articulation with markers such as race, class, sexuality, and territory (Lewis, 2025). Its articulation network is composed of government institutions, reformist NGOs, international organizations (such as UN Women), private foundations, universities, and traditional media, which collaborate to consolidate an institutionalized feminist agenda that seeks legitimacy through legal recognition and media visibility. However, this network neutralizes the subversive potential of feminism and reinforces its role of containment and maintenance of the current order (Lewis, 2025).

In turn, Enemy Feminism collaborates with these colonial forces, reproducing hierarchies and exclusions under a rhetoric of protection and identity purity. Thus, it reinforces alliances with conservative, ultranationalist and even fascist movements, as in the case of TERFs (trans-exclusionary feminists), who exclude and criminalize trans and gender-nonconforming bodies (Lewis, 2025). To this end, it adopts discourses supposedly of safety, protection of women and social order to legitimize exclusionary and violent practices, promoting a counterrevolutionary justice that keeps the bases of cisheteropatriarchal and colonial power intact. According to Lewis (2025), these alliances are not accidental: they are part of a strategy that mobilizes feminism as an ideological tool to sustain a reactionary *status quo*. Thus, by adopting narratives based on fear — of the loss of national identity, of the dissolution of the traditional sexual order, of the threat posed by racialized or non-binary bodies — this feminism actively contributes to xenophobia, structural racism and transphobia.

Lewis argues that these narratives use feminism as a mark of discursive legitimacy to create the figure of the criminalizable other: the trans woman, the Muslim person, the migrant, the black body. This is, therefore, an instrumentalization of feminist discourse in favor of authoritarian and moralistic policies that, instead of protecting, monitor, punish, and exclude. In this discursive process, they also operate by naturalizing gender norms, defending an essentialist and binary view of sexual difference, refusing to recognize fluid gender identities or trans experiences, and promoting a hierarchy between legitimate and illegitimate bodies within the feminist field itself (Lewis, 2025).

b) Effects of the Micropolitical Relationship

In power relations, homonationalism functions as a form of articulation between selective inclusion and systematic exclusion, supported by categories such as securitization, racialization, heteronormativity, normalization, and the discursive production of the enemy. On the one hand, targets are produced that include racialized populations, migrants, Muslims, and dissident queer bodies, who suffer concrete effects of surveillance, discrimination, and violence. These groups are treated as threats to national security and excluded from full citizenship, especially when they do not

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align with white and cisheterosexual normativity. For this to occur, the figure of this Other is discursively produced as the figure of the queer terrorist — who articulates sexuality, race, and religion as markers of danger. Thus, the State and the media reinforce these images through security discourses that justify repressive practices even without concrete threats (Puar, 2017).

Femonationalism, as analyzed by the author, is structured based on a dichotomous relationship between a civilizing self and another culturally marked as a threat. In this context, the main targets of this discourse are Muslim men and women, as well as, to a lesser extent, non-Western migrants. These subjects are represented in an ambiguous and functional way: Muslim men appear as oppressors, identified with patriarchal and misogynistic practices; Muslim women are portrayed as victims of a culture that supposedly subjugates them, which feeds the narrative of salvation and moral superiority of the West. This symbolic construction serves the logic of a Western, modern and feminist self, which positions itself as the bearer of democratic and egalitarian values. In contrast, the other, which represents Muslim or migrant bodies, cultures and identities, is produced as a threat to gender equality, Western culture and the democratic fabric itself (Farris, 2025).

Both Traditional Feminism and Enemy Feminism, as pointed out by Lewis (2025), use a strategic articulation that uses symbolic narratives to justify and perpetuate oppressive social structures, masking authoritarian practices under the veneer of care and protection. On the symbolic level, the so-called discursive targets are narrative constructions that legitimize conservative and exclusionary policies. One of these figures is that of the idealized woman, associated with motherhood, purity, submission, and religiosity. This normativity operates in an exclusionary way, delegitimizing the existence and rights of trans, black, poor, and dissident women. Another recurring figure is that of the woman as victim or protector, whose supposed vulnerability is instrumentalized to justify control over their bodies, reinforcing moralistic and racist stereotypes. Finally, there is the representation of women as national or cultural symbols, used as an emblem of the purity of culture and tradition, serving as a justification for nationalist and exclusionary policies (Lewis, 2025).

For Lewis (2025), these symbolic constructions are intended to protect real and material targets: concrete structures of domination. Among them, the preservation of patriarchy and colonialism stands out, with the instrumental use of law to maintain hierarchies of gender, race and class. In addition, control over bodies and sexualities is exercised through legislation and public policies that regulate motherhood, gender and sexuality, under a rhetoric of protection that, in fact, seeks domination.

Idealized narratives function as tools to enable control policies, with the rhetoric of tradition and care being used to naturalize legislation that maintains patriarchal and colonialist orders. There is, then, a dual strategy: the creation of symbolic figures that legitimize oppressive practices and the use of these practices to preserve power structures (Lewis, 2025). It is denounced that the articulation between discourse and power is, therefore, central to the operation of Reactionary Feminisms.

c) *Form of Instrumentalization of Law: Law as a technology of power*

According to Puar (2017), Homonationalism is characterized as a movement in which the law is used to consolidate a narrative based on the racialization and racialization of LGBTQIA+ groups and migrants, especially Muslims, as threats to Western civilization. Thus, migration control laws and policies, for example, reinforce the logic of distinction between us (civilized, Westerners) and others (immigrants, dangerous), producing a racialization that justifies the repression and social control of these populations. In legal practices, security laws, migration control and other legal devices create the aforementioned assemblages of authority that aim to restrict the rights of racialized and sexualized minorities under the pretext of protecting order and Western civilization. Thus, the law reinforces the discourse of risk and threat, promoting exclusion and reinforcing hierarchies.

In Femonationalism, Farris (2017) argues that law is used to legitimize narratives that link the protection of women to the exclusion of migrant, racial, and religious minorities, especially Muslims. In this way, security legislation, the criminalization of abortion, restrictions on reproductive rights, and minority control policies function as instruments to reinforce a regulatory morality and a racialized project of inclusion/exclusion. In legal practices, these laws function as mechanisms of social discipline, reinforcing a hierarchy that distinguishes us (civilized, liberal) from others (invaders, threats), sustaining the discourse of a salvation that maintains male, heteronormative, and racial privileges.

In the field of traditional feminism, Lewis (2025) argues that law is used in a reformist approach to promote legal changes that seek to guarantee formal equality of opportunities and civil rights for women within the patriarchal capitalist system. These laws often reinforce the permanence of the system by promoting superficial advances and recognition, without destabilizing the existing power structures. In this case, such laws serve as instruments that justify the maintenance of the *status quo*, for example, through maternity protection legislation or abortion restrictions, which operate within the logic of protecting women, often reinforcing the traditional configuration of family and gender hierarchies. For enemy feminism, Lewis

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(2025) points out that law is used to reinforce conservative, racist, colonialist and xenophobic discourses. They use laws to legitimize discriminatory practices, exclusions and oppressions, such as migration restrictions, racialized laws and laws of control of subordinate bodies and identities, under the guise of protecting true women or traditional values. In such a scenario, these legal strategies work to reinforce the maintenance of gender, race and class hierarchies, often through moralizing discourses that make invisible the interests of preserving social privileges and privileges.

IV. Intersections and Convergences

The three descriptions of manifestations of power have in common criticism of the instrumentalization of feminism and sexual and gender rights, denouncing the co-aptation of struggles for equality and rights to reinforce exclusionary projects, such as nationalism, racism, imperialism or neoliberalism. They also point to the alliance between progressive discourses and systems of oppression and how, paradoxically, values such as human rights, female emancipation or LGBTQIA+ inclusion can be used in the service of domination, for example: to legitimize wars (Puar, 2017); to justify anti-immigration policies (Farris, 2017); to exclude trans people or reinforce state surveillance (Lewis, 2025).

It is possible to affirm, therefore, that the authors also converge in rejecting a feminism assimilated to institutional power: by criticizing hegemonic, white and normative feminist movements, which do not confront power structures such as racism, colonialism, capitalism and mass incarceration, they highlight the limits of these movements in their association with the hegemonic system and also the reinforcement of this with the alleged actions of promoting rights.

Homonationalism, Femonationalism and the so-called Reactionary Feminisms, especially the Enemy, share strategies, discourses and networks of articulation that reveal a common pattern: the instrumentalization of discourse and institutions to reinforce conservative political agendas, often to the detriment of vulnerable populations. These are movements that converge in the construction of simplified and binary narratives: oppressor *versus* victim. In this spectrum, certain groups (Muslims, migrants, LGBT+, dissident women) are represented as threats to order, Western values and morality, fueling discourses of fear, xenophobia and conservatism.

It is important to emphasize that, in this production of the Self and the Other, there is a systematic pattern of maintaining hierarchies and social control, through symbolic constructions that operate in the name of security, morality and national identity. In this production of the other, made from social markers such as race, gender, sexuality, religion and geopolitical origin, racialized groups, migrants, LGBTQIA+ and dissident women are presented as dangerous or vulnerable, mobilizing stereotypes of backwardness, irrationality, moral deviation or threat to order. This symbolic construction fulfills the ideological function of justifying repressive, security and exclusionary policies. This pattern is reinforced by the use of binary and stigmatizing narratives, in which there is an identity binary of us versus them: the civilized, national, Western and morally superior us is contrasted with a dangerous, barbaric or degenerate Other. This logic sustains a rhetoric of dehumanization and urgency, disseminated especially by the media, which legitimizes social fear and authoritarian policies (Farris, 2017; Lewis, 2025).

In this dynamic, the figure of the Other can oscillate between victim and oppressor. Some groups may be presented as vulnerable (e.g. Muslim women) to justify paternalistic interventions and cultural control measures. At the same time, related groups are portrayed as agents of oppression (Muslim men, migrants, queer bodies), legitimizing repressive policies. This ambiguity serves to maintain the *status quo* and conceals the structures that produce vulnerability (Puar, 2017).

In this sense, it is important to emphasize that the production of the victim figure operates as an ideological device: it naturalizes inequalities, ignores some power relations and legitimizes tutelary actions, which often reinforce stigmas and exclusion. By positioning certain groups as eternally vulnerable, this strategy reinforces social hierarchies, empties the complexity of these subjects' experiences and depoliticizes the structural causes of oppression (Lewis, 2025).

Finally, it can be inferred that the three manifestations converge in promoting a politics of fear, in which protection and security measures legitimize the repression of minorities in the name of preserving traditional values. The Other becomes a scapegoat for moral, economic or political crises, allowing conservative discourse to gain strength as an authoritarian response to diversity and change.

In this convergence of strategies, the *modus operandi* of these discourses involves the instrumental use of law as a technology of power, legitimizing exclusions and criminalizations under the justification of security and moral protection. This rhetoric is reinforced by diverse actors — political parties, social movements, public figures, and the media — who collaborate to disseminate and consolidate these views in the collective imagination. The use of law is used to create and reinforce narratives of racialized threat and control of certain groups, consolidating racialized and power hierarchies (Puar, 2017; Farris, 2017). For Lewis (2025), Traditional Feminism uses law to promote superficial

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and republican improvements within the capitalist and patriarchal system, reinforcing a formal equality that does not challenge existing power structures; and Enemy Feminism instrumentalizes the law to legitimize conservative, racist and xenophobic discourses, reinforcing hierarchies of exclusion and social control under the guise of protecting true women and traditional values. As a technology of power, the law reinforces and legitimizes the strategies of power, domination and exclusion present in these different discourses and ideological formations.

V. Final Considerations

The analysis of the discursive articulations of Homonationalism, Femonationalism and Reactionary Feminisms reveals the functioning of a sophisticated logic of production and maintenance of inequalities, marked by the symbolic construction of the other as a threat. They describe a coordinated set of dynamics in which otherness is instrumentalized, not only as difference, but as a risk to the desired normative order. The partial and selective inclusion of social groups, such as sexual dissidents or women, within the framework of the nation and the law is denounced as a biopolitical strategy of control, disciplining and exclusion – and not of emancipation.

In this process, the relationship between the self and the other is profoundly asymmetrical, reproducing colonialist dynamics: the self (represented by the Western, white, cisheterosexual and national subject) is constituted as a civilizing figure, bearer of reason, progress and universal values, while the other is forged as a dissonant body, a moral, cultural or security threat. This relationship is not based on objective data, but rather on discursive constructions conveyed and reinforced by the media, public policies, legal discourses and institutional practices, creating a collective imaginary that legitimizes symbolic and material violence against those who do not fit into the parameters of hegemonic normality.

The danger of these discursive devices lies precisely in their ability to operate under the guise of care, tolerance and justice. Inclusion paradoxically becomes a form of exclusion, by selecting which bodies and identities are acceptable and which must be marginalized or silenced. In this way, colonial, racist, patriarchal and capitalist structures are not only maintained, but are renewed under new vocabularies, converting diversity into political and symbolic capital.

The theoretical categories presented by Jasbir Puar, Sara Farris and Sophie Lewis are therefore useful for an analysis of the denaturalization of these discursive technologies. As the recognition that markers of gender, race, sexuality and nation are traversed by relations of power, it is clear that their mobilization is strategic and, when not interrogated, can reinforce oppressions.

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