

*CORTE*<sup>1</sup>

*Claudia Casarino*

*You're eating me up so much with your eyes  
I have no strength left  
to feed you  
Stella do Patrocínio*

Corte: the act of separating a part from a whole of the same material, reduction;  
Corte: the act of cutting;  
Corte: injury, incision, wound;  
Corte: royal residence, palace;  
Corte: piece of something, slice, chunk;  
Corte: court;  
Corte: graphic representation of a section of a construction to show the vertical dimension of the building.

Claudia Casarino invites us to observe what clothes us as a premeditated and designed system. Still, as part of the structure, it can be the text of maintenance, awareness, and rupture, not as an empty celebration of style but as a battlefield where issues of gender, class, and power are in constant conflict. Her works, which connect with intimacy, memories, and lightness, bring out unspoken perceptions with their sharp humor. By bringing naturalized violence to the surface and making it visible through beauty, the artist challenges our perceptions and forces us to face the uncomfortable truths that clothe us.

Fashion, often celebrated as an expression of identity and creativity, is also a sphere where power and oppression are intricately intertwined. From the choice of fabrics to the final design of a garment, every detail carries with it a tale of control and subjugation. The history of fashion, often romanticized, is also the story of how bodies, especially those that are feminized and belong to precarious populations, have been shaped, manipulated, and controlled over time.

Every piece of clothing, every choice of fabric, and every accessory is linked to power over bodies. In its apparent simplicity, each piece of clothing is an extension of power. Choices that seem trivial, such as the fit of a dress or the texture of a fabric, are imbued with deep meaning. These often reflect gender and class dynamics, where the female body and marginalized bodies are objects of control. Fashion, in this sense, is not just an aesthetic statement but a political exercise that perpetuates subtle and often naturalized violence.

How to draw naturalized violence through transparency. That which does not sustain our gaze. That which is overlooked. For beauty has the privilege of fixing and retaining the gaze.

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<sup>1</sup> The word "cut" ("corte") in Portuguese gathers a range of meanings that are untranslatable under a single English word. The translator has opted to keep the word in the original in order to maintain the author's play on homonyms.

This violence, under the guise of beauty, is a powerful tool of oppression. Transparency, for example, is not just a style but a metaphor for what is invisible to society's eyes: inequalities, injustices, and neglected histories. At the same time, transparency can be perceived as a means of exposing these hidden truths and giving visibility to what is usually covered up by the glamour and superficiality of fashion.

Paradoxically, it is through beauty that this violence can be challenged and revealed. Beauty, with its ability to capture and hold the gaze, becomes a poetic gesture of resistance. By creating something beautiful that also bears the mark of oppression, the artist exposes the cracks in the system, inviting the viewer to confront the realities that lie beneath the surface. Beauty, in this context, is not an end in itself but a means of revealing inequalities and their consequences, of transforming what is ignored into something impossible to overlook.

These are choices, thought out, lived, and executed, often based on the combination of memories. And how to speak of violence through beauty. Beauty as a poetic gesture that makes visible inequalities and their consequences.

Keyna Eleison