# Carmelo Bene, a Stuttering War Machine

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**ABSTRACT** – **Carmelo Bene, a Stuttering War Machine** – This article presents one of the topics raised by the research in progress on the work of the Italian artist Carmelo Bene. The author resumes a relation already made at the beginning of the research between the Benean actorial machine and the Deleuzean-Guattarian war machine, adding elements from an approach of stuttering in Gilles Deleuze, as well as from materials and experiences collected in the field research developed in Italy and France along the last three years. The initial goal of the research was to study the concepts that Carmelo Bene created in scene, seeking a closeness to what was original in his work. From the observation of the multiplicity of Bene's theoretical and artistic alliances, it became necessary to interrogate and contaminate the research and writing modes themselves, establishing a production by means of fragments and closeness, being this text one of them.
Keywords: **Carmelo Bene. Actorial Machine. War Machine. Stuttering Machine. Deleuze-Guattari.**

**RÉSUMÉ** – **Carmelo Bene, une Machine de Guerre Bégayante** – Cet article presente l'un des sujets soulevés par la recherche de l'oeuvre de l'artiste italien Carmelo Bene, toujours en cours. L'auteur reprend une relation qu'elle avait faite au début de sa recherche entre la machine actorielle bénéenne et la machine de guerre deleuze-guattarienne, en les ajoutant un abordage du bégayage chez Deleuze et par le biais de matériels et d'expériences recueillis lors de recherches de terrain menées en Italie et en France depuis 2014. La recherche avait comme objectif initial une étude des concepts que Carmelo Bene avait créés sur la scene, en cherchant ce qui était original dans son travail. La connaissance de la multiplicité des aliances théoriques et artistiques de Bene imposait la necessite d'interroger et de contaminer les propres modes de recherche et d'écrite, établissant une production par fragments et approximations dont le présent texte en est une tentative.
Mots-clés: **Carmelo Bene. Machine Actorielle. Machine de Guerre. Machine Bégayante. Deleuze-Guattari.**

**RESUMO** – **Carmelo Bene, uma Máquina de Guerra Gaguejante** – O artigo apresenta uma das temáticas suscitadas pela pesquisa, ainda em andamento, da obra do artista italiano Carmelo Bene. A autora retoma uma relação que já havia feito, no início da pesquisa, entre o conceito beneano de máquina atorial e o conceito deleuze-guattariano de máquina de guerra, acrescentando-lhe elementos de uma abordagem da gagueira em Gilles Deleuze e de materiais e experiências colhidos em pesquisas de campo na Itália e na França nos últimos três anos. A pesquisa teve por objetivo inicial um estudo dos conceitos que Carmelo Bene criou em cena, buscando uma aproximação ao que havia de original em sua obra. A partir do conhecimento da multiplicidade de alianças teóricas e artísticas de Bene, impôs-se a necessidade de interrogar e contaminar os próprios modos de pesquisa e escrita, estabelecendo-se uma produção por fragmentos e aproximações, dentre os quais o presente texto é uma tentativa.
Palavras-chave: **Carmelo Bene. Máquina Atorial. Máquina de Guerra. Máquina Gaguejante. Deleuze-Guattari.**

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The focus of the research that originated the present article is the work and the public figure of the Italian artist Carmelo Bene as both, life and work, were inseparable along his life (1937-2002). From the access to rare material[1], initially the investigation was developed as a continuation to my PhD dissertation (Balestreri, 2004) and, in the last three years, earned new inputs from my annual field research in Italy and France. It was during these trips that contacts were established or, according to the case, reestablished with researchers and artists who were close to and worked closely with Bene, or who participated in the organization of his archives[2]. These trips were also an opportunity to visit important places of his life, locations of his films, addresses where *alternative* theaters where Bene performed in the 1960s used to exist, works of art that were inspiring to him. I also conducted a search of published material that was of interest to the research in booksellers and second-hand bookstores, as well as I visited archives of different institutions, being the most important of them the artist's personal archives while they were kept in *Casa dei Teatri*, an institution belonging to the *Istituzione Biblioteche di Rome*.

Researching Carmelo Bene, or the attempt to experience his work as much as possible – a theater that is not observed anymore, but whose effects are still felt by various means – imposes a policy of approach and writing that, in several aspects, is intertwined with and resounds to Deleuze-Guattari's work, in its rhizomatic way of joining apparently distant dots, entangling ideas and reverberating sensations. The approach to the work and the marks left by this *artlife* in those who testified it imposes the invention of new ways of researching and conceiving the research text. But this is not always achieved – each text, each trip to the field becomes an attempt to allow oneself to be taken by the flows asking to pass.

For a long time, the research was exploratory, although in a very particular way, given the amplitude of Carmelo Bene's performing and conceptual inventions. There was plenty of material published along the artist's 40-year-long career, mostly in Italian only. However, due to several reasons, hardly anything on this work reached Brazil. In this exploratory research, some Benean topics and concepts are highlighted, which have been worked for publication in a book. Some of these topics were recently retaken in the light of the field research. Connected with other perceptions and information, they have been giving origin to new texts. The present article re-

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sumes a link traced a few years ago by the author, between a concept that is frequently present in Bene's texts and statements from the mid-1980s on – the actorial machine – and the war machine according to Deleuze and Guattari, relating it to the Deleuzean approach of stuttering, even proposing that the actorial machine can also be a stuttering machine.

A hurricane passed through Italy between 1959 and 2002 and keeps producing its effects. Carmelo Bene (1937-2002) premièred as an actor in Albert Camus's *Caligula* in 1959, having obtained the author's authorization to perform a *Caligula in his own way*. In bombastic presentations in Rome *cantine* – basements of residential buildings[3] – between 1961 and 1963 in his Laboratory Theater, in the ground floor of a small building in the *Trastevere* area, and next, in a small place of Piazza Cavour –, Carmelo Bene, born and raised in the south of Italy, in the region known as Salento, the southern-most part of the Puglia, invented an original and surprising artistic journey. In the most complete research of his works (Bene, 2004), it can be counted 59 theatrical spectacles – some of which are new editions of the same original play –, 9 short, medium and long length movies – 9 records, 16 films for TV – television versions of theatrical plays or readings of fiction or poetry – 21 distinct radio programs, besides several records of seminaries and interviews. The numbers do not express by themselves all the uniqueness of this work, but they provide evidence of its exuberance.

In 2014, Professor Piergiorgio Giacchè, from Perugia, Italy, suggested that I should allow Carmelo Bene to come close to me as a ghost or a haunt, when I was travelling through the south of the country for the first time, searching for the artist's traces. As it seems, this research is sketched, little by little, in its unveiling. If researching is to shape a plan of forces (Rolnik, 2014), here it is about activating it and gradually finding words that are worthy of these intensities. The controversial, scandalous, provoking, humble Carmelo Bene hurricane seems to be part of the social fabric of Italy, with splashes in France, where he performed more than once.

One early appearance of Bene in France was through his first long length movie, *Our Lady of the Turkish*, that, awarded in the 1968 Venice Biennial, was exhibited in Paris in a cinema in the Quartier Latin[4] in the same year. The closeness of the artist with Deleuze happened in 1977

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when, in an initiative of the collective *Dramaturgie*, the plays *Romeo i Giulietta* and *S.A.D.E.* were presented in the Fall Festival in Paris. *Dramaturgie* was a cultural institution and a publishing house, being responsible for Bene's and his theater departure to Paris. Professor Jean-Paul Manganaro, in charge of all the negotiation with the artist, asked him if he wanted to invite someone in particular, to watch him and speak with him. Bene said that he would like to meet Foucault, Lacan, Deleuze, Barthes and Pierre Klossowski. According to Prof. Manganaro[5], everyone but Barthes, who refused to attend Bene's spectacles, liked what they saw very much.

In the end of the following decade, the Italian multiartist developed with Klossowski the project of staging of the play *Le Baphomet* for the 1989-1991 Venice Biennial, in the Theater sector, directed by Bene. The project generated an intense conviviality between both, but it was not developed due to the early removal of Bene from the position. Klossowski participated in a flow-book resulting from Bene's work in Venice (Bene et al., 1990). But the most lasting encounter, a collaboration and a great friendship, happened with Deleuze. He, who said in his *Abécédaire* that he did not like theater, except Carmelo Bene's and Bob Wilson's, attended at least five different Bene's spectacles, some of them in Italy. I found in the personal archives of the artist in Rome[6], amongst books of his library, dedications that demonstrate friendship and admiration, as in the dedication of Deleuze to the French edition of his *Movement-Image*: "To Carmelo Bene, leaving from a huge Macbeth, thinking about his work in the cinema and the theater, admiration and affection, Gilles 1983"[7]. Also, the one that I read in Deleuze's *Foucault* (Ed. Minuit, 1986): "For Carmelo, from Hamlet to Lorenzaccio, homage to his genius. Gilles"[8].

While Deleuze said that he did not like theater (Deleuze, 1997) but for two exceptions, amongst which Carmelo Bene, Pier Paolo Pasolini (2010), in turn, in the presentation of his text *Bestia da Stile*, critiques the at the time "new" Italian theater, "a decay of the model of the Living Theater", an appreciation from which he excludes Carmelo Bene, "always autonomous and original"[9]. Carmelo Bene: a *cursed*, who became a sacred monster of the Italian theater. Professor Piergiorgio Giacchè highlights the mutant and inscrutable character of Bene, who would not have a work prone to scrutiny in evolutive stages, as other great figures of the theater did[10]. We perceive this in Deleuze, who wrote his *One Less Manifesto* in

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1977 or 1978 to, shortly later, attend Bene's *Manfred*, and to recognize there, once again, the new – this time, according to Deleuze, another relation with the sonorous was being restored: "the power of an artist is the renewal; Carmelo Bene is the proof of it" (Deleuze, 2003, p. 173). The theatrical creations of Carmelo Bene were increasingly radicalizing along the years, until reaching the concept of what he called *actorial machine*.

What does Bene refer to when he speaks of an *actorialness as machine*? How to bring closer the concepts of actorial machine in Bene, and of war machine in Deleuze and Guattari? And how to speak, in this in case, of a *stuttering machine*?

An initial clue of the closeness here searched was provided by Deleuze himself, who, in his text *One Less Manifesto*, speaks of Shakespeare's/Bene's Richard III as being the constitution, in scene, of a man of war (with his prostheses, deformities, flaws, variations…).

> The man of war was always considered, in the mythologies, as having a distinct origin from the one of the man of State or the one of the king: misshapen and vile, he always comes from somewhere else. CB makes him to appear in scene: as women in war enter and leave, concerned with their children who whine, Richard III shall become misshapen to amuse the children and to hold back the mothers. […]. He constitutes himself a little like Mr. Hyde – od colors, of sounds, of things (Deleuze, 1979, p. 90-91).

It is not about the engendering of a man of State:

> And Richard III, in turn, is less eager for power and more avid for reintroducing or reinventing a war machine, with the risk of destroying the apparent balance or the peace of the State apparent (what Shakespeare calls Richard's secret, the 'secret goal') (Deleuze, 1979, p. 90).

For Deleuze, is this the intention of Bene's staging: the engendering of this man of war, the invention of a war machine. Other authors also use this notion when referring to the actorial machine Carmelo Bene, like Manganaro – a personal and intellectual friend of Deleuze and Bene – who, when referring not only to a play, but to the work of the artist as a whole, speaks of the "[…] precise and fast preparation of a work that quickly will function as a war machine"[11] (Manganaro, 2003, p. 10).

What characterizes the war machine is its exteriority in relation to the State; it is linked to nomadism – in displacement and speed –, establishing

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a *thought of the outside* (Sasso; Villani, 2003), the outside of the representation. This is what Deleuze will highlight in Richard III: the line of continuous variation to which Carmelo Bene submits all the elements of his theater.

In the 1980s, Bene becomes, in many cases, the only artist in scene: he takes over almost all the roles. In his complete works, in the listing of his last spectacles, it is common to find the indication of the presence of an orchestra and Carmelo Bene as the *solo voice*. In 1989, *Pentesileia* premièred, which has as sub-heading *actorial machine-actorialness of the machine*, a founding proposal that tops his elaboration in theater and that was developed by him at each play, especially in the last ones. Neither the actor nor the spectacle have substance. Carmelo will, for instance, speak of an *amplified actorial machine*, which is quite distinct from an actor who uses a microphone so that his words are better heard; it is not an actor who says a text, it is a machine that produces sounds and it is amplified. The increasingly more frequent use of playback is not done by comfort or to make any accomplishment easy, but it is an instrument of creation.

> The actor is not enough, neither the great actor. It is necessary to be a machine, which I defined as 'actorial'. What is an actorial machine? First, it will be amplified. But the amplification – it is a strange thing – is not a *gonflage*, that is, it is not an inflating […] it is when I am so close that the contours vanish. Theater is everything that is not understood (Bene, n.d.).

As Professor Giacchè reminds us, the actorial machine is "the opening of a new chapter of the performing art" (Giacchè, 2007, p. 156) for those who welcomed the technological updating. However, contradictorily, as Bene reminds in his text *Autografia d'un Ritratto*, they invest a lot in the lighting and still are in the 20th century concerning the sonorous aspect: "An extremely ridiculous dichotomy: zero decibels (acoustics) and three hundred kilowatts (optics)" (Bene, 1995a, p. XV).

Also in 1989, appointed as the director of the Venice Biennial Theater Sector, Bene proposes a Laboratory with artists – musicians, actresses, composers, drummers, sound technicians, etc. – and some academics. The proposal was to experience the emptiness of the scene, the actorialness as machine: "it was not sought this or that way of being in scene, but to exit from it" (Manganaro, 1990, p. 18). Manganaro certifies the impossibility of this purpose, as the technique and the virtuosity of the invited artists intensified

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the spectacular; while, with Carmelo Bene, the theater becomes a non-place, "orphan of the subject and the language". "The actorial machine is unobservable" – Manganaro analyzes the difficulties of the invited artists to experience the emptiness of the scene, as Carmelo Bene proposed, highlighting that they were extraordinary groups from Europe and other regions. The difficulty was that it was not sought a way or another of entering in scene, but of *exiting from* it. Bene makes a game of words with the expression *mis en scène* and says that what he does is "to remove, to take away from the scene" (*ôter la scéne*). Carmelo Bene's actorial machine blows up the spectacle, the spectator-*voyeur*, the function of the critique, as there is nothing to observe, there is no comment possible, his theater is "wandering in the chaos" (Manganaro, 2003, p. 18; p. 25).

With Bene, the director theater, the actor, these hard segmentarities that define the great references of the western theater, its molar, visible and recognizable plan also blow up. Deleuze says that, with Bene, there is no actor or director anymore, but *operator* (Deleuze, 1979).

The notion of segmentarity was created by the ethnologists to comprise the societies without a centered State. However, as Deleuze and Guattari claim, the modern societies also are segmentarized, with the observation that the State makes distinct segmentarities resound one into the other, taking everything to a center. Deleuze and Guattari say (1996, p. 87):

> We are segmented from all around and in every direction. The human being is a segmentary animal. Segmentarity is inherent to all the strata composing us. Dwelling, getting around, working, playing: life is spatially and socially segmented. The house is segmented according to its rooms' assigned purposes; streets, according to the order of the city; the factory, according to the nature of the work and operations performed in it.

Thus, it will be necessary to speak of flexible segmentarities – which are made and unmade following the affections and the becomings, and of hard segmentarities – where the segments lose the faculty of sprouting, as they are examined, overcodified, predetermined. Both processes are inseparable, every society and every individual are crossed by both segmentarities, which the authors also call *molar* and *molecular*. The molar organizations – sexes, classes, etc. – do not exclude molecular agencies and combinations – "a thousand tiny sexes", the "masses" – that agitate them permanently. Later, in the same chapter, they consider insufficient the differentiation of hard

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and flexible segmentarities and prefer to consider, on the one hand, molar segmentarities and, on the other, another process, molecular, which is the one of the mutant flows and the lines of flight (Deleuze; Guattari, 1996, p. 83-84).

Simplifying, we can say, with Zourabichvili (2004, p. 30), that lines of flight are "vectors of 'disorganization' or deterritorialization", a regime of lines of time that crosses us and make constituted worlds to escape. They can be called lines of vanishing, being this vanishing a condition for the invention of new worlds, for the incessant fabrication of life.

In his last plays, Bene radicalized the proposal of *actorial machine*. Manganaro explains that, in the spectacle *Pinocchio*, Carmelo begins to think the functions of the actor as a "puppet-marionette", unfolds the actorialness in "objective impossibility of 'being' and 'growing up'" (Manganaro, 2003, p. 33):

> It is through the marionette that C.B. comes to the formulation of a new concept for the theater, which he calls *actorial machine*, to which he interdicts the role, the feelings, the representation and interpretation vocation (Manganaro, 2003, p. 38)[12].

The actorial machine does not bear historicizing. In the flow-book *Il Teatro Senza Spettacolo* [Theater Without Spectacle], also a result of the Venice Laboratory, it can be read that, with Bene, there is no Romeo and Juliet, or Richard III stories as told by Shakespeare anymore, "[…] but a Richard III 'happening' or a Shakespeare 'happening' that catalyzes energies, powers and tensions" (Dumoulié; Manganaro; Scala, 1990, p. 18). The same authors, who sign the first part of the book, continue: "[…] here it is traced the difference between the direction, that distributes and assigns to each one his part, and the point of non-return of the actorial machine, that captures the energies of the 'happening' and takes over all its voices" (1990, p. 18)[13]. They highlight that the actorialness as machine makes the normativity to escape from the meaning of the text and the triad of the Aristotelianism – time, action and place –, that the theater of director, on its turn, worships: "*Against all catharses, the actorial machine is raised now as a war machine*"[14] (Dumoulié; Manganaro; Scala, 1990, p. 45, emphasis from the authors).

According to Deleuze, the happening can be evoked here as the authors explicit their alliance with this theoretical field. This philosopher

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claims that all his work was to bring to the light what a happening is. He assumes from the stoics the notion of incorporeal to say, as Cláudio Ulpiano explains (1989), that the happening is an effect of the field of powers, an effect of the encounter of bodies. Based on this, it is understood that Carmelo Bene is not interested in the meaning of a text, of a gesture, but in this capture of the intensive, that can be called happening. Drawing from the words of Tânia Galli (n.d., online), it is considered that:

> When conceiving life as a happening that is produced as a becoming, a make itself, Deleuze challenges us with a logic of the meaning, not with entrenched categories, making abstractions of the happenings in an *a priori* already given and already solved. Thus, the proposed reality is already given, beforehand. The happenings [...] are unique and, as such, non-predictable in the logic of an identitarian matrix, in which everything is defined. One does not mimic, as, when creating, one is opening passage to other processes that are not the identical, the identitarian. They are modes of collective subjectivity always being made, happening. When approaching Deleuze, we deal with an ethics of the happening, in whose internality it is sought not time constituted by continuity and eternity, but time opened by the unintended of the present time, without fixed categories, through which the subject becomes different of what he is, being himself.

What can be perceived in some passionate for this thought is that, from the perspective of those who read and teach the happening in Deleuze, it lacks to consider in movement the place where they themselves are, running the risk of vanishing of the existential places and territories themselves. To perforate the security of the words and, who knows, to stutter, is what Bene did quite well, both in the theater and out of it.

Thus, in Bene it is not about interpreting a role anymore – the theater of director is a commentary of the text, say the same authors – or searching for the meaning of a text, but, amongst other things, making sonorous matter from the voice. If "the dramaturgy excludes the actorialness", making mere textual expression of the actor's body, the actorialness, in turn, is the "joy of the inorganic" (Dumoulié; Manganaro; Scala, 1990, p. 14-15) and the search for the emptiness of the scene.

What do the war machines consist of, after all? To understand them, it is necessary to face three negatives: it is not a metaphor, they do not concern the machine techniques exclusively, and they do not have the war as object. Deleuze and Guattari open *The Anti-Oedipus* claiming that every-

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where there are machines, "real ones, not figurative ones: machines driving other machines, machines being driven by other machines, with all the necessary couplings and connections". They list: the breast is a machine to produce milk, to which one couples another machine, the mouth; the mouth of the anorexic, though, "[…] wavers between several functions: its possessor is uncertain as to whether it is an eating-machine, an anal machine, a talking-machine, or a breathing machine (asthma attacks)". And they continue: "Hence we are all handymen: each with his little machines. […] Something is produced: the effects of a machine, not mere metaphors" (Deleuze; Guattari, 2010, p. 11). As Zourabichvili remembers (2004, p. 35), the machine is "[…] social before being technique, it ignores the distinction between its production and its functioning, and it is not taken for a closed mechanism at all".

Maurizio Grande, a scholar who participated as a scientific consultant of the Laboratory *The Impossible Research* in the 1989 Venice Biennial, claims that Carmelo Bene is the "actor-machine" or "the *anti-language machine* of the non-art of the actor". And he adds: "From the Elizabethans to Lewis, from Shakespeare to Laforgue, from Musset to Kleist, Carmelo Bene rewrites the non-written, the unspeakable signifier of the subject-without-language and the *personaless*-actor" (Grande, 1990, p. 105-106)[15].

Giacchè said[16] that he saw Carmelo Bene leaning for half an hour over one single page of a text. He also said that, after Bene, *Pinocchio*, Carlo Collodi's classic text, was not the same anymore; he also said that, with Bene's performing work, he captured/understood some of Leopardi's lines which he did not understand previously. Carmelo Bene worked a lot with great texts and made a non-textual theater with them. We can think about these movements as incisions in Moebius strip: forms are cut, facilitating the access to the forces (Rolnik, 2014). Deleuze provides good clues to accompany these movements: in his *One Less Manifesto*, he highlights that Bene makes surgical incisions in the texts, removing from them the elements of power to, in continuous variation, make the potentialities to appear (Deleuze, 1979).

It is not only in the work on the texts that Carmelo Bene provokes variations; all his theater is of continuous variation. With whispers, roars, amplification and playback, he takes over his variation as stuttering, alt-

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hough he does not use these terms. Little wonder, the philosopher André Scala says that Deleuze and Guattari probably thought about Carmelo Bene when they wrote *Plateau N. 3, 10,000 B.C: The Geology of Morals (Who Does the Earth Think It Is?)*. Thus, professor Challenger, Conan Doyle's strange character, appropriated by Deleuze and Guattari in *Plateau N. 3*, the one who makes the land to roar with his vocal metamorphoses and his increasingly husky voice, would be, according to Scala, appropriate to the disarticulations promoted by Bene in his scene. To Scala, "[…] no one other than Bene would be able to make a public reading [of this Plateau] with his accelerations, his theater, his vocal metamorphoses. A *Tamerlano-Challenger* axle, Theater-Philosophy, practice and theory of the Disarticulation" (Scala, 1990, p. 76).

Marlowe's *Tamerlano* (*Tamburlaine*) was read by Carmelo Bene (1995b) for the scholars, as Scala, who had participated of the Laboratory *The Impossible Research*, proposed and coordinated by Bene during the 1989 Venice Biennial. According to Jean-Paul Manganaro, *Tamerlano* is an "example of a modernity that by itself is a tyrannical subtraction of meaning" (Manganaro, 1990, p. 19). Tamur Khan, the bloody Mongol conqueror, whose trajectory is shown by Marlowe in this tragedy, is there presented in his tyranny, but also in his greatness: "It is a war field, that is, it is not a scene that represents a war field. The war is actual, but which one? The one of the rhythm against rhymes, of the rhythm against the beat, the one of the white verse against the ternary form" (Scala, 1990, p. 73). Highlighting that Bene has special preference for the disform, Scala flatteringly calls the voice of the Italian artist "a limping voice" (Scala, 1990, p. 72), the one that, both through *Tamerlano* and many others, carry through what Deleuze calls "To stutter, *but* being stuttering of his own language, and not only of the sayings…" (Deleuze, 1979, p. 106).

In front of the excerpt in which everybody abandons Challenger and leave him speaking to himself – "Most of the listeners were gone" (Deleuze; Guattari, 1995, p. 73) –, how not to think on Artaud embodying the conference *The Theater and the Plague* in the Sorbonne, in March of 1933, twitching and being abandoned by the people who were present, except by a few who stayed, as his great friend Anaïs Nin? Bene, however, instead of solitude, lived his madness in the scene and knew how to occupy the spaces

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that were offered to him, becoming quite known and renown in his country, a *sacred monster*, living constant renewals, as Deleuze says.

The stuttering, reminds Parnet, or a scream, or silence, "[…] would be like the line of flight of the language, speaking in his own language as a foreigner, making a lesser use of the language…" (Deleuze; Parnet, 1998, p. 32). All of this is also in the first text of Deleuze on Bene (Deleuze, 1979): Carmelo Bene places everything in continuous variation, he removes the elements of power both from the language and the gestures, he subtracts the stable elements, the structure, the enunciation, the dialogue, the action. And it can be added to the obstacles that he imposed to the actors in scene, by means of the costumes and of objects of the setting, those obstacles that he ascribed to the language, in the incessant production of a stuttering machine that does not oppose, but perforates, excavates, stumbles, gurgles, regurgitates the words, also producing lines of flight in the sayings. In a later text, under the title of *He Stuttered*, the philosopher resumes topics and examples present in the essay inspired by Bene: "grow from the middle, or to stutter" (Deleuze, 1997, p. 126), being a foreigner in his own language. When speaking of a style, which perhaps would be a non-style, "Style is the economy of the language. Face to face, or face to back, making the language to stutter and at the same time taking the language as a whole to its limit, to its outside, to its silence" (Deleuze, 1997, p. 128). These inputs help to perceive some of Bene's paradoxes. For instance, he used to study the classic texts and made an a-textual theater with them, which was not a theater of gestures either, being his experimentations distinguished with the sonority of the spectacles, especially with the voice. Thus, beyond the binarisms, or turning the back to them, it is sought diverse ways of saying the singularity of this work, and perhaps we can speak of Bene's work as a stuttering war machine.

**Notes**

[1] In 2003, when I visited Professor Jean-Paul Manganaro, translator of Bene into French, a great friend of the artist and considered one of the biggest experts on his work, a visit that was generously intermediated by a Brazilian friend, Professor Daniel Lins, Professor Manganaro presented me with five rare books of and on Carmelo Bene. He also put me in contact with Professor Giorgio

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Passerone, another admirer of Bene who, even before the existence of YouTube, lent me his VHS tapes with old recordings from the TV. Concerning the books that Professor Manganaro donated to me, I understand it as a sort of curatorship and study guidance, perhaps a provocation, that now reaches a point of possible writing.

2    The list of people who were interviewed or with whom I spoke informally, and who have collaborated with the research, is also a list of gratitude for their availability and generosity in sharing experiences and knowledge, or facilitating the access to materials. Besides Professors Manganaro and Passerone, already mentioned, Professors Piergiorgio Giacchè and Camille Dumoullið, the costume designer Luisa Viglietti, the actress Lydia Mancinelli, Luca Buoncristiano and the PhD Francesca Oppedisano and Monica Palliccia, amongst many others, have left the doors opened for my actions of research.

3    The *cantine – cave* in French – is a sort of big warehouses, often used as cellars or to keep a personal library or objects. In this case, due to the low rent, they were occupied as small theaters in the 1960s, in Rome, as the actress Lydia Mancinelli explained to me in a conversation in September 2016 in Fregene, a beach close to Rome.

4    According to an unpublished interview with Jean-Paul Manganaro on October 28, 2014, in Paris.

5    In an unpublished interview by me October 2014 (see note 4). In a later conversation on November 13, 2015, Professor Manganaro said that Barthes was interested in Brecht. Perhaps this is why he was not interested in Bene's theater.

6    Archives donated by Bene, in his will, to what should be a foundation to disseminate his work. They were partially kept in *Casa di Teatri*, under the direction of the institution *Biblioteche di Rome*, until December 2016. They were open to consulting, following previous authorization, but the images of the collection cannot be published, by requirement of the heiresses, whose rights were obtained judicially. I had a chance to visit the archives in three separate occasions in 2015 and 2016. These archives were transferred to the Castle Carlo V, in the city of Lecce, Puglia, in the beginning of 2017.

7    In the original in French: *Pour Carmelo Bene, en sortant d'un si grand MacBeth, en pensant a son oeuvre au cinéma comme au théatre. Gilles 1983.* The translations of the excerpts referenced in French or Italian are the author's responsibility.

8    In the original in French: *Pour Carmelo, d'Hamlet a Lorenzaccio, hommage à son genie. Gilles".*

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9    The most complete quotation, in the original in Italian, is: *L'Italia è un paese che diventa sempre più stupido e ignorante. Vi si coltivano retoriche sempre più insopportabili. [...] Il teatro italiano, in questo contesto (in cui l'ufficialità é la protesta), si trova certo culturalmente al limite più basso. Il vecchio teatro tradizionale è sempre più ributtante. Il teatro nuovo – che in altro non consiste che nel lungo marcire del modelo del "Living Theatre" (escludendo Carmelo Bene, sempre autonomo e originale) – è riuscito a divenire altrettanto ributtante che il teatro tradizionale.*

10   Conversation in Paris, October 2014.

11   In the original in French: *[...] l'élaboration precise et rapide d'une ouevre qui va vite fonctionner comme une machine de guerre.*

12   In the original in French: *C'est par la marionnette que C.B. parvient à la formulation d'un concept nouveau pour le théâtre, ce qu'il appelle la machine actoriale, à laquelle il interdit le rôle, les sentiments, la vocation d'interprétation et de représentation.* Despite the consideration of the *Ubermarionette* of Gordon Craig (1872-1966), the use of puppets in scene and a search for the emptiness in Tadeusz Kantor (1920-1990), Manganaro always claims for the uniqueness of the marionette for Bene, adding that the actorial machine achieved successive "overcomings [*superamenti*] […] against the theater of director, but also against the theater of the actor", not dissociating his works from conceiving a spectacle and developing/acting in it. It is really a work of *operator* (Manganaro, 1995, p. 1514).

13   In the original in Italian: *Qui si tracia la differenza tra la regia, che distribuisce e assegna a ognuno la sua parte, e il punto di non retorno della macchina attoriale che capta le energie dell'evento" e ne assume tutte le voce.*

14   In the original in Italian: *Contro ogni catarsi, la macchina attoriale si erge allora come macchina da guerra.*

15   In the original in Italian: *Carmelo Bene è la* macchina antilinguagio *della non-arte dell'attore. [...] Dagli Elisabettani, da Shakespeare a Laforgue, da De Musset a Kleist, Carmelo Bene riscrive il non-scritto, il significante indicibile del soggetto-senza-linguagio e dell'attore-senza-persona.*

16   Conversation in Paris, October 2014.

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