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**Horizons of perception. Research of Czech Object Sculpture Art in Period 1950–1989.
Reflection of a phenomenological methodology in the Artworks of Stanislav Kolíbal.**

(Working Title)

In my dissertation project, I focused on the problem of Czech object sculpture art in the time period 1950–1989. Especially the methodological issue and the ways of interpretation of the Stanislav Kolíbal, Dalibor Chatrný and Karel Malich artworks with regard to the knowledge of phenomenological philosophy. My research also reflected the socio-political context in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic with the main rule of Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (since 1948) and circumstances of representation on the official and non-official art scene as well as possibilities of the influences of "western" minimalistic and post-minimalistic object sculpture art.

At the end of the '50s of the 20th century we can see a new strong generation of Czech sculpture artists who didn't continue in the state official art doctrine of "social realism" – typical for the end of 40s and 50s – and transform its artistic expression to more abstract form. Simultaneously with monumental sculpture for the public space and architecture start to arise object and installation art presented especially in small galleries (as Špálova gallery curated by Jindřich Chalupecký) and small-town institutions.

In the center of my research stay the questions: What are the main aspects of Czech object art arising after the Second World War? Is this a continuation of the interwar avant-garde? Or can we talk about the influences of western late modernism, especially Donald Judd's category of "specific object", which were possible in the alleviated political situation at the '60s.? Can we use a "western" methodology and analytical approach? Alex Potts which is talking about the "phenomenological turn" in the object sculpture art of the second half of the 20th century (based on the texts of Rosalind E. Krauss and Michael Fried) see the clue in the philosophy of French philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty, which can be used as the methodological approach to interpreted object artworks. Merleau-Ponty main category "corporeal spatial perception" could be also perceived in the artworks of Stanislav Kolíbal, Karel Malich or Dalibor Chatrný. Another argument be found in the Czech intellectual context was a strong role a phenomenological philosophy of Jan Patočka and also the Merleau-Ponty's ideas were

discussed during the `70s and `80s on the ground of the "Jazzová sekce/Jazz section" publishing.

Still, research of Czech object art has to be taken with regard to the different context of Central Europe. German art historian Hans Belting calls it as a "second voice" to the "western" late modernism in the book *The End of the History of Art* (1987). As well as Slovak theoretical Marie Orišková in the book *Dvojhlasné dejiny umenia/ Second Voice of History of Art* (2002).

In my contribution to the International Forum for Doctoral Candidates want to present the case study of the object sculpture of Stanislav Kolíbal in the comparative analysis with the artwork of American post-minimalistic artist Richard Serra. We can see some similarities – for both is a typical dichotomy of categories: stability–lability and the "spatial perception". Although Kolíbal still talks about the metaphorical sense of his work, while Serra makes “empty artwork”. In this comparison, we can discuss the typical basis of Czech object as a typical case of the Central Europe artworks emerging in the socialist context. As well as the possibility and limits of interpretation with phenomenological philosophy based on the Kolíbal`s objects from the `60s, especially: *Labil/Labile* (1964), *Pád/Fall* (1967) and *Otázka času/A Question of Time* (1968).

The Czech Object Art made in the period of 1950–1989 was analyzed in historical and political perspective. Unfortunately, there are not key studies reflected the foreign methodological context. In my dissertation, I try to describe the specific modification of late modernism in Central Europe – not only in Czechoslovakia – but also in the other post-soviet countries as Poland or Bulgaria.

In conclusion, I expected that the International Forum in Berlin will be important impulse for discussion methodological possibilities and limits in the East European Art History.