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**CONNECTIONS AND CONCEPTS: DEVELOPMENT OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE
CZECHOSLOVAK AND HUNGARIAN STATE SECURITY SERVICES REGARDING THE
POLITICAL TRIALS WITHIN THE KSČ, 1948–1954**

Summary

This PhD dissertation aims to present the fluctuating relations between the Czechoslovak and Hungarian state socialist state security services in the earliest period of their relationship by focusing on the Czechoslovak political trials. The cooperation between the two services was indeed volatile. They established their unofficial and official connection quite late, only in 1947–1948. After the expulsion of Yugoslavia from the Cominform, the search for the ‘enemy within the party’ created the chance of a major cooperation between them in the case of Noel Field in 1949. However, the mutual efforts to unveil the ‘enemy’ showed a significant drop, mostly since the main actor in the relationship, Hungarian state security colonel Ernő Szücs was murdered during his own constructed case in 1950. From that point onward, even though there were many instances where the Czechoslovak political proceedings had Hungarian aspects, there was no collaboration between the two services to create a joint ‘investigation’ – as they did previously in the Field-case.

To give a broader context for the analysis of the two services’ relations, the dissertation uses the methods of comparative and transnational history to highlight the similarities and differences between the two main political trials and the two state security services in Czechoslovakia and Hungary. Using archival sources from Czech, Hungarian, and Slovak archives, the doctoral work examines the earliest instances of connections, brings new perspectives and information to the Field-case, reveals Szücs’s relations to his Czechoslovak colleagues, and analyses four Czechoslovak political trials and their Hungarian aspects. These trials are examined as case examples supporting the theory about the setback in the relations after 1950, but they also highlight other reasons for this beside Szücs’s death. As a result, the dissertation gives a more nuanced inquiry into the topic’s already existing, yet deficient and fragmented historical knowledge, and presents new information, approaches, contexts, and interrelations of the rarely discussed relations between the two neighbouring countries’ state security services.