Contents

	List of tables	viii
	Abbreviations Acknowledgments	ix xi
	Introduction	1
	Hungary's place in Europe: North, East, Central or West? 3	
	Hungary's religious and ethnic groups 6	
	Hungary's neighbors 7	
	Hungarian national territory in flux 8	
	Hungary since 1945: four central questions 12	
1	1956 - key event in Hungarian postwar history	15
	1956 and Hungary's changeover to democracy in 1989 15	
	What happened in the autumn of 1956? 17	
	Pre-history: Stalinism with a Hungarian stamp 23	
	The aftermath of 1956: reform and resignation 26	
2	The Hungarian state: caesuras and continuity	30
	The constitution and constitutionality: from the 1949 constitution	
	to the 2012 Fundamental Law 31	
	The parliament 39	
	The parties 43	
	The voting laws and elections 51	
3	Foreign policy: from World War II to the European	
	Union	58
	"Hitler's last ally" 59	
	Absorption into the Soviet system 62	
	1956 – diplomatic background and context 67	
	The Kádár era: loyalty to Moscow and tentative relaxations 69	

vi	Contents	
	The "Second Cold War" and the Kádár system in crisis (1979–1989) 75	
	Collapse of Soviet hegemony and Hungary's Western integration 77	
4	From capitalism to the planned economy	
	and back again: economy and social policy	81
	Long-term developments until the end of World War II 82	
	Crisis and recovery: the postwar years (1945–1948) 84	
	The planned economy: successes and crises 86	
	Reforms and constants 92	
	Social policy: Hungary in European comparison 98	
	Positive and negative social policy: the social-political measures	
	of Hungarian Stalinism (1949–1956) 101	
	Social policy as part of the "Social Contract" under Kádár	
	(1957–1989) 103	
	Capitalism, crises and social policy since 1989 105	
5	Social structures and mobility	113
	Long-term demographic developments 113	
	The imperfect capitalist society before 1945 116	
	The socialist society 119	
	Social mobility and education 123	
	Limits, contradictions, and the dissolution of socialist society 126	
	Hungary society since 1989 129	
6	Lifestyles in transition	135
	Families and gender in the 1950s 136	
	A socialist consumer society? "Goulash Communism," "Refrigerator	
	Communism," trips to the West and vacation homes 140	
	Cultural upheavals in the 1960s: fashion, rock'n' roll,	
	and soccer 144	
7	Ethnic homogenization and minority policy	
	within Hungary and neighboring states	154
	From multi-national state to a homogeneous nation with national minorities 155	
	Development of the rights of nationalities in Hungary since 1945 160	
	Minority policy in the neighboring states: nationalistic conflicts	
	and hopes for their resolution in a unified Europe 165	
	Hungarians inside and outside the European Union – foreigners	
	in Hungary 169	

	Contents	vii
Churches and religion The perspective from below: religiosity in Hungarian society 174 The view from above: the difficult relationship between the church elite and politics since 1945 180 Religion in Hungary since 1989 187		172
Hungarian politics since 1989 The demystification of Western Europe 189 The importance of the memory of 1956 and the particularities of the Hungarian changeover from Communism to democracy from 1988 to 1990 192 Features of Hungarian political culture in the 1990s 195 From EU membership to Orbán's "Hungarian Revolution" in 2010 199		189
References Index		204 216