

ideas stemming from fascism. The final chapter offers some concluding thoughts on Souliotis and especially his ideological make-up.

Overall, this is an interesting biography of a relatively unknown but significant figure and Mazis uses the opportunity to explore some underexamined aspects of Greek and Balkan history, such as the urban aspect of the Macedonian conflict, the impact of alternative nationalist ideas, but also the effect of this conflict on the lives and careers of its participants. The book could have benefitted from more careful editing, as there are some repetitive passages, while the 30-page historical background chapter seems overly long for such a short book. Nevertheless, Mazis succeeds in exposing the significant role of individuals like Souliotis in the convoluted and often tragic political developments of Greece in the first half of the twentieth century and sheds new light on a field that is often perceived as exhaustively researched.

EVDOXIOS DOXIADIS
Simon Fraser University

Socially Engaged Art after Socialism: Art and Civil Society in Central and Eastern Europe. By Isabella Galliera. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2022. xx, 384 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Illustrations. Photographs. \$34.95, paper. doi: 10.1017/slr.2023.297

Now available in paperback, Isabella Galliera's ground-breaking study *Socially Engaged Art After Socialism* presents a long overdue examination of socially engaged art practices in east central Europe since the end of socialism, focusing on art in Bulgaria, Hungary, and Romania. The author demonstrates how arts practitioners, their collaborators, and participants were empowered by using their social capital to shape civil society and "advocate for a dissenting civil society" (17). Galliera contends that socially engaged art projects offered the possibility to both *work towards* and *act within* this new civil society (3).

The choice of these three countries from which to examine these artistic practices is a unique one, and brings attention to not only a lesser studied area of the region, but also some lesser-known projects and, in the case of Bulgaria, one woefully understudied art scene. Galliera is clear that these countries do not stand for the entire region of central and eastern Europe, rather, they present an opportunity to examine specific factors that played a role in the emergence of these types of art practices in the region (9). An example is the reliance on informal local networks and foreign funding, the backdrop of rapid and dramatic restructuring all with an aim to integrate into the neoliberal market and the EU (9). Juxtaposing the experience of artists in these three countries puts these similarities and differences into sharp focus, demonstrating both the shared experiences of artists in the region and the manner in which local conditions affected artistic production.

Rather than organize the book chapter by country, Galliera focuses on issues that are relevant to the discussion of socially engaged art projects and examines how artists in the region dealt with or addressed them, for example, the local and the transnational, the "counterpublic," belonging, and institutions and self-institutionalization. Those familiar with socially engaged art projects in general will find the discussion of these specific and perhaps lesser-known projects, due to their geographical origin, of interest, and those familiar with the projects will find a healthy analysis of the works within the context of both post-socialist east central Europe and the literature of socially engaged art.

The hardcover version of the book was originally published in 2017, and it would be interesting to know how the author's thinking around socially engaged art in the region has evolved since then. For example, Galliera claims that artists in the region used socially engaged art to "reclaim public life from both the recent socialist past and current neoliberal ideologies in order to build inclusive public spheres as democratic forms within emerging civil societies" (2), however this is just one example of the many ways in which socially engaged art was employed by artists. In fact, as the author herself points out in Chapter 3, "Historical Antecedents: Participatory Art under Socialist 1956–89," the projects that form the case studies in her book emerged from a much wider context of participatory and socially engaged art that extends to the communist period, where artists also attempted to form their own parallel civil and artistic society in the second public sphere.

Given the rich critical framework that Galliera provides with regard to participatory and socially engaged art practices, it would have been interesting to hear some concluding remarks from the author as to how the study of these cases can advance our understanding of socially engaged art practices more generally. Can the findings of this research alter or enhance the critical theory that has developed around socially engaged art, by including the artists and art works from these lesser-studied and lesser-known artistic environments? This would enrich the already nuanced discussion about the different ways in which social capital has worked in the post-socialist environment for these artists as opposed to way it has functioned in the west.

The contributions of this book are many: a focused and thorough discussion of socially engaged art projects from Bulgaria, Hungary, and Romania; a thoughtful consideration of the context in which artists in the post-socialist period were operating, and an expansion of our understanding of the scope of socially engaged art projects in the context of neoliberalism.

AMY BRYZGEL
Northeastern University

Defining Latvia: Recent Explorations in History, Culture, and Politics. Ed. Michael Loader, Siobhan Hearne, and Mathew Kott. Budapest: Central European University Press, 2022. 269 pp. Notes. Glossary. Index. \$85.00, hard bound.
doi: 10.1017/slr.2023.298

Defining Latvia is a collection of essays by an international group of experts on Latvia that grew out of a 2018 conference at Uppsala University in Sweden to mark the 100th anniversary of Latvian independence. It serves as a representative sample of the main topics of inquiry that are of concern to contemporary historians and political scientists who focus on Latvia. The strength of the book is the spotlight it places on the overlooked or underappreciated episodes in the modern era of Latvian history. Indeed, the collection is full of fresh insights and interpretations regarding the development of Latvian identity and statehood.

The first chapter by Catherine Gibson is the only one that deals directly with the formation of Latvian national identity in late nineteenth century Russia. In "Mapping *Latwija*," Gibson shows how an administratively divided Latvian region came to imagine itself as constituting a coherent geographic territory. She focuses on the life and work of Matiss Siliņš, a publisher of maps that were intended to instill a sense of Latvian national consciousness by including the place names in Latvian and by clearly demarcating the boundaries of the area inhabited by Latvian speakers.