starting research project and therefore we can look forward to a detailed study which could help the broader public to be better oriented with the rather confusing information about the Zapatista movement which is now available.

The Chiapas Zapatistas are also the topic of the final text of the monograph, written by Petra Binková. However, she researches them from another point of view than Kuřík. She is interested in visual representations, mostly *murals*, which fill public space of Chiapas villages, squares, houses, walls, etc. Binková differentiates two aspects of art in public space – she distinguishes between the rather traditional aspect and the one that expresses the political opinions of its creators. After that she analyses the understanding of public space on a theoretical level and concludes that Zapatista murals correspond to Habermas' concept of *public sphere*, representing rather a virtual or imaginary community which does not have to exist in defined, delimited space. The manifestations of Zapatista muralists instead of supporting their own identity, i.e., aiming at least at regional ethnic coherence, have so far the rather opposite effect: the discussion of the conflict in Chiapas is led mainly outside the Zapatista autonomous zone and the dichotomy inside the zone deepens because many of its inhabitants for different reasons refuse the Zapatista ideology or do not much identify with it.

As was already said in the introduction of this review, this monograph is probably the first attempt to present some problems of forming the "new" ethnicity of well-known Mexican Indian groups. All the authors did a lot of fieldwork or (as in the case of M. Křížová) do long-term research in archives and try to enrich the never-ending flux of debates on this topic which are led not only in Mexico but also in many other countries. It is good that Czech and Slovak Mexico studies, some of whose representatives published parts of their long-term research here, do not stay behind in the trend.

Marek Halbich

Victoria Pitts: IN THE FLESH: THE CULTURAL POLITICS OF BODY MODIFICATION.

New York: Palgrave Macmillan Press 2003, 239 pp.[1]

Victoria Pitts-Taylor, Professor of Sociology at Queens College of the City University of New York, is one of the most prominent scholars interested in the issue of the body and body modifications. In 1999 she was one of the authors of a monothematic issue of the journal Body and Society devoted to body modifications, alongside Christian Klesse, Bryan S. Turner, Paul Sweetman and Sheila Jeffreys; it was later published as the anthology *Body Modifications* edited by Mike Featherstone.

In her book *In the Flesh: The Cultural Politics of Body Modification* she addresses the issue of non-mainstream body modifications and the agency and power relations that shape them.

The term body modifications usually mean alterations of the human body for non-medical reasons. In its broad-

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est sense it consists of such practices as dieting, body building, plastic surgery or breast implants. But more often it is used in its narrower sense for body piercing, tattooing, scarification, branding, incisions, sub-dermal implantations and similar practices.

Although body modifications are considered cultural universals, in their narrower sense they were long condemned in Western society. Since colonialism, modified bodies of the Others were perceived by Westerners as a sign of their inferiority and primitivism. The most established form of body modification in the West, tattooing, was associated with the working class and thus perceived as marginal, even deviant and pathological. A rise of interest in body modification comes with some subcultures of the 1960s and 1970s, BDSM, punks and later modern primitives. Mainstream interest comes with the so-called *Tattoo Renaissance* in the 1990s that resulted in the constitution of the body modification movement or subculture, which is the main topic of this book.

In her research Pitts focused on "people who define themselves as body modifiers" (p. 20). From 1996 to 2000 she conducted 20 interviews with a diverse sample of people constructed by the snowball method, ranging from ages 20 to 53, a "mostly white, adult, gay-friendly, middle-class, New Age, pro-sex, educated, and politically articulate group" (p. 20). In addition she studied corresponding subcultural texts (mostly magazines and websites) and representations of body modifications in cyberspace (especially *Body Modification Ezine*). She also analyzed articles on body modification in 12 major newspapers over the years 1995–2000.

In her analysis she embraces a post-essentialist perspective according to which the body is always "culturally shaped and socially ordered" (p. 26). Drawing from both post-modernism and post-structural feminism she attends "to questions of self-definition, to the powerful forces that may territorialize and reterritorialize the body, and also to the historicity of the social and material technologies used in body projects." (p. 48).

In order to find out "how radical body art practices reflect, consciously and otherwise, the social and political locations of individual bodies in the larger power relations of society" (p. 14), she concentrates on body modifications of women, gays, modern primitives and cyberpunks.

Chapter 2 deals with women body modifiers, many of whom perceive body modification as a way to reclaim their bodies, especially after sexual or physical abuse. Pitts sets their assertion into a discussion of radical and pro-sex feminists which evolves around the issue of whether women body modifications internalize patriarchal hatred of the female body or whether they reclaim female sexuality and desire. While generally supporting the later position, Pitts strongly reminds us of intersubjectivity of meanings which somehow limits its inscription.

In Chapter 3 Pitts shows how queers use body modifications for "visibly queering" by "inscribing the body with badges celebrating prohibited pleasures and identities" (p. 114). The queer body is used as a "space of rebellion and self-actualization" (p. 114) and "body technologies as potential practices of agency" (p. 114).

Just as women body modifications contest patriarchy, queer body modifications contest heteronormativity.

While Pitts seems to be pro-woman and pro-queer, in Chapter 4 she provides a radical critique of modern primitivism. Modern primitives are body modifiers who simulate body modification practices of indigenous cultures (e.g., Plaino Indians *Sun Dance*, Mandan *Okipa* or Tamil Hindu *Kavadi*) in a romanticized attempt "to rescue the body and self from the problems of the modern world" (p. 3). Pitt's critique of modern primitivism concerns the problem of appropriation of non-Western practices, but also the reproduction of racist and colonial discourse and fetishization of the Other by "project[ing] white Western desires onto the bodies of non-Westerners" (p. 137). Moreover she shows that modern primitivism implicates not just in subculture, but also in pop culture and high culture.

Chapter 5 addresses the last of the presented perspectives on body modification, that of cyberpunks. While modern primitives gain their inspiration from indigenous cultures, cyberpunks find it in science fiction. Influenced by the work of William Gibson, they see body modifications as a "post human experiment" (p. 153). Through denaturalization of the body they aim for "hybridity of humans and machines" (p. 152) resulting in the cyborgian body. Pitts further discusses Orlan and Stelarc, body artists using high technology in their performances, and also cyber communities of body modifiers, such as *Body Modification Ezine*.

One of the main strengths of this book lies in its theoretical richness. While primarily grounded in post-modernism and post-structural feminism, Pitts draws on many other paradigm including cultural studies, radical feminism, the queer theory, etc. But the author's high theoretical competence might be the reason why the "voice of the people," their informants' perspective, is somehow limited. Personal narratives present in chapters of women and queer body modifiers are missing in accounts of modern primitives and cyberpunks. Limited seems to be also the usage of analyzed newspapers, which Pitts used only to claim "that body modification has been framed in public discourse as a social problem" (p. 21). Although it might be the most usual representation of body modifications and body modifiers, as she states, it is certainly not the only one present.

Another point I would like to address is the ambiguity of the central term, nonmainstream body modifications. In a number of instances, Pitts used this term in contrast to mainstream body modifications, although she did not explicitly define it anywhere. This becomes important especially in regard to body piercing and tattooing and their increasing acceptance in the mainstream. Although it might be intentional that author did not want to draw a clear line between these two, in some instances it creates doubts and uncertainty about what kind of body modifications are addressed.

I would also welcome more detailed descriptions of each scene, even though this book is not an ethnography. It would not only help those readers unfamiliar with these groups to gain more understanding but it would also bring the issues depicted more to life.

In the Flesh: The Cultural Politics of Body Modification gives an account of four different parts of the body modification movement and their perspective on body modifications. While doing so, it clearly shows not just that body modifications have the potential to be subversive or transgressive and that the body is a place of both resistance and power, but particularly "how the Western flexible body, or the body-seen-as-project, (...) is saturated with political meanings and is symbolically, culturally and even materially stratified" (p. 197). I recommend this book to anyone interested in issues involving the body, body modifications and body politics.

Martin Heřmanský

Thomas Turino: MUSIC AS SOCIAL LIFE: THE POLITICS OF PARTICIPATION.

The University of Chicago Press
2008, 258 pp. + CD.

After Thomas Turino, professor of ethnomusicology at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign (IL), had thoroughly studied two different cultures, that of the Peruvian Conima (*Moving Away from Silence: Music of the Peruvian Altiplano and the Experience of Urban Migration*, 1993), and the Shona of Zimbabwe (*Nationalists, Cosmopolitans, and Popular Music in Zimbabwe*, 2000), this time he worked on theoretical soil, understandably in the sphere of theory, nearer rather to the social sciences than to classical musicology. This has to do with the prevailing affiliation of American ethnomusicology (alias musical anthropology) to anthropology. His initial understanding of music continues along the line of, e.g., Small's book *Musicking* (1998). In sum: music is not a "thing"; it is not primarily "sound structure"; it is an activity which not only sounds different in different cultures, but also has very different meanings and represents very different values. The only thing that these various musics have in common is the very fact that people "make" them. Turino considers the main sense of the very existence of music to be an expression and reinforcement of individuals, and mainly of collective identities: *Music and dance are key to identity formation because they are often public presentations of the deepest feelings and qualities that make a group unique* (p. 2), that are decisive for survival.

For an explanation of how music functions for the integration of the individual, he uses Bateson's concept (the connection of stimuli from the unconscious in the primary process), and Csikszenmihalyi's concept of "flow"– a transcendental experience of heightened concentration which a person reaches, e.g., through the performance of music.

However, Turino pays greatest attention to the effect of music on the human collective. His basic approach is semiotic: he earlier adapted Peirce's doctrine to musical material ("Signs of Imagination, Identity, and Experience: A Peircian Semiotic Theory for Music," *Ethnomusicology* Spring/Summer 1999, 221–255) and here he repeats it in simplified form. Afterwards (in the second and third chapters) he presents his own typology of existences/modes of music: "participatory" and "presentational" performance