

Mesmo assim, é um livro recomendável na medida em que expressa as idéias de um pensador instigante e que nos desafia a questionarmos aqueles que nos querem fazer crer num marxismo que seria “propriedade privada” de alguns iluminados oniscientes.

**Jorge Ventura de Morais**  
Mestrando em Sociologia  
da Universidade Federal de Pernambuco

**ROTTER, Frank.** *Musik als kommunikationsmedium, Soziologische Medientheorien und Musiksoziologie.* Berlin - München, Duncker & Humblot, 1985, 145 pages. DM 48.

This book is divided into two main parts. The first concerns the sociological theory of media and the social psychology of music. The second part covers the comprehension of music in the theory of media and music as communication.

Rotter's personal experience regarding music includes not only theoretical activity but also collaboration with an experiment organized by Rudolf Heinz in Wuppertal in 1976 on the psychoanalytic musical interpretation in the group (p. 6). Furthermore, Rotter's theoretical approach remains open to recent empirical research done by others (for instance, pp. 69-70).

In the first part of the work, the functional-theoretical sociological approaches of Parsons, Baum and Luhmann are critically discussed – including, in connection with Parsons, the problem of “music as merchandise” and, in connection with Luhmann, the problem of “money and art”. Rotter's essay tries to correct the social-functional theories of media which favors unilaterally, according to him, media as money and power/law, with only a marginal reference to music. To the social-functional criteria he adds personal-functional ones, which concern communication media and music specifically treated as a communication medium (pp. 5, 6, 9).

Rotter studies music as expressive symbolization, as social-psychological concretizations, as acoustic fetish, music and schizophrenia. He also advances (pp. 69-76) the preliminary answers to the relevant problems of his book.

For example, according to Rotter, music guarantees a plus in experience possibilities by combining regressively the status of small child and the status of adult and corresponds, as an acoustic fetish, to a basic necessity which is disconnected from the mother but remains related primarily and symbiotically to her – in a simulated near-to-the-mother auditive world. Music combines impersonality and feeling of proximity and “regulates” fear (pp. 70 and 71).

Rotter stresses the mother-child dyad, which is experienced by the child initially in a not differentiated way as an “I-world” unity (pp. 124-125). The reactively simulated near-to-the-mother auditive world appears not only as a pattern of regression, but also as a pattern of integration (p. 125). In relation to the extended necessity of music in our society, one might suppose that music, as

personal integrative experience, helps to compensate hyperdifferentiation in modern society (p. 126).

The second part of the book discusses: music's communicative particularities, theory of information and music, several topics on sociology of music, music therapy, and finally a broad perspective on music and action.

Rotter states that music as a means of communication "allows, even in conditions of mass communication, the personal centralization ('die Persozentriertheit') of the musical experience; this personal-functional structural particularity is fundamental to the societal signification of the medium 'music', seen as societal diffusion of music listening" (p. 113). It is especially clear that identical musical offerings are experienced inter and intraindividually in a different way, without this appearing as problematical in the societal reality (p. 113).

Rotter's essay is particularly important first of all because it contributes directly to subtract music from a marginal treatment in sociology; and also (and not the least) because its general theoretical approach combines both a societal and an affective perspective about music. Thus, perspectives that are attributed conventionally and respectively to sociology and to social psychology are put together by Rotter (pp. 5, 43-44 ff.) as it behooves a general social theory.

We say "conventionally" because, in theoretical terms, there seems to be no difference between sociology and social psychology (expressly and unsuspectably in this sense, Durkheim, *Sociologie et Philosophie*, Paris, Alcan, 1924, p. 47, *Le Suicide*, Paris, PUF, 1960, p. 352). Moreover, there seems to be no acute methodological difference between the macro and the microsocial, as macrogroups are in reality, from the point of view of their relations with the interacting organic mind, only one or more than one other organic minds which are the representatives of the macrogrupal patterns and act as such.

In fact, and this harmonizes with Rotter's previous books, there is no social without the affective, and conversely: the social is an exteriorized resultant of interactive mental poles (where the affective is) and influences, in turn, mental reality.

On the other hand, Rotter's essay is not confined to an empirical sociology of music, it also compares fruitfully the sociology of music and a psychonalitic-psychiatric perspective. In addition he considers contemporary social French philosophy as well that of Adorno concerning music. Finally, intellectual problems close to the praxis, such as socialistic realism and music, feminism and music, are regarded.

The specific personal-functional meaning of music is stressed by Rotter. In his thought, instead of a mere and usual combination of marxism and psychoanalysis, there is a combination of sociological systemic theory (Luhmann) and psychoanalysis – which at the same time avoids further the sociologism of not considering the personal-functional.

In fact, for Rotter there exists a pronounced asymmetry between social and personal systems: the socially functional does not necessarily fit with the satisfaction of personal necessities and personal preference, with neurotic consequences for the members of society.

Thus, as in previous works by Rotter, to which he expressly refers (p. 5), an integrated sociologically psychological investigation is attempted, based on the interdependence and interpenetration of the social and psychic systems. Rotter includes a psychological systemic theory as an addition to an uniquely sociological systemic theory. To him the personal-functional criteria of rationality should be the pattern of social evolution.

In Rotter's general perspective the smallest possible parcelling of sympathy and a primary socialization tendentially directed to affective development are important. This does not occur in the frame of the present form of bourgeois publicity: particular interests of a minority dominate primary socialization which is not applied to the primacy of personal development, but which leads to a high concentration of productive goods in connection with the economy's orientation towards capital. Rotter opposes expressly the universality of personal development and particular interests.

To him the greatest possible chances for personal development imply the greatest possible chances of change, since the individual is social and society is of a psychic nature (*lato sensu*). Our present values would be historically determined by the evaluative variable of the greatest possible human development.

This integrative sociological-psychological perspective seems in fact highly rational and not rationally censurable in their fundamental traits, since in concrete empirical terms only such primacy of personal development makes sense, for social groups do not exist corporally, but only, basically, as patterns shared by persons.

Rotter's stressing of the affective component of man – not merely in his sociology of music, but also in others studies written by him – is not only a partly psychological approach, but may be considered a genuine sociological approach as well: without confusing the mental and the social, it could be said that the social, since it is not the corporeal, cannot be nothing else but the (externalized) intermental and in this way is unintelligible without the mental – and conversely.

If sociology is theoretically unintelligible without the mental (in different forms such is the teaching of Durkheim, Weber, Marx, Simmel and other classical authors), this rings particularly true in relation to a sociology of music, which cannot avoid being above all a sociology of the affective. Emphasizing creatively and with up-to-date information such a neglected but basic theoretical point, Rotter's book is extremely modern and important.

**Cláudio Souto**  
Professor do Mestrado de Sociologia  
da Universidade Federal de Pernambuco