

*International Community Power Structures: Comparative Studies of Four World Cities.* By DELBERT C. MILLER. Bloomington, 1970. Indiana University Press. Tables. Figures. Notes. Index. Pp. xx, 320. \$11.50.

This new book by Miller expands and elaborates further in a research area that he, along with a few others, has helped to establish. Again the basic approach remains essentially the same, based on the reputational method for discovering the powerful, and on a model of community power structure that he earlier developed jointly with William H. Form for analyzing the network of relationships among power segments. Of crucial interest this time is the expansion of such an approach to four world communities: Seattle, Bristol, Córdoba, and Lima. Moreover, the cross-cultural study of these communities, requiring the analysis of differences in cultural configurations, and in social, economic, and historical traditions, led the author into research avenues little considered before. All together it is a major study, one that will provoke much consideration and discussion among specialists, one moreover that exemplifies a type of scholarship and scientific dedication quite remarkable for these days of passing fashions for it is an effort of 15 years of continuing research.

But, with all these positive attributes indicated, one must at least mention some of the essential problems with the study. Miller's conceptualization of the research area may help to introduce some of the problems. "Community power structure research seeks those aspects of social structure which are relatively stable and exhibit recurring regularities in community decision making." The focus on stable and recurring regularities of course minimizes the possibility of directing attention to social contexts in rapid transformation and thus places outside the research area one of the most crucial problems for analysis, that is, how power structures are transformed. It emphasizes, and is particularly adequate to deal with social contexts in which there is a substantial stability of the existing social system. Thus, the apparent dynamics of the process of decision making just covers the more static and resilient power structure.

The later part of Miller's formulation, focusing on "community decision making" also raises problems, some of them well felt by the author in this book. It implies at least a conceptualization of power structure that: (1) conceives of the *local* power structure as that of crucial importance; (2) views *power processes* as a type of *community process*, that is, closer to the democratic, plural participation model; and (3) generally implies, in connection with the research methodol-

ogy of reputational approach, a conception of the power structure at the community level as a power arena in which actors as single units struggle and exhibit power. Such conceptualization, probably highly pertinent for the context of Miller's first study (Seattle in the 1950s), clearly presented problems in the continuation and expansion of the research to the other world cities. Although Miller indicates that all the four cities have a power structure tending toward the 'cone' or 'trunked pyramid' type, the conceptualization of community has to be extended in order to work in a context where there is a higher degree of class stratification or where local and national 'communities' overlap as in Lima. Moreover, when dealing with situations expressive of the pluralistic model, decision making does have a community wide network; whereas in more stratified contexts it is closely linked to one segment of the social structure. Such a situation is of particular importance when the analysis of power is focused on decision making around community issues. In a highly stratified context these may deflate the studies of power structure to the ephemeral, since these can be used, intentionally or otherwise, for distracting purposes; e.g., the alleged recent focus on pollution to distract attention from more fundamental issues such as war, the existing political process, or the urban ghettos. Finally, the 'atomic' view of the power structure, leading to individualization of power (and thus the reason for the reputational method used), proved to be the most problematic in cross cultural research since it did not tap power segments such as the military and the church that usually express group instead of personalized power.

A final critical issue deals with the process of interpretation in such cross cultural research. Miller was most clear in his indication that in such research the process of explanation could not be confined to the parameters of his research design, but had to appeal to cultural, socio-economic, and historical analysis. It is unfortunate that such and similar central issues, were not discussed more at length.

To conclude, in spite of such criticisms, Miller's contribution is one that must and will certainly be taken into consideration in research on power structures.

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*Tradition and Growth: A Study of Four Mexican Villages.* By MANUEL AVILA. Chicago, 1969. University of Chicago Press. Tables. Appendix. Index. Pp. xv, 219. \$10.75.

This study is interestingly conceived. The author, an economist,