

# Was Tocqueville Wrong?

Charisma, creativity, and glamour as  
new sources of political legitimacy

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# The argument

- Political legitimacy can be attained by other means than voting or citizen participation;
- Emergent forms of legitimacy: charisma and individualistic self-expression

# The background

- 1) New Political Culture
- 2) New Chicago School
- 3) The concept of “scene”
- 4) “Theory of scenes” comprehends several dimensions, including legitimacy

# The strategy

- Tocqueville/Putnam model: voting and participation promotes political legitimacy
- Drawback: cultural insularization
- Alternative: Add concrete, successful cases of new modes of securing political legitimacy other than voting or citizen participation

# Concrete examples

## The LA case

- The “crisis” of governance in LA today concerns legitimacy;
- In 2000, a national survey of citizen participation showed LA citizens to be on many measures the most alienated, individualist, non-participatory, fearful, and untrusting set of persons surveyed in any major US city.

# The LA case

- FAUI finding: California for much of the twentieth century was the outlier, if one took a global perspective.
- Since 2000, California is being forced to confront many of the same deep problems that citizens and leaders are fighting over in Taipei, Mexico City, Cairo, and Bogotá.

# Other examples

- Bogotá, Naples, Chicago.
- Mayors here, especially Bogotá, turned Putnam's Tocquevillian logic on its head: Instead of conceiving of good government as the product of civicness, Mockus's innovative "Civic Culture Program" demonstrated that civicness could actually be a product of good government.



Mayor Mockus as  
“Super Citizen”

# Policies:

- 1) Traffic-directing mimes
- The original introduction of nearly 500 mimes to recall citizens of traffic rules. By “interrupting” bad old habits, the traffic-directing mimes achieved in a few months what decades of conventional law enforcement had failed to achieve: it reintroduced citizens to traffic rules by confronting them with an unexpected, artistic event.



Result: 50% decrease in traffic accidents in less than 10 years.

- 2) “Women’s Night Out”
- This government-decreed voluntary curfew for men was meant to articulate the gender biases underlying violent criminality. It basically encouraged women to go out at night, and discouraged men from doing so in those particular nights.



Result: Police statistics show that *no* homicides took place during those “Women’s Night Out”.

- 1st Conclusion:
- Growing demand for more individualistic, charismatic, and creative forms of legitimacy, at least in some locations, and scenes.
- There are many roads leading to political legitimacy, and the Tocqueville/Putnam one is no more than that – one among others.

## *Cross-National Hypotheses and Results*

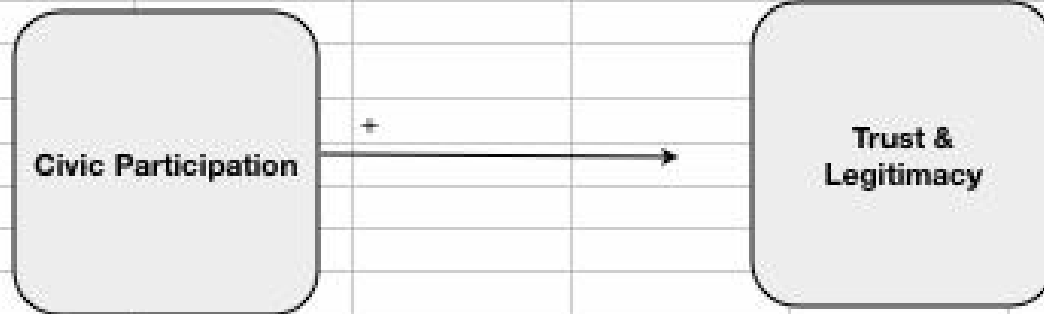
- Model 1: more participation of citizens increases trust, and feelings of support and legitimacy about the political system. US and Europe exemplify this.
- Model 2: civic participation and trust and legitimacy are low in most Latin American countries. Basically, the opposite of 1, hence same causal dynamics of Tocqueville-Putnam model.

- But if we shift to certain Asian countries, the quasi-determinism of Models 1 and 2 is called into question:
- Civic participation in Japan is low. But contradicting Models 1 and 2, in Japan trust and legitimacy are roughly similar to Western Europe and the US.
- Model 3: positive relation between non-civic variables may substitute for the civic participation.

### Models 1 and 2

N W Europe High on both variables

Latin Am Low on Both



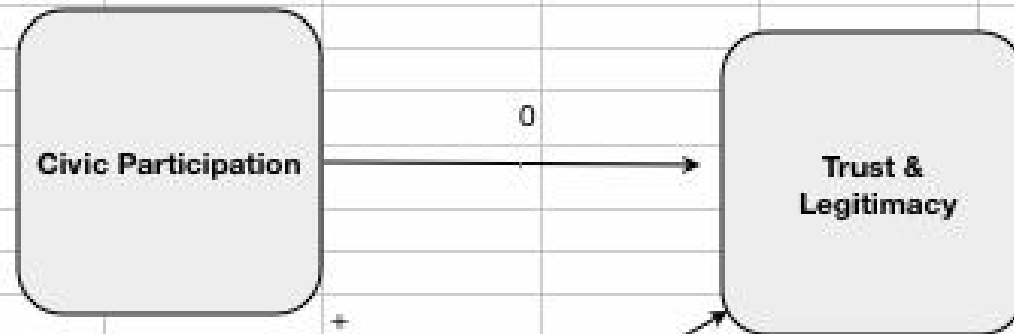
### Model 3, maybe 4?

Asian cases low on

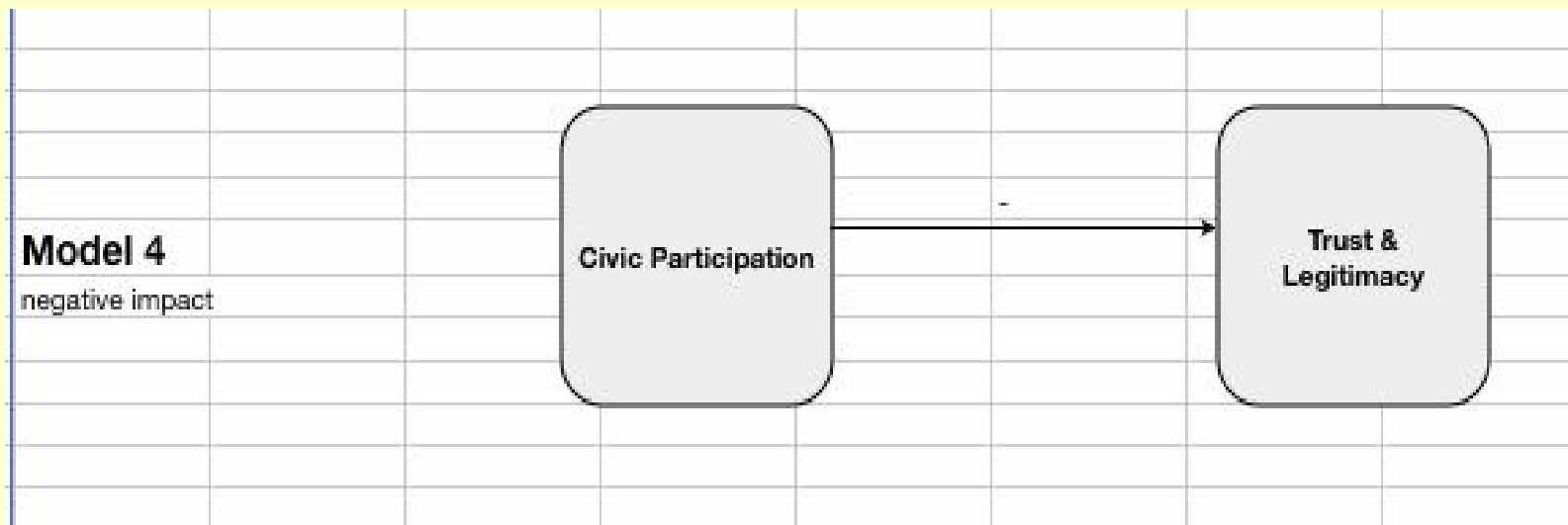
Civic Participation

But high on Trust

Yet they may vary on causes of trust



- Kim (2008): In many countries, civic participation *reduces* trust and support for the political system.
- Model 4: negative impacts of civic participation in both measures (civic virtue and trust). Portugal, Poland, Austria, etc.



**<Table 5> A List of ISSP Countries by Capacity of Voluntary Associations to Develop Civic Resources**

		Civic Virtue	
		Significant	Insignificant
<b>Trust</b>	Significant	<b>Group I</b> US, Australia, Canada, Chile, Finland, France, Germany, Japan, Latvia, Norway, Spain, Switzerland, Uruguay, Venezuela	<b>Group II</b> Czech Republic, Ireland, Poland, Slovak Republic, Sweden
	Insignificant	<b>Group III</b> Bulgaria, Great Britain, Flanders, Israel, Netherlands, New Zealand, Taiwan	<b>Group IV</b> Korea, Austria, Brazil <sup>f</sup> , Cyprus, Hungary, Philippines, Poland, Portugal <sup>tt</sup> , Russia, Slovenia

*f Associational membership significantly and negatively affects social trust*

*tt Associational membership significantly and negatively affects civic virtue*

From: S. Kim (2008)

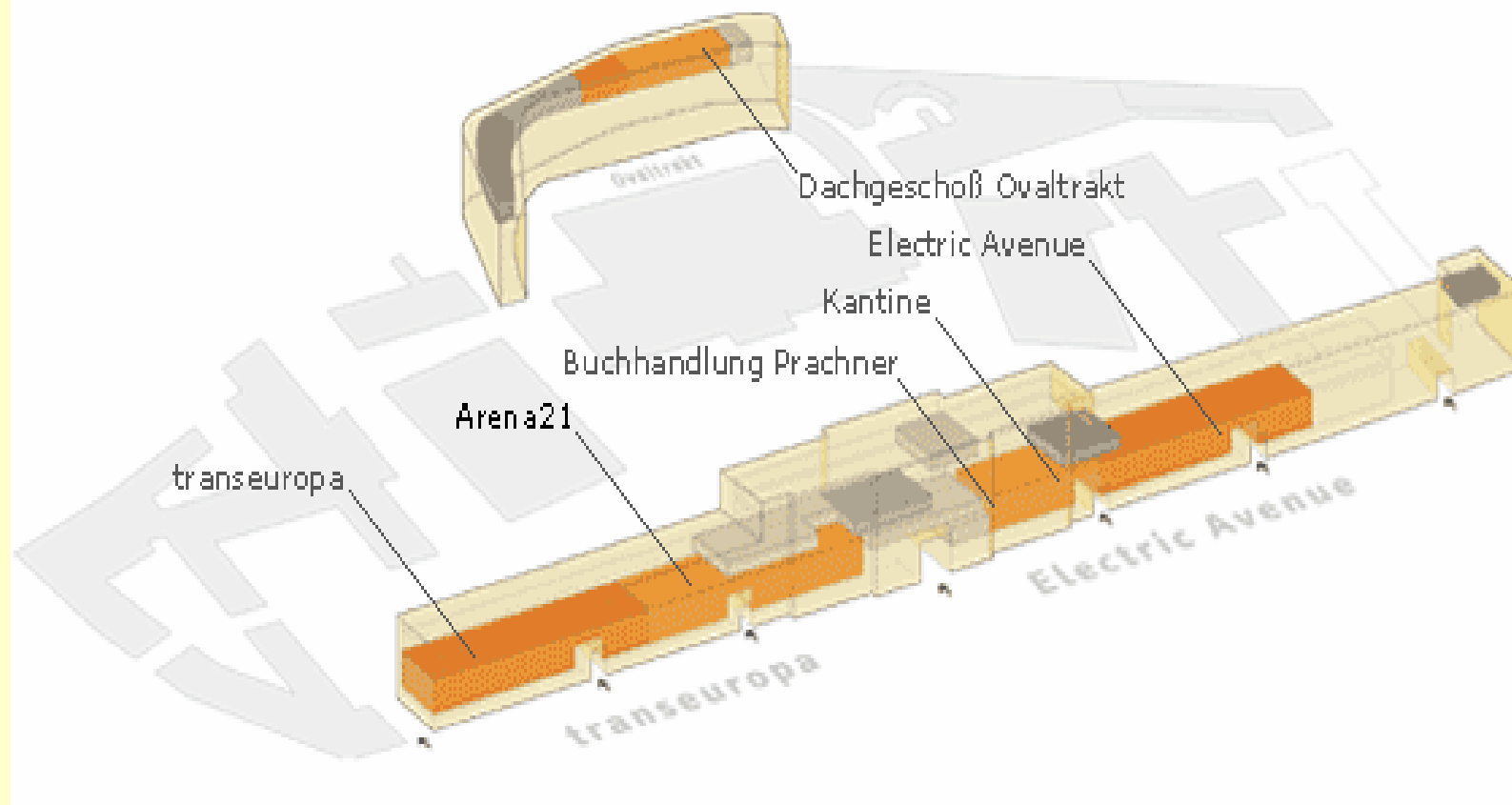
- Conclusion:
- Cultural content matters, and varies by context.
- Charisma and individualistic self-expression are alternative mechanisms which may successfully engage citizens with their political systems, in addition to voting and civic participation, as stressed by the Tocqueville/Putnam tradition.
- E.g. arts and entertainment: fruition of amenities is a powerful form of civic engagement.



- *Gasometer City*, Vienna, inaugurated in 2001

Mixed-use building: 24 hours occupancy and activity in the gasometers with inhabitants working, living, and entertaining.

## → Architektur - quartier21



*MuseumsQuartier, Vienna*

Also inaugurated in 2001, covers 60 hectares – one of the 10 largest in the world

