



**Panel Discussion:
Migration and Labor Markets:
What can Europe and Japan learn from each
other's experience?**

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Migration and labor markets: What can Japan and Europe can learn....



1. From one another

- Japan and Europe are arguably very different wrt migration: this holds for emigration (historically) and immigration (contemporarily): open v. close, diverse v. homogenous, regional v. distant immigration
- Is Japan committing demographic suicide and Europe cultural suicide? The robot-immigrant trade off.

2. From 50 years of immigration economics research

- Immigration and labor market outcomes: “much ado about nothing”
- Across skill-cells complementarities (different skill structures): “foreigners take the jobs that natives don’t want”
- Within skill-cells complementarities: the productivity benefits from *birthplace* diversity, especially for high-skill workers
- Growth impacts of immigration on innovation, productivity, integration to the global economy

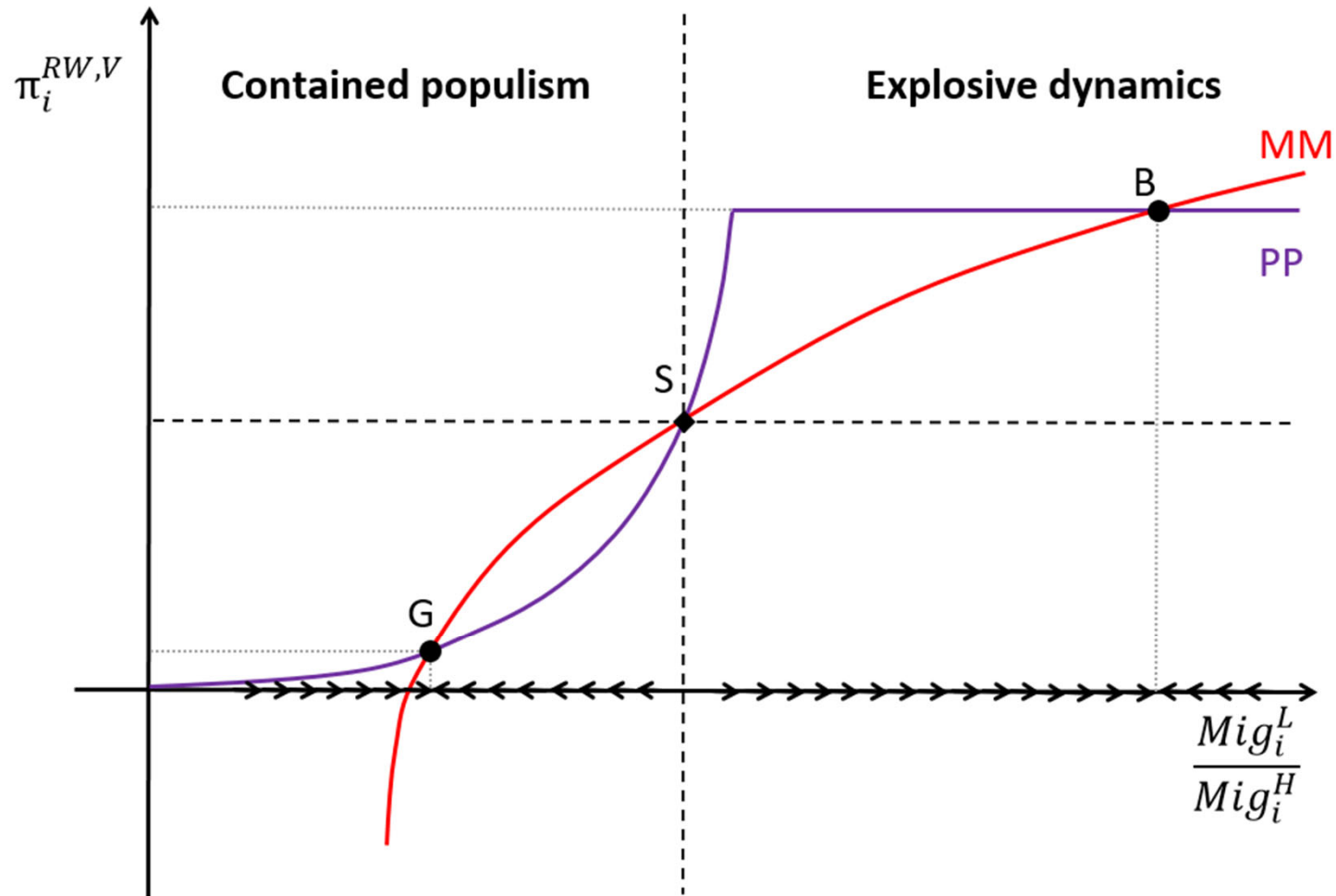


Two challenges for Japan

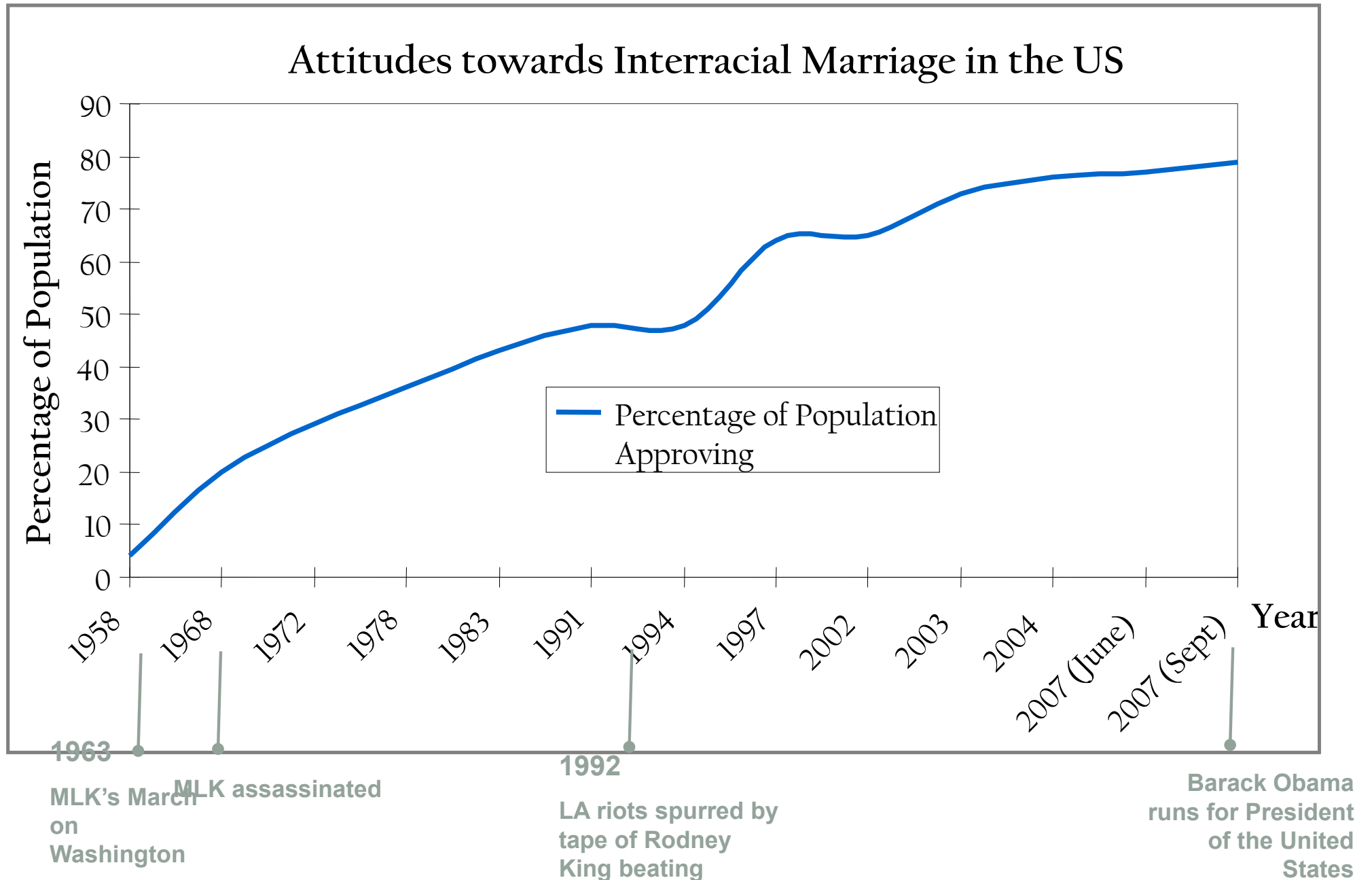
1. How to attract a diverse, skilled foreign labor, which is essential to long-term growth
 - Offer long-term integration prospects, including citizenship
 - Promote openness to diversity, including for low-skill immigration (you can't be xenophobic and attractive at the same time – the “vicious circle of xenophobia”)
2. Temporary v. permanent migration
 - All policy analyses I have seen (e.g., at the TRIO conference, in the press, official reports) are about guest-workers, not about long-term integration.
 - “We got workers and got people instead” (Max Frisch, 1965).
 - Accommodating a large foreign and diverse population involves cultural change – can that happen?

The Vicious Circle of Xenophobia

(Docquier & Rapoport, Economic Policy, 2025)



And cultural change takes time... but can be complete



How is Japan doing on the xenophobia front?



- https://www.lemonde.fr/en/international/article/2025/09/21/japan-faces-a-rising-wave-of-xenophobia_6745598_4.html
- <https://www.nippon.com/en/in-depth/d01220/>

How can this be improved?

Very partial answer from our morning presentations on informational treatments' effects on public views on immigration, with all the limits and caveats this entails (as nicely put forth by Professor Toshiro Obuko from Keio University and RIETI)

Conclusion



in Brezis, E.S. and P. Temin. 1999. *Elites, Minorities and Economic Growth*, North-Holland, Elsevier.

CHAPTER 8

DON'T BEAT UP THE LITTLE GUYS

David S. Landes

Harvard University

Those who write about persecution and discrimination, whether ethnic, religious, class, or sexual (gender), are usually and rightly concerned with the negative effects on the victims. Insofar as such oppression deprives the oppressed of opportunity to work and earn, there is an obvious cost to the economy. Much less noted, perhaps because less obvious, is the cost to the oppressors.

Yet history abounds in examples. One of the best, because of its importance and the persistence of negative consequences is the Spanish persecution, first of Jews, then of Moors and Protestants, from the fourteenth century on. The story of these wicked (I use the word advisedly) campaigns, particularly the first, is well known. The Spanish, in the course of centuries of intermittent external crusade against the Muslims, pursued comparable internal measures against the outsiders in their midst -- the Jews to begin with, because they refused to adopt the true faith, because they tempted and seduced those of their former co-religionists who had accepted Christianity, because their very presence contaminated. Even where local Christian rulers chose to protect their Jewish subjects for good economic reasons, popular uprisings, often fomented by Christian dogmatics and fanatics (what we would now call pogroms), could force the ruler's hand, the more so as the growing number of (forced) converts raised the stakes of salvation.



Thank you for your attention!

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