

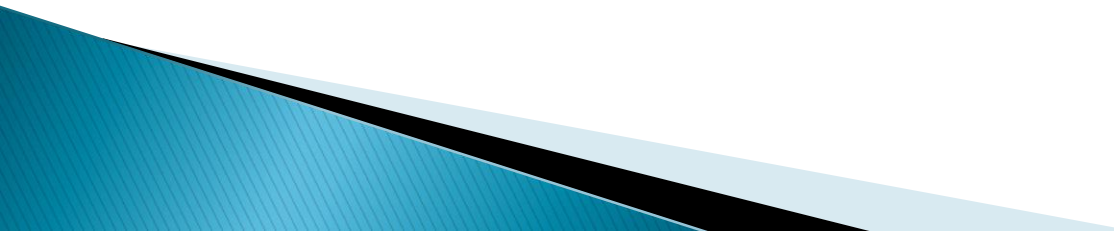
The African Presence and the Nation–Immigration Dialectic in Canada

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Main Objectives

- ▶ Examine the nation–immigration dialectic in Canada, and show how Africans are involved in the process.

Key Questions

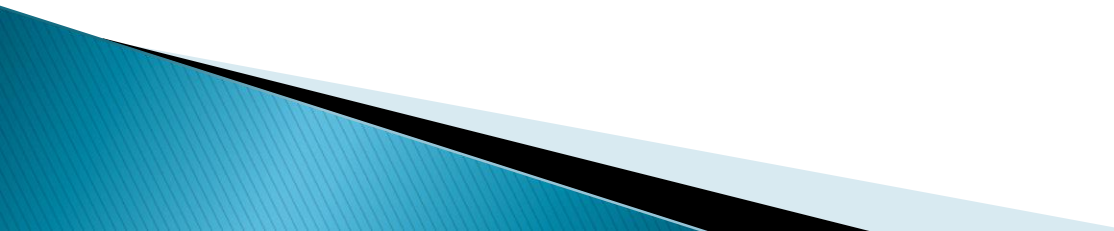
- ▶ What is dialectics, what are its principles?
 - ▶ What is identity (individual, group, national)?
 - ▶ What is the nation–immigration dialectic?
 - ▶ What constitutes the Canadian national identity?
 - ▶ How is the Canadian national identity formation influenced by the African presence.
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The Nature of Dialectics

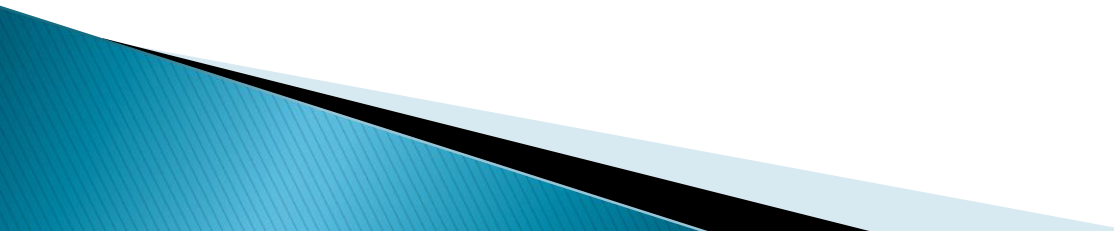
- ▶ Socrates in Plato's dialogue:
 - *Crito*,
 - *Meno*,
 - *Protagoras* etc.

- ▶ Popularized by:
 - Kant,
 - Fichte,
 - Hegel,
 - Marx

Dialectics: Defined

- ▶ The triad: *thesis–antithesis–synthesis*
(Heinrich Moritz Chalybäus: 1796–1862)
 - ▶ Reciprocity between seemingly unrelated things;
 - ▶ Concurrence of two contradictory positions;
 - ▶ Logic of Contradiction;
 - ▶ Preserves the dynamic co–existence of binary opposites:
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Binary Opposites

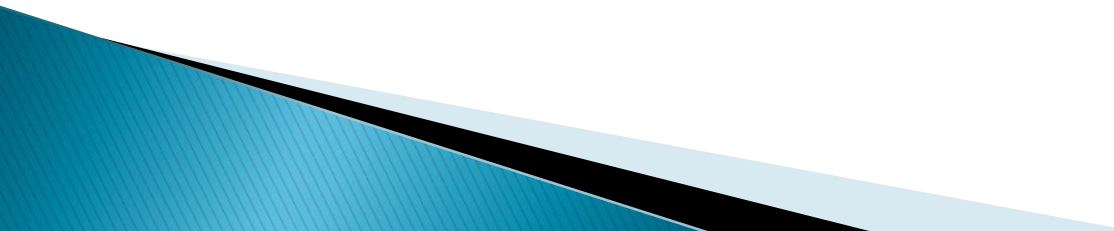
- ▶ Birth/Death
 - ▶ Positive/Negative
 - ▶ Man/Woman
 - ▶ Being/Nothingness
 - ▶ Master/Slave
 - ▶ White/Black
 - ▶ Light /Darkness
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THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LABOR AND CAPITAL.

Laws of Dialectics

- ▶ 1st : Law of the transformation of quantity to quality.
 - ▶ Societal change is subtle, imperceptible

 - ▶ **Analogies**
 - ▶ Water to ice or to vapour
 - ▶ *The Sorites paradoxes*: Heap of grain, bald head etc.
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2nd: Law of the interpenetration of opposites

- ▶ Social change involves contradictions
 - Involves antagonism and interdependence
 - Unity of opposites
 - Unity in diversity
 - Creative Destruction
- ▶ Contradiction is the source of energy/motion
- ▶ Nature entails coexistence of opposites
- ▶ **Biology:** Male v Female
- ▶ **Magnetism:** North v South poles
- ▶ **Electricity:** Positive v Negative
- ▶ **Mathematics:** Odd v Even Numbers

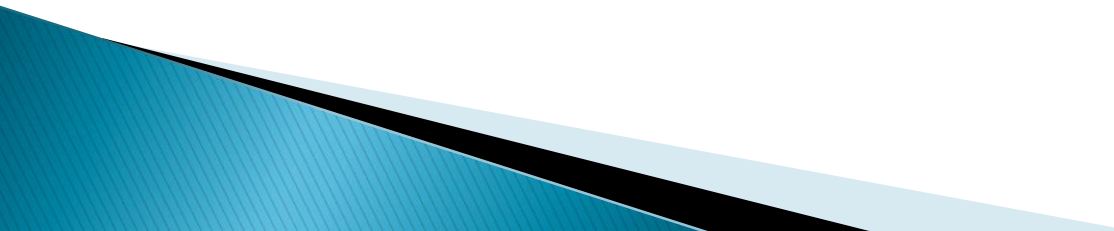
3rd: The Law of the Negation of the Negation (Negation & Sublation)

- ▶ Societal change is non-linear; spiral
- ▶ Entails success & failure simultaneously
- ▶ Rejection & absorption
- ▶ Negation & Sublation
- ▶ **Analogy**
 - Planted grain of corn
 - The life cycle of a butterfly

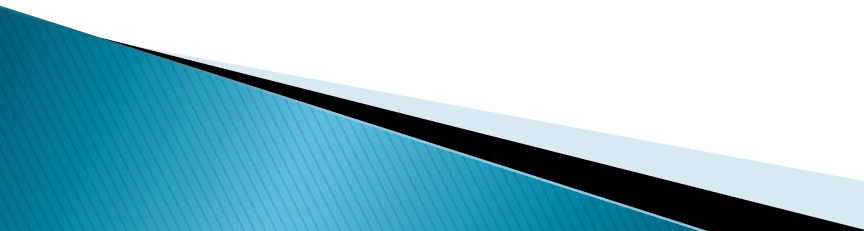
Principles of Dialectics

- ▶ Gives primacy to change, process, flows, fluxes, relations, rather than elements & structures;
 - ▶ “Parts” are in “wholes”; “particulars” in “universals” and *vice versa*;
 - ▶ *Causes* and *effects* are interchangeable
 - ▶ Things are internally heterogeneous and internally contradictory;
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The Nation–Immigration Dialectic

- ▶ Harald Bauder: *Immigration Dialectic* (2011)
 - ▶ Theoretical construct on the intricate, recursive, contradictory links between national identity formation and immigration.
 - ▶ How national identity formation affects immigration policy and *vice versa*.
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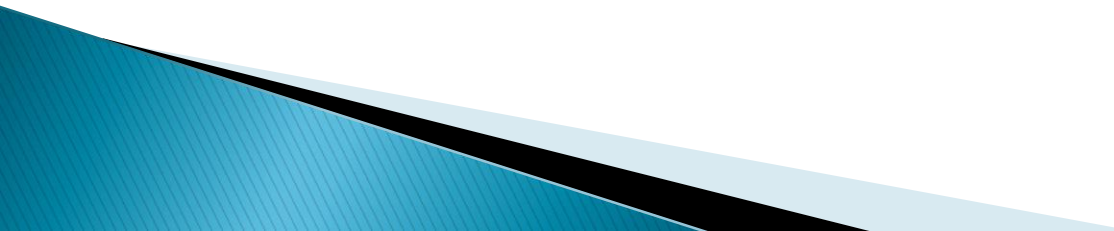
Dialectics: Noteworthy Applications

- ▶ Hegel: *Lordship and Bondage/ Master–Slave*
 - ▶ Nietzsche : *Master–Slave*
 - ▶ Martin Buber: *I and Thou*
 - ▶ De Beauvoir: *The Second Sex*
 - ▶ J. Habermas: *Communicative Rationality* (Dialogue)
 - ▶ U. Beck” Global domestic politics (interpenetration)
 - ▶ Z. Bauman: Liquid modern world (Unstable, ever–changing world)
 - ▶ M. Castells: Spaces of flow (Unstable, ever–changing world)
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Platypus, the Epitome of Dialectics >>

Dialectics of Identity

- ▶ *Identity is* :
 - ▶ Both internal and external
 - ▶ Both individual and collective (group or social)
 - ▶ Both Socially constructed & Deconstructed/Contested
 - ▶ Both a cause (independent variable) and effect (dependent variable)
 - ▶ Both cognitive (identify as) and affective (identity with)
 - ▶ Note: It is unstable, a process in constant flux
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Theorizing the Nation

- ▶ An imagined community which is limited and sovereign.
- ▶ *Imagine*: A member cannot know all co-members
- ▶ *Community*: Fraternity and solidarity
- ▶ *Limited*: Bounded, subset of human population
- ▶ *Sovereign*: Essentially seek to be free
 - --Benedict Anderson

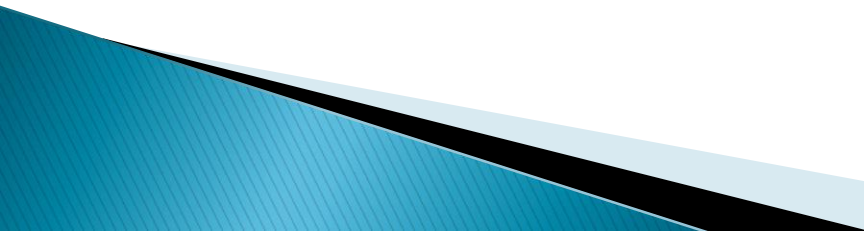
Canadian National Identity

- ▶ Geography: North, Cold, Ice, Lakes, Mts, etc
 - ▶ Developed, Advanced, Western, Northern, OECD
 - ▶ English–French Duality
 - ▶ Essentially Christian, White Society
 - ▶ Liberal Democracy
 - ▶ Law–abiding
 - ▶ Immigrant Nation
 - ▶ Humanitarian
 - ▶ Peace–loving
 - ▶ Hockey–loving
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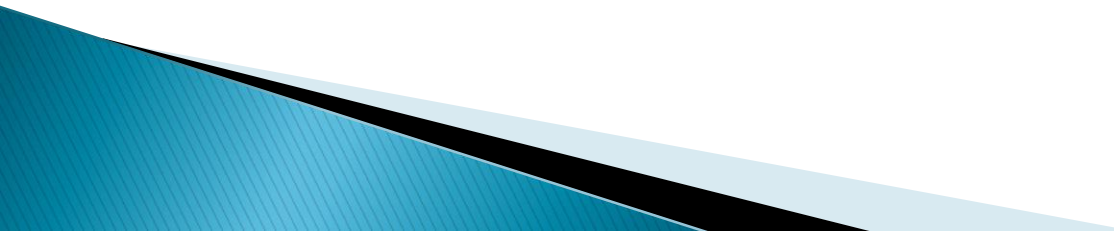
Africans in the Nation–Immigration Dialectic in Canada (Negation)

Sphere	Canadian National Identity	African–Canadian Identity
Cultural	White, European/ Christian/ English & French Multicultural/ Immigrant host nation	Black, African/ Muslim, Ethno– Christian/ Visible minority/ Immigrant, stranger
Socio– Economic	Global north, developed/ Rich/ Capitalist,/ OECD/G8/7	Global Southerner/ Underprivileged/ Poor/ Working–class
Political	Liberal democracy, rule of law/ Peace–loving/ Humanitarian	Corrupt/dictatorial/un lawful, crime–prone/ War–like/ Refugee
Geographic & Others	Cold northern climate. Punctual, mental, un– rhythmic	Hot or warm Tropical. Prone to lateness, physical, rhythmic

Blacks as Binary Opposites of Whites & “Uniqueness Thesis”

- ▶ Somatic difference
 - ▶ Legacy of slavery and attendant stereotypes
 - ▶ Social distance, racial inequality & its (awareness) (Reitz and Banerjee 2009 etc)
 - ▶ *Darker the skin, less you fit*—Lesley Taylor '09
 - ▶ Difference in *essence* versus difference in *degree*
 - ▶ Yet, homogenized into “visible minority”
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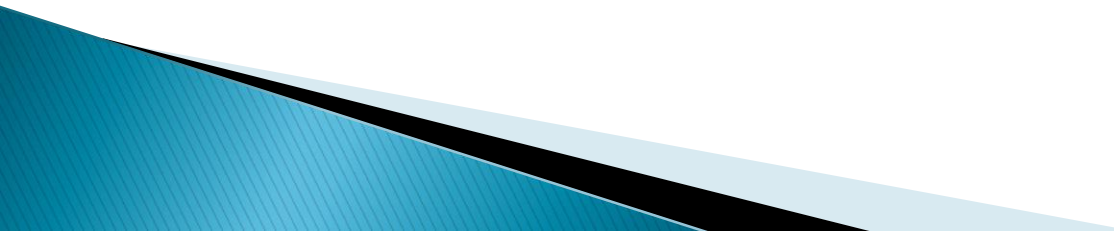
Sublation: 2nd Negation

- ▶ Absorb the immigrant, change her from the *Other* to a member.
 - ▶ Instruments of Absorption: Citizenship ceremonies, Multiculturalism, Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Employment Equity
 - ▶ Absorb immigrants to resolve labour shortages
 - ▶ Solidify class system, vertical mosaic (Africans as proletariat, industrial reserve army).
 - ▶ As strangers to facilitate monetized transactions.
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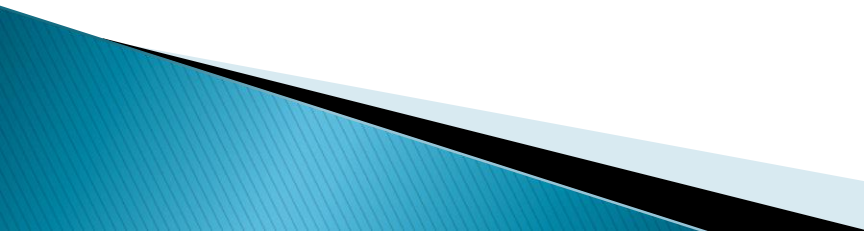
Strangers and Business

- ▶ “Never have any financial dealings with two kinds of people—friends and enemies;...the desirable party..is the person completely indifferent to us, engaged neither for us nor against us (i.e., the stranger).”
- ▶ --Georg Simmel, *The Philosophy of Money* (1900 [1978])


Bringing Race In: *Truncated Sublation*

- ▶ Challenges in stigma avoidance
 - (Anglicization of names; exogamy,
 - denigration of blackness);
 - ▶ Twinning of blackness with criminality, evil;
 - ▶ Recognized mainly Somatic features
 - Stats Canada: Japanese, Chinese, Filipino, Black
 - ▶ No institutional arrangement to right or atone the wrongs of the past.
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Africans and the Canadian Immigration Policy/System

- ▶ Definition of “family “ in family unification
 - ▶ Emphasis on business class, as against refugees
 - ▶ 3rd or Safe Country Clause for Refugees
 - ▶ Airport and immigration officers’ racist screening
 - ▶ African and the global distribution of Canadian visa offices
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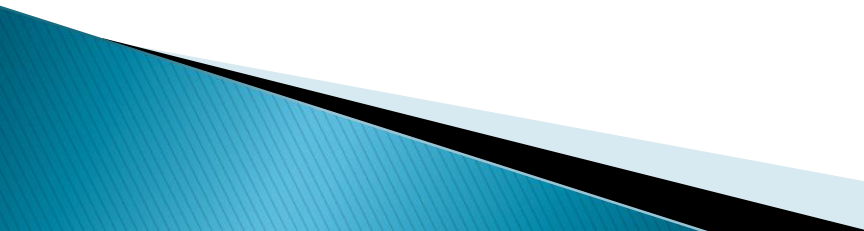
Concluding Remarks

- ▶ Blacks/Africans serve as the polar opposite of the mainstream Canadian;
 - ▶ Africans are used to situate the Canadian national identity in a positive light;
 - ▶ Africans influence the Canadian national identity and immigration policy and *vice versa*.
 - ▶ Blacks face truncated integration or sublation
 - ▶ Dialogue: More efforts by Blacks and authorities to promote the integration of Blacks.
 - ▶ Dialectics is a formidable tool for socio-cultural analysis.
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Noteworthy References

- ▶ Harald Bauder (2011) *Immigration Dialectics*
- ▶
- ▶ Dmitri Nikulin (2010) *Dialectic and Dialogue*
- ▶ Fredric Jameson (2009). *Valences of the Dialectic*.
- ▶ Joseph Mensah (2006) “Cultural dimension of globalization in Africa: a dialectical interpenetration of the local and the global” *Studies in Political Economy* 77, 2006; 57–82

Relevant Works

- ▶ Mensah (2015) *Social Identities (the Black presence and Nation–Immigration dialectics in Canadian)*
 - ▶ Mensah & William (2014) *African and Black Diaspora (See/being Double)*
 - ▶ Mensah & Williams (2013) *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, (Housing: Mixed methods)
 - ▶ Mensah & Williams (2013) *Housing Studies* (Housing: Qualitative)
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