In the summer of 2006 Canadian Heritage provided primary funding for this research project. A team of seven academic researchers from across Canada was then assembled to examine the nature and scope of the ‘fragmentation position’ embodied in the anti-multiculturalism and post-multiculturalism discourses articulated in a selected set of academic and media texts written either in French or English. The overarching research question was:

**What are the nature, extent, and interpretations of the concept “anti/post-multiculturalism” (as related to the fragmentation position) in academic and media texts?**

1.2 **Methodology**

To answer this research question the methodological technique of content and narrative discourse analysis was used by the seven members of the research team to examine a relatively large number of media and academic texts written in English and French. This report is based on the research findings contained in separate background papers produced by the following research team members:

**English-language Analysts:**

**Media Sources**

Karim H. Karim – Journalism and Communication, Carleton University

---

1 Secondary counterpart funding was provided by the Prairie Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Integration.
Academic Sources
Joe Garcea – Political Science, University of Saskatchewan
Anna Kirova – Education, University of Alberta
Lloyd Wong – Sociology, University of Calgary

French-language Analysts:

Media Sources
Chedly Belkhodja – Political Science, Université de Moncton

Academic Sources
Chedly Belkhodja – Political Science, Université de Moncton
Phyllis Dalley – Education, Université d’Ottawa
Micheline Labelle – Sociologie, Université du Québec à Montréal

This report is based on the research and analysis of those researchers.

➢ Overview of the Fragmentation Position in the Academic and Media Texts

• Academic Texts
There are three central themes of the fragmentation position in the academic literature on “anti-multiculturalism and post-multiculturalism”:

I. Multiculturalism’s emphasis on differences is divisive and subverts social cohesion in Canada and the development of Canadian identity.

II. Multiculturalism’s emphasis on cultural relativism potentially leads to a clash of cultures, or, at a global level, a “clash of civilizations”.

III. Multiculturalism leads to ethnic marginalization and ethnic stratification particularly when there is unequal distribution of power in society.

Looking more closely within each of these three central themes there are numerous criticisms that are articulated either explicitly or implicitly. Under Theme I - the following five specific criticisms are identified:

Criticism 1: Multiculturalism fragments because it promotes the creation of segregated racial and ethno-cultural enclaves.

Criticism 2: Multiculturalism fragments because it creates multiple social and political identities and divided loyalties.

Criticism 3: Multiculturalism fragments because it hinders the production and perpetuation of a singular “Canadian civic culture” with a “Canadian moral centre”.

Criticism 4: Multiculturalism fragments because it hinders the development and delivery of a singular “civic education”.

Criticism 5: Multiculturalism fragments because it hinders the development and delivery of a singular “civic education”.
Criticism 5: Multiculturalism fragments because it creates conflicts within ethno-cultural groups.

Under Theme II - the following three specific criticisms are identified:

Criticism 6: Multiculturalism fragments because it hinders the construction of a shared citizenship or ‘intercultural citizenship’.

Criticism 7: Multiculturalism fragments because it facilitates the importation and perpetuation of ethnic and religious conflicts from other countries.

Criticism 8: Multiculturalism fragments because it frustrates the aspirations of Quebec nationalists and Aboriginal nationalists.

Under Theme III- the following two specific criticisms are identified:

Criticism 9: Multiculturalism fragments because it privileges ethno-cultural groups at the expense of others.

Criticism 10: Multiculturalism fragments because it hinders the mobilization of progressive activism for progressive policies in achieving an equitable distribution of economic and social benefits.

The full report summarizes the positions of the main authors who articulate the various criticisms and it should be noted that these positions are usually declarations of what the authors consider to be either self-evident or valid assumptions and rarely, if ever, are they presented either as propositions or hypotheses to be examined or tested. These academic authors are mainly political philosophers, political scientists, and sociologists.

- Media Texts

The analysis of the English media texts focuses on major English Canadian newspapers in 2006 and reveals the following four dominant themes in the order of their frequency of occurrence:

1) Multiculturalism presents obstacles, if not barriers, to the development of common values, shared citizenship, and national identity.
2) Terrorism and multiculturalism, as well as Muslims and multiculturalism, are problematical.
3) The failure of multiculturalism in other countries (UK and France mostly) is a warning sign for Canada.
4) Multiculturalism hinders immigrant integration and possibly facilitates social disintegration.

This English media analysis includes the writings of journalists such as Margaret Wente, Lysiane Gagnon, Daphne Bramham, Rondi Adamson, Hubert Bauch, Brigitte Pellerin, Fred Kerr and Nathalie Petrowski and in newspapers such as The Globe and Mail, Vancouver Sun, Toronto Star, Montreal Gazette, Winnipeg Free Press, and the Calgary Herald. Many of the articles were about multiculturalism in other countries of which they
were intended to identify as lessons that were relevant for multiculturalism in Canada as per theme 3 above.

The analysis of the French media focuses on five francophone newspapers in Canada (Le Devoir, La Presse and Le Soleil which are published in Québec, Le Droit which is published in Ontario, and L’Acadie-Nouvelle which is published in New Brunswick) for the period 2002 to 2006. This analysis reveals that multiculturalism is subjected to criticism in conjunction with high profile current events related to terrorism, religious disputes, and political disputes. Among the most notable events of these during the period from 2002 to 2006 have been:

- The terrorist and anti-terrorist initiatives prior to, during, and after September 11, 2001;
- The conflicts created by depictions of religious and cultural issues in the media both in other countries and in Canada;
- The debates on establishing Islamic courts in the provinces of Ontario and Quebec;
- The debates on religious apparel and symbols (kirpan, veil, and kippa);
- The debates on what constitutes reasonable compromise in relation to religious holidays (e.g. Christmas), dress codes in some facilities which do not conform to the religious values of those who live or worship nearby (e.g., YWCA); and
- The debates on the appointment of the Governor General and her position on national unity and multiculturalism.

There are two major categories of principal arguments against the Canadian multiculturalism model. The first category focuses on the political rationality which underpins multiculturalism policy and the second, found in publications outside Quebec, consists of the views of members of the official minority language communities who have concerns regarding the effect of increased cultural diversity on their own culture. This French media analysis includes the writings of Michel Augé, Jacques Beauchemin, Adélard Landry, Rino Morin Rossignol, Gaétan Chiasson, André Arcelin, Mathieu Bock-Coté, and Pierre Bergeron,

Observations on the Criticisms and the Critics

In the academic literature criticisms are generally based on an inadequate distinction between multiculturalism philosophy and multiculturalism policy as well as an inadequate acknowledgement that both the philosophy and the policy of multiculturalism have evolved over time. Further, critics generally assert that multiculturalism philosophy and policy contribute to fragmentation without providing a precise conceptualization of the nature and magnitude of fragmentation which they have in mind and tend to be unwilling to concede that assessing empirically the positive and negative effects of multiculturalism is very difficult, if not impossible. Thus the arguments of critics are based largely on “faith” rather than “facts” and are not evidence based. At other levels, many of the critics, who favour interculturalism over multiculturalism, are unwilling to concede that these two philosophies embody many of the same principles. Moreover,
almost no attention is devoted to provincial multiculturalism philosophies and policies. The notable exception is Quebec’s interculturalism philosophy and policy. Finally, criticisms over the advantages and disadvantages of multiculturalism philosophy and public policy generate debates which are potentially fragmentary.

For both the English and French media our research and analysis focused on very recent articles thus the themes that emerged are very current and reflect public concerns of many Canadians in the post 9/11 era. For the English media the concerns about the supposed fragmentary thrust of multiculturalism are discussed not only in the Canadian context but also cross-nationally particularly in comparison to some European countries. The French media is strikingly similar to the English media as both tend to focus on the general themes that multiculturalism poses serious challenges for integration and is not creating harmony. A notable difference is that the Quebec-based francophone media devotes disproportionate attention to the perceived challenges that multiculturalism poses for the identity and recognition of the Quebecois nation and also the tensions which either exist, or are perceived to exist, in Quebec between Canada’s multiculturalism policy and Quebec’s interculturalism policy.

A categorization is possible here regarding the critics in both the academic literature and the media. One category would be “anti-multiculturalists” who are fundamentally opposed to multiculturalism. Another category would be “laissez-faire multiculturalists” who support the philosophy of multiculturalism but oppose state intervention. A third category would be “constructive multiculturalists” who support multiculturalism, both as a philosophy and as a public policy, but are critical of some aspect(s) and believe that there is room for improvement.

**Observations on the Potential Effects of the Fragmentation Position**

In addressing the question “What are the potential effects of the fragmentation position?” this report suggests that, among other things, it is likely to lead to a public questioning of: 1) the actual nature of Canada in regard to it being a multinational, multicultural or multi-ethnic/poly-ethnic society, and whether change is needed; 2) multiculturalism philosophy in terms of whether it has salutary or adverse effects on multiculturalism policy and programs, social cohesion, and national unity, and whether a change in philosophy is needed; and 3) the nature and value of multiculturalism, immigration and citizenship policies and programs in light of desired goals such as social cohesion and national unity and whether any changes are needed to those policies and programs.
Observations on Policy Implications and Options

The above mentioned criticisms of multiculturalism policies and programs have potential ramifications not only for multiculturalism but also for Canadian immigration and citizenship policies and programs given that historically Canada’s immigration and citizenship policies have been based on “nation-building” and arguably still are. Thus it is conceivable that policy makers might begin considering adjustments to immigration and citizenship policies and programs as a means of minimizing the perceived fragmentation effect. The policy debates and initiatives in recent years indicate that the fragmentation position is likely to produce further coordination and convergence between the multiculturalism, immigration, and citizenship policies in order to facilitate and produce a “thicker” citizenship that is characterized by a set of common values, a shared cultural identity, a substantive national identity, and greater social cohesion based on increased homogeneity. The challenge for policy makers will continue to be to find the right balance between the laudable normative ideals to which most Canadians subscribe and the practical imperatives of national identity, unity and security.

This report reveals that the criticisms of the multiculturalism philosophy and policy that constitute the fragmentation position are numerous. Some of these criticisms are intended to encourage policy makers to reform multiculturalism philosophy or policy while others are intended to encourage them to supplant multiculturalism philosophy and policy with either interculturalism or monoculturalism.

The report concludes that existing criticisms of multiculturalism philosophy and policy cannot be dismissed as insignificant and, as such, policy makers should be cognizant of them. There are several options for policy makers in dealing with the criticisms and the problems to which they point. First, they should assess the fundamental nature of the criticisms of multiculturalism philosophy and policy to determine which ones, if any, point to ‘real problems’ and which ones point to ‘perceived problems’. Second, they should assess the relative tractability of the various problems to determine, among other things, both the nature and scope of the effort that will be required to deal with them and the proper sequence in which to tackle them. Finally, the report suggests that regardless of what policy makers focus on, and what they do when dealing with various symbolic or substantive aspects of multiculturalism philosophy and policy, they should ensure that neither the efficacy nor the morality of the Canadian management of diversity is adversely affected.