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**L'Afrique et les défis du XXIème siècle
Africa and the Challenges of the Twenty First Century
A África e os desafios do Século XXI
إفريقيا وتحديات القرن الواحد والعشرين**

**Rethinking the Challenge of negative ethnicity in Africa:
Beyond the impasse, towards the alternatives:
A Case study of Kenya**

**Daniel Rotich Kandagor
Egerton University**

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Abstract

This research proposal is set to undertake an analysis of the current challenge of negative ethnicity in Africa in general and in Kenya in particular with a view of recommending alternatives that are likely to jettison the impasse. To effectively tackle the challenge of negative ethnicity, an overview of Kenya's history will be examined highlighting the factors contributing to the impasse. One important issue that this study is set to critically assess is the role of ethnic "identity" as understood by Kenyans and how other forms of identities can be rebuilt to counter the consequences of negative ethnicity. It is assumed that Kenya is besieged by negative ethnicity because it has no other forms of identities such as those embraced in Tanzania, "brotherhood" concept. Pursuant to the issue of "identity" the proposal will assume an ordinary language analysis of the current meanings of "identity," a complicated and unclear concept that nonetheless plays a central role in ongoing debates about national, ethnic, gender, and state identities. "Identity" as we now know it derives mainly from the work of psychologist Erik Erikson in the 1950s. Generally, "identity" refer to either (a) a social category, defined by membership rules and (alleged) characteristic attributes or expected behaviors, or (b) socially distinguishing features that a person takes a special pride in or views as unchangeable but socially consequential (or (a) and (b) at once). In the latter sense, "identity" is modern formulation of dignity, pride, or honor that implicitly links these to social categories. By understanding how identity works, one can better understand how "identity" can help explain political actions and why the negative ethnicity becomes a national disaster in Kenya.