

January 12, 2025

To: **Dr. Viridiana E. Herrera**, Assistant Professor & FRDC Chair

Letter of Intent

Dear **Dr. Herrera**,

I am hereby pleased to submit this Letter of Intent to both you and the entire Faculty Research and Development Committee, as I seek funding (\$ 7,000) for the following handy book project tentatively titled “**The Mvett: toward a scientific-spiritual philosophy in the academy and beyond.**” This is anticipated to be a six-month intensive project running from March through August 2025. But why is such a project pressing here at Lincoln University, one might ask?

I respond that my contextual teaching experience in this institution (Lincoln University) has increasingly alerted me to the urgent need to decolonize our curricula in the Department by writing, for example, an inclusive and transdisciplinary handy book (75 pages total) in honor of the 1974 Cairo symposium’s 50th anniversary.¹ The latter prospective book, in tune with Lincoln University’s motto (Learn. Liberate. Lead.), will open our students and faculty to the historical, individual, social, ethical, political, and pluri-cosmic dimensions of the Mvett² philosophy, as we CREATIVELY explore slippery themes related to the nature of ‘wisdom,’ ‘love,’ ‘reality,’ the ‘meaning of life,’ the ‘self,’ ‘justice,’ ‘leadership,’ or ‘God,’ etc.

This said, I recapitulate the project as follows, while thanking you all for your time and attention: **Type of proposal**: Research (Book project); **Tentative title**: “The Mvett: toward a scientific-spiritual philosophy in the academy and beyond”; **Anticipated timeframe of the project**: March-August 2025.

Sincerely,

François Kodena, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor, History, Philosophy and Religion
Lincoln University, PA.

¹ The symposium marked a paradigmatic REVOLUTION in world historiography and philosophy. Théophile Obenga, who attended the conference alongside his mentor Cheikh Anta Diop, indicates that “The question of the ancient Egypt connection with the rest of Black Africa was opened to an intensive discussion involving opposing points of view in 1974 during an international symposium organized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) held in Cairo and Aswan.” See: Théophile Obenga, “Egypt: Ancient History of African Philosophy” in Kwasi Wiredu (Ed.), *A Companion to African Philosophy* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 32. During the conference, Cheikh Anta Diop and Théophile Obenga evidenced that the ancient Egyptians were black Africans in origin, culture, thought, and language, as endorsed by the following conclusive pronouncement from the symposium’s final report itself: “Although the preparatory working paper sent out by UNESCO gave particulars of what was desired, not all participants had prepared communications comparable with the painstakingly researched contributions of Professors Cheikh Anta Diop and Obenga. There was consequently a real lack of balance in the discussions.” See: G. Mokhtar (Ed.), *General History of Africa*, vol. II, *Ancient Civilizations of Africa* (Paris: UNESCO, 1981), 76-77.

² Elloué-Engoune, Alain, *Du Sphinx au Mvett : Connaissance et sagesse de l’Afrique* (Paris, L’Harmattan, 2008).