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Trust in the Catholic Reformation. Genoa, 1594-1664

Peeters, T.D.H.M.

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Author: Peeters, T.D.H.M.

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Propositions belonging to the PhD thesis

1. Historians can better explain the complexity and ambiguity of the Catholic Reformation if they consider that reform processes often relied on trust.
2. Although explicit mentions of trust are not easy to trace in the primary sources, a study of the dynamics behind new initiatives shows that many Catholic reformers were well aware of the importance of trust.
3. Trust was of particular importance in the Church's moral reform endeavours, because this type of reform proved to be most effective when done on a voluntary basis.
4. The Jesuit *indipetae* letters show that studying how seventeenth-century people experienced trust in God also helps us to identify the ways in which they trusted other people.
5. Just as historians can identify the influence of power in any historical dynamic, one can see trust relationships anywhere; this is both the strength and the weakness of these two concepts.
6. The interplay between freedom and obedience is key to the religious experience of early modern people. Trust, in turn, is the key to understanding this relation.
7. Trust forms an essential basis of human knowledge. Becoming more aware of this fact would help scholars in the humanities to reduce the relativism that tends to dominate their endeavors.
8. Trust is a promising concept in the field of institutional history, because it enables the historian to study large and complex entities without overlooking the role of the individual.
9. Teaching children how to assess the trustworthiness of opinions, feelings and others, is a key skill for the 21st century.
10. The historian who wants to work in the Italian archives should either be very determined to find what he is looking for, or not be too committed to his or her own schedules.
11. Faith and trust are two very similar phenomena. If people realised how much they rely on trust for things that are of immense importance to them, believers and non-believers would understand each other better.