Luxembourg School of Religion & Society

PONTIFICIA ACADEMIA THEOLOGICA

UCAC
Université Catholique d'Afrique Centrale

Trust & Society
The Global Network on Trust
An LSRS Project

INTERNATIONAL TRANSDISCIPLINARY CONFERENCE

TRUST & SOCIETY

Catholic University of Central Africa in Yaoundé (Cameroon)

25–27 November 2026

With the support of the International Federation of Catholic Universities

FIUC IFCU 1924-2024

PROGRAMME

English Version

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Foreword by the Chair of the Organizing Committee

How could we not see this international congress as a continuation of **Pope Leo XIV's visit** to the Catholic University of Central Africa? In his address, the Holy Father observed:

Now more than ever, universities, and Catholic universities all the more so, must become **genuine communities of life and research**, initiating students and teachers into a fellowship of learning, "so as to experience together the joy of Truth and to explore its meaning and practical implications". I would emphasise those two words: life and research. Beyond intellectual endeavour, what is at stake is an experience of being community in which the pursuit of truth engages the whole person.

Our congress seeks to respond to this call in the spirit of *Ad theologiam promovendam*. Did Pope Francis not stress the importance of creating an academic community of shared faith and study, weaving a network of relationships with other institutions of formation, education and culture, and capable of entering, with originality and imagination, the existential settings in which knowledge, professions and Christian communities take shape?

For a few days, our congress brings together an academic community at CUCA, a distinguished place of scholarship, research, and teaching, serving seven African countries. Some of these countries face difficult circumstances in which **questions of trust arise with particular urgency**. We find ourselves at the heart of the "existential settings" referred to in *Ad theologiam promovendam*.

Two CUCA faculties are organising this congress together *with Trust & Society — The Global Network on Trust* and the *Pontifical Academy of Theology*, with the support of the *International Federation of Catholic Universities*. We are thus working as a network, as *Veritatis gaudium* also calls us to do.

Our keynote speakers will include academics and practitioners from diverse national and cultural backgrounds. Three respondents will offer perspectives on each keynote address. This dialogue will invite speakers and listeners alike to allow a vision ever more deeply imbued with the Gospel to take shape within them, drawing upon their knowledge, memory, imagination and the divine life dwelling in them.

More than thirty papers, arranged thematically in small parallel sessions, will foster dialogue, frank exchanges and mutual enrichment. Our practice of theology is thereby becoming increasingly open to other forms of scientific, philosophical, humanistic and artistic knowledge, in dialogue with believers and non-believers, with women and men of different Christian denominations and different religions.

Trust & Society (or societies): **the ampersand** symbolises the living interplay between these two inseparable realities! Trust develops, in particular, through social relationships; conversely, no society can endure without it. We examine both realities and the bonds between them. This approach touches upon a constitutive dimension of human existence: the living relationships we have with God, with others who form part of our "world", and with ourselves.

On my first visit to the CUCA, I was struck by the linguistic richness with which trust can be expressed. This bears witness to the links between trust and culture, explored in several contributions.

We seek to understand how trust is lived, expressed and celebrated across periods and cultures, among the people of God and throughout humanity, which bears the imprint of its Creator. This also means examining **experiences in which trust is betrayed**, broken or rebuilt. In this context, it is heartening to recall what Pope Leo XIV also said in his address at CUCA:

> At a time when many throughout the world seem to be losing their spiritual and ethical bearings, becoming trapped in individualism, appearances and hypocrisy, the university is, par excellence, a place of friendship and cooperation, but also of interiority and reflection.

Every word matters: friendship, cooperation, interiority, reflection. Each reminds us that discursive and propositional rationality operates within a relational existence and engages the person in their existential and spiritual dimensions.

Rather than lamenting a "**crisis of trust**", so often invoked to market supposed "solutions", we wish to highlight our theological transdisciplinary research and the possibilities it opens up.

A distinctly **theological approach** to trust must be open to transdisciplinary dialogue. Pope Francis calls, notably in *Ad theologiam promovendam*, for a robust form of transdisciplinarity. More than a synthesis of disciplines, it invites a contemplative disposition, allowing different forms of knowledge to enter into dialogue, to "ferment", mature and enrich one another:

> all forms of knowledge within the space of Light and Life offered by the Wisdom that emanates from God's Revelation.

Transdisciplinarity concerns not only knowledge but also those who bear it and seek truth together. It transforms our outlook and the practice of both research and teaching. Theology must become sapiential and embodied: beyond being an academic discipline, it is also a discipline in the sense of *sequela Christi*, following Christ.

Addressing participants at a seminar of the Pontifical Academy of Theology, Leo XIV referred to St Augustine, St Thomas Aquinas and Blessed Antonio Rosmini —a list to which the women Doctors of the Church, among others, should be added — before linking theology to theologians themselves and emphasising their missionary zeal:

> Theology, then, is that wisdom which opens up wider horizons of human existence through dialogue with the sciences, philosophy, art and the whole of human experience. A theologian is someone who, in the very act of doing theology, is moved by an ardent missionary desire to share with everyone both the "knowledge" and the "savour" of faith, so that faith may illuminate human life, raise up the vulnerable and excluded, touch and heal the suffering flesh of the poor, help us build a fraternal and caring world, and lead us to an encounter with God.

Our academic community brings together seekers of that Truth who is Christ himself and who has already come to meet them, so that they may learn to communicate that Truth to others, including through words. Revelation provides the resources we need to discern the paths towards our future.

To study trust at a Catholic university is also to be called **to practise it during this congress**. Here, as "at home", it underpins our relationships: trust in one another, in the value of our work and in the institutions that support us. May it shape our encounters, our listening, our exchanges of ideas and our common search for truth; and may this lived experience itself enter into dialogue with scientific knowledge. In this way, we shall experience the "community of life and research" to which Leo XIV calls us.

The congress will end on 27 November, but the work begun here will continue. May it nourish scholars' intellectual and spiritual lives, inspire initiatives within communities, and encourage reflection, evaluation, formation and publications. May our exchanges bear lasting fruit and foster tangible partnerships!

I count it a privilege to take part in this intellectual, human and spiritual endeavour. I offer my heartfelt thanks to all those whose commitment, expertise and trust have made this congress possible.

May the Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of the Apostles and Patroness of Cameroon, and Saint Augustine, Patron Saint of the Catholic University of Central Africa, together with Saint Thomas Aquinas and Saint John Henry Newman, co-patrons of the Church's educational mission, intercede for us.

Msgr. Prof. Dr. Dr. Jean Ehret
Chair of the Organizing Committee

Programme at a Glance

Wednesday 25 November 2026 – Nkolbisson Campus

08h30 Registration and welcome
10h00 Opening Ceremony
11h00 Keynote Lecture I – H.E. Mgr Dr. Andrew Nkea
Franz Kamphaus Auditorium
12h30 Lunch
14h00 **Keynote Lecture II – Prof. Dr. François Mabille**
16h00 Parallel Sessions A
18h00 Eucharistic Celebration

Thursday 26 November 2026 – Nkolbisson Campus

08h00 Eucharistic Celebration
09h00 Keynote Lecture III – H.E. Mgr Dr. Dr. A. Staglianò
Franz Kamphaus Auditorium
11h00 Parallel Sessions B
12h30 Lunch
14h30 Parallel Sessions C
16h30 Keynote Lecture IV – Prof. Dr. Pierluigi Consorti
Franz Kamphaus Auditorium
18h00 Close of proceedings

Friday 27 November 2026 – Ekounou Campus

08h00 Eucharistic Celebration
09h00 Keynote Lecture V – Trust & Society Lab 2 "Theology of Trust"
FSJP Auditorium
11h00 Parallel Sessions D
12h30 Lunch
14h30 Parallel Sessions E
16h30 Review of the conference and concluding remarks
FSJP Auditorium
18h00 Closing of the conference

Keynote Lectures

Speaker: 40 minutes; 8 minutes for each respondent

Wednesday 25 November 2026 – Nkolbisson Campus

11h00–12h30: Keynote Lecture I

Franz Kamphaus Auditorium

H.E. Mgr Dr. Andrew Nkea – Archbishop of Bamenda, Grand Chancellor of UCAC

Trust and Social Cohesion: The Mission of the Church in a Context of Crisis and Conflict

Respondents:
Rector Prof. M. Kalinowski; Prof. A.C. Mayer; Prof. P. Consorti

14h00–15h30: Keynote Lecture II

Kamphaus Auditorium

Prof. Dr. François Mabille – Secretary General of the International Federation of Catholic Universities

L'Église catholique et la confiance depuis Rerum Novarum : relecture socio-historique

Respondents:
Rector Prof. T.B. Tchoungui ; H.E. Mgr Dr. Dr. A. Staglianò ; Dr. A. Mawata Augusta

Thursday 26 November 2026 – Nkolbisson Campus

09h00–10h30: Keynote Lecture III

Kamphaus Auditorium

H.E. Mgr Dr. Dr. Antonio Staglianò – President of the Pontifical Academy of Theology

Foi, confiance et connaissance dans Magnifica Humanitas, à la lumière de Ad theologiam promovendam

Respondents: Prof. Y. Elenga; Prof. M.-T. Mengue; Prof. Dr. L. Santedi Kinkupu

16h30–18h00: Keynote Lecture IV

Kamphaus Auditorium

Prof. Dr. Pierluigi Consorti – Professor University of Pisa et Visiting Professor à la Luxembourg School of Religion & Society.

Confiance et Droit :
une perspective « Droit et Religion »

Respondents: Dr. P. Amougui; Prof. Dr. F. Ndzana; Dr. R.F. Mbabe Adiobo

Friday 27 November 2026 – Ekounou Campus

09h00–10h30: Keynote Lecture V

FSJP Auditorium

Trust & Society Lab 2

La confiance : une approche théologique à la lumière de Ad theologiam promovendam

Parallel Sessions at a Glance

Wednesday 25 November 2026 - – Nkolbisson Campus

A1 – Trust, Traditions, Spirituality and Art | 16:00–17:30 | Room O

A2 – Trust, Traditions, Spirituality and Art | 16:00–17:30 | Room N

A3 – Trust, Traditions, Spirituality and Art | 16:00–17:30 | Room M

Thursday 26 November 2026 - – Nkolbisson Campus

B1 – Trust, Personhood and Relationships | 11:00–12:30 | Room O

B2 – Trust, Personhood and Relationships | 11:00–12:30 | Room M

C1 – Trust, Church and Institutions | 14:30–16:00 | Room O

C2 – Trust, Church and Institutions | 14:30–16:00 | Room M

Friday 27 November 2026 - – Ekounou Campus

D1 – Trust, Society and Politics | 11:00–12:30 | Room 220

D2 – Trust, Society and Politics | 11:00–12:30 | Room 221

E1 – Trust, Education and AI | 14:30–16:00 | Room 220

E2 – Trust, Education and AI | 14:30–16:00 | Room 221

Parallel Sessions

Wednesday 25 November 2026 – Nkolbisson Campus

Parallel Session A1 – Trust, Traditions, Spirituality and Art
Room O
16:00–17:30
Chair: Rev. Dr. Jean-Paulin Mbida

16:00–16:30 André Marie Djon Limay
Crise et restauration de la confiance entre l'être humain et l'être Suprême. Une réflexion anthropologico-théologique à partir des récits négro-africains de la chute.

16:30–17:00 Eliane Oyongo Ononino
La confiance et la Pneumatologie : Sagesse spirituelle et connaissance relationnelle dans le développement africain

17 :00–17 :30 Innocent Ouédraogo
Méfiance, défiance et confiance du basilikos en Jn 4,43-54: pédagogie johannique du croire

Parallel Session A2 – Trust, Traditions, Spirituality and Art
Room N
16:00–17:30
Chair: Prof. Dr. Georg Rubel

16:00–16:30 Joan Mary Kiyveyonge

From Broken Covenant to Renewed Bond: Jeremiah, Ricoeur, and the Ubuntu Philosophy in Dialogue for a Transdisciplinary Theology of Trust

16:30–17:00 Beltha Ngwashi

From Hidden Election to Covenant Trust: David's Three Anointings and Legitimate Authority after Crisis.

17:00–17:30 Claude Armel Otabela & Norbert Zongo

Quand le corps exprime la confiance : psychologie et théologie dans les Psaumes bibliques

Parallel Session A3 – Trust, Traditions, Spirituality and Art

Room M

16:00–17:30

Chair: Dr. Anata Mawata Augusta

16:00–16:30 Grégoire Abessolo

L'art et la confiance en Afrique

16:30–17:00 Stève Loïc Talla Pafong

Repenser la confiance : de l'intériorité augustinienne au « tout est lié » de Laudato si'

17:00–17:30 Raymond Essindi Mballa

Le problème de la confiance en Afrique, une crise de "l'auto-conscience" : pseudomnésie, alethemnésie et metamnésie.

Thursday 26 November 2026 – Nkolbisson Campus

Parallel Session B1 – Trust, Personhood and Relationships
Room O
11:00–12:30
Chair: Rev. Jérôme E. Bountsebe Ekassi, M.A.

11:00–11:30 Miroslaw Kalinowski
Experiencing Human Dignity as a Foundation for Building Trust among Persons Serving Terms of Imprisonment

11:30–12:00 Christabelle Nabilla Yuyof
Faire confiance en prison : santé, relations et stratégies de survie des femmes détenues au Cameroun

12:00–12:30 Joseph Bernard Ntamak
« Nous-mêmes ». Une modalité essentielle du hemlè (confiance) pour la renaissance de l'Afrique dans la pensée de Jean-Marc Éla

Parallel Session B2 – Trust, Personhood and Relationships
Room M
11:00–12:30
Chair: Rev. Prof. Dr. Yvon Christian Elenga

11:00–11:30 Darius Vidal Malongo Bansimba
De la technique du « faire-croire » à l'éthique de l'être : repenser la confiance comme habitus théologico-philosophique dans les sociétés en crise

11:30–12:00 Kevin Phouet Foe

Anthropologie et patrie : Recherches phénoménologique et herméneutique en vue de la confiance.

12:00–12:30 Andrzej Pietrzak

The Threshold of the Loss of Apparent Obviousness: Religious Trust and Social Credibility in the Perspective of the Actionable Sufficiency Threshold (AST)

Parallel Session C1 – Trust, Church and Institutions

Room O

14:30–16:00

Chair: Rev. Dr. Vincent Billot

14:30–15:00 Cyrille Etoundi Djon

La gouvernance des biens temporels de l'Église en Afrique confiance institutionnelle

15:00–15:30 Annemarie C. Mayer

Underway to Restored Trust: A Transdisciplinary Approach to Trust in Ecclesial Ministry

15:30–16:00 Roland Berger Mouosso Balong

La confiance comme levier de transformation organisationnelle : le cas du diocèse de Bafia (Cameroun)

Parallel Session C2 – Trust, Church and Institutions
Room M
14:30–16:00
Chair : Prof. Dr. Marie-Thérèse Mengue

14:30–15:00 Honorine Ngono
GRH dans une paroisse : une question de confiance. Approche théologique, pastorale et managériale dans l'Archidiocèse de Yaoundé

15:00–15:30 Kouokam Magne Estelle
Entre registres symboliques, dispositifs techniques et gouvernance : les médiations de la confiance dans le champ de la santé au Cameroun

15:30–16:00 Stève Bianzié & Alain Dieudonné Nkodo
La fabrique de la confiance dans les parcours de soin: une lecture croisée des médiations institutionnelles et religieuses au Cameroun

Vendredi le 27 novembre 2026 – Ekounou Campus

Parallel Session D1 – Trust, Society and Politics
Room 220
11:00–12:30
Chair: Rev. Prof. Dr. François Ndzana

11:00–11:30 Jérôme Emmanuel Bountsebe Ekassi
Le crédit et la fondation : vers une théologie politique de la confiance. Relire la crise anglophone camerounaise avec Fabien Eboussi Boulaga

11:30–12:00 Piotr Kopiec
Theology Informing Politics: Trust as a Bridge between a Responsible Society and social cohesion

12:00–12:30 Alawadi Zelao
Citoyenneté, légitimité et société de confiance dans les États africains

Parallel Session D2 – Trust, Society and Politics
Room 221
11:00–12:30
Chair: Dr. Yvan Yhannick Obah

11:00–11:30 Jean Gabriel Bela
L'acte de foi à l'épreuve de la défaillance institutionnelle : socio-anthropologie d'une confiance en crise chez les femmes des communautés ecclésiales rurales.

11:30–12:00 Smart Chikwere Attah

Harnessing Indigenous Brotherhood Norms: Adapting the Igbo Erim Principle within African Traditional Value Systems for Violent Conflict Reduction in Nigeria

12:00–12:30 Birol Topuz

From Moral Accountability to Intercommunal Trust: Alevi Communal Ethics in Çorum

Parallel Session E1 – Trust, Education and AI

Room 220

14:30–16:00

Chair: Rev. Dr. Nicodème Ondoua Mekongo

14:30–15:00 Yves Olinger

La confiance en catéchèse. Un chemin de rencontre avec Dieu, avec les autres chrétiens et avec soi-même

15:00–15:30 Leonnard Santedi Kinkupu

Éducation et Éthique : leviers pour bâtir une humanité d'espérance

Parallel Session E2 – Trust, Education and AI

Room 221

14:30–16:00

Chair: Prof. Kouokam Magne Estelle

14:30–15:00 Robert Mebenga Mbala

La reconstruction de la confiance à l'ère de l'intelligence artificielle : une lecture éthique à partir de la théorie philosophique de la confiance d'Annette Baier

15:00–15:30 Joël Francis Ohandza

Herméneutique de la confiance à l'ère de l'Intelligence Artificielle : crise cataphatique et apophatique.

15:30–16:00 Paschal Okpaleke

Can we trust AI? Magnifica Humanitas and the Fragility of a Church that Speaks for Humanity

Contributors to the Parallel Sessions

1. Abessolo Amougou Grégoire

Art africain contemporain et théories de la confiance

Language: French · Field: Theology of Art · Theme: African Art

Biography – Grégoire Abessolo Amougou, OP, holds a doctorate in theology and is president of the International Association of Friends of Engelbert Mveng. He teaches at Domuni and ESIF.

Abstract – How is it that African art, once denied recognition, now floods the international market? This historical reversal, which has seen African art move from the status of a 'primitive' object to that of a central phenomenon in the international market, is the result of a profound cultural, political and economic revolution. Viewed through philosophical and sociological theories of trust, contemporary African art reveals a cultural history that illuminates both the trajectory of African art and that of humanity as a whole**.**

2. Attah Smart

Harnessing Indigenous Brotherhood Norms: Adapting the Igbo Erim Principle within African Traditional Value Systems for Violent Conflict Reduction in Nigeria

Language: English · Field: Political Anthropology · Themes: African Traditions, Reconstruction

Biography – Smart Chikwere Attah, PhD, is affiliated with the Department of Political Science, Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution at Kashim Ibrahim University (formerly Borno State University), Maiduguri, Nigeria. His research focuses on peacebuilding, conflict resolution, indigenous African values, and social trust.

Abstract – This paper examines the Igbo *Erim* principle of brotherhood as an indigenous ethic of trust-building and conflict prevention in Nigeria. Drawing on African communitarian philosophy, peacebuilding theory, and social trust perspectives, it explores how mutual obligation, collective accountability, solidarity, reconciliation, and respect for human dignity can foster peaceful coexistence. Through qualitative literature review, historical inquiry, and comparative analysis, the study investigates the potential of indigenous African values to reduce interpersonal, communal, and identity-based violence. It argues that integrating these traditions into peacebuilding policies and community dialogue can strengthen social cohesion and promote sustainable peace.

3. Bela Jean Gabriel

L'acte de foi à l'épreuve de la défaillance institutionnelle : socio-anthropologie d'une confiance en crise chez les femmes des communautés ecclésiales rurales.

Language: French · Field: Social Sciences · Themes: Women, the Church in Africa

Biography – Fr Bela is a priest of the Diocese of Obala and holds a doctorate in social sciences, specialising in the Church's social teaching and public ethics. He teaches at the Pontifical Gregorian University and is also a member of the newly established Women & Gender Research Hub in the university's Faculty of Social Sciences. His current research focuses on gift and gratitude in ecclesial settings.

Abstract – This paper analyses ecclesial trust through the everyday experiences of women in rural African ecclesial communities. Bringing Georg Simmel's understanding of trust as an act of faith and Niklas Luhmann's view of trust as a social mechanism for reducing complexity into dialogue with fieldwork, it examines the paradox between these women's pastoral commitment and their institutional invisibility, which may progressively weaken both their act of faith and their bond with the Church.

4. Stève Bianzié and Dieudonné Alain Nkodo

La fabrique de la confiance dans les parcours de soins : une lecture croisée des médiations institutionnelles et religieuses au Cameroun

Language: French · Field: Practical Theology, Social Sciences and Health Sciences · Themes: Health, institutions, mediation, religious institutions

Biography:

Dieudonné Alain Nkodo is a priest of the Archdiocese of Yaoundé and a doctoral candidate in pastoral theology at the Catholic University of Central Africa (UCAC) and in moral theology at the Pontifical University of Salamanca. His research concerns pastoral mediation, spiritual accompaniment and religious practices in hospital settings.

Stève Bianzié is a political scientist, academic, lecturer and researcher at UCAC. His work focuses on public health policy, territorial dynamics and social experiences of healthcare in northern Cameroon.

Abstract – This paper analyses trust in healthcare pathways in Cameroon as a relational construct. It shows that trust is created, repaired, or undermined at the intersection of institutional, professional, family, community, and pastoral forms of mediation. The joint perspective of Bianzié and Nkodo thus highlights trust as a collective and continually negotiated achievement.

5. Bountsebe Ekassi Jerôme Emmanuel

Le crédit et la fondation : vers une théologie politique de la confiance. Relire la crise anglophone camerounaise avec Fabien Eboussi Boulaga

Language: French · Field: Political Theology · Theme: Political crisis

Biography – Jérôme Emmanuel Bountsebe Ekassi, MA, is a doctoral candidate in systematic theology at KU Leuven and a research fellow of the Research Foundation – Flanders (FWO). His most recent publication is 'Beyond Multi-party Systems and Elections: Democratic Challenges in Africa' (with Ludovic Lado), in Concilium 2026/1**.**

6. Djon Limay André Marie

Crise et restauration de la confiance entre l'être humain et l'être Suprême. Une réflexion anthropologico-théologique à partir des récits négro-africains de la chute.

Language: French · Field: Practical Theology · Themes: Governance, the Church in Africa

Biography – A priest of the Diocese of Édéa (Cameroon), he holds a doctorate in systematic theology of mission from the Pontifical Urbaniana University in Rome. He is a senior lecturer and Prefect of Studies at the Saint Paul VI Provincial Major Seminary in Douala. He is a member of CRÉDIC and AFOM. His research focuses on the inculturation of Christian faith and evangelical liberation in Africa, as well as contextual theology and contemporary missiology in multicultural and multi-religious settings. He has authored several books and scholarly article**s.**

Abstract – This paper examines the crisis of trust between human beings and God, as well as ways of restoring it. Drawing on sub-Saharan African myths and Judeo-Christian narratives of the Fall, the author explores the origins of mistrust and the processes through which trust between the two protagonists may be rebuilt. The paper draws lessons for conflict resolution and the restoration of trust in contemporary societies. It concludes with practical proposals for rebuilding trust among human beings and between humanity and its environment, from the cosmotheandric perspective of integral ecology.

7. Essindi Mbala Raymond José

Comprendre l'Afrique pour croire en l'Afrique et au monde noir

Language: French · Field: Philosophy, Trauma Studies · Themes: Social memory, colonisation, collective trauma

Biography – A priest of the Archdiocese of Yaoundé and Doctor of Philosophy of the San Dámaso Ecclesiastical University in Madrid, Spain, he is Prefect of Studies at the Interdiocesan Major Seminary of Philosophy in Otélé, Cameroon.

Abstract – This paper analyses the crisis of trust in Africa through the concept of 'self-awareness', linked to memory and self-knowledge. It distinguishes three processes: pseudomnesia, the falsification of historical memory; alethomnesia, the restoration of authentic memory; and metamnesia, the creative reappropriation of the past in order to build the future. Drawing particularly on Cheikh Anta Diop and UNESCO's General History of Africa, the author shows how traumatic colonial memories undermine self-confidence. He advocates renewed memory as the foundation of an African and Pan-African confidence oriented towards the future.

8. Etoundi Djon Cyrille

La gouvernance des biens temporels de l'Église en Afrique à l'épreuve de la synodalité : reconstruire la confiance institutionnelle

Language: French · Field: Practical Theology · Themes: Ecclesial governance, synodality.

Biography – He is a priest of the Archdiocese of Yaoundé, an assistant lecturer at UCAC and a doctoral candidate in practical theology at UCL in Belgium.

Abstract – This paper highlights the crisis of trust arising from abuses in the administration of temporal goods in some African dioceses, against a background of institutional challenges linked to the excessive concentration of decision-making. In the light of synodality, it proposes renewed governance of ecclesial assets based on participation, transparency, and shared responsibility as a means of rebuilding institutional trust within the Church.

9. Kalinowski Mirosław

Experiencing Human Dignity as a Foundation for Building Trust among Persons Serving Terms of Imprisonment

Language: English · Field: Practical Theology · Themes: Prison, Crisis, Reconstruction

Biography – Pr Dr Mirosław Kalinowski is the Rector of the Catholic University of Lublin in Poland. He was President of the College of Deans of Faculties of Theology in Poland (2008-2016), and a member of the Lublin Scientific Society (since 2011).

Abstract – This presentation examines how university education in prison fosters trust through the recognition and experience of human dignity. Drawing on a thirteen-year programme at the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Poland, it identifies three mechanisms: awareness of the inherent dignity of others, the development of self-respect and personal agency, and positive relationships grounded in mutual respect and cooperation.

By treating incarcerated individuals as students rather than merely inmates, the programme offers an alternative relational environment. The findings highlight higher education's potential to rebuild interpersonal and institutional trust, promote social reintegration, and support the responsible participation of formerly incarcerated persons in society.

10. Kiyveyonge Joan Mary

From Broken Covenant to Renewed Bond: Jeremiah, Ricoeur, and the Ubuntu Philosophy in Dialogue for a Transdisciplinary Theology of Trust

Language: English · Field: Bible, Old Testament · Themes: Reconstruction, Book of Jeremiah, Bible

Biography – Sister Joan Mary Kiyveyonge is a PhD student in Biblical Theology at the Catholic University of Central Africa, Yaoundé, where she serves as Deputy Director of the Language Laboratory. A theology graduate, she teaches Scripture at Maryvale Institute, Bamenda, and is committed to youth formation, child protection, and theological reflection serving the African Church.

Abstract – Amid a global crisis of trust, this paper reads Jeremiah's arc from broken covenant (11:1-13) to new covenant (31:31-34) through Ubuntu's relational personhood and Ricoeur's wounded cogito, narrative identity, and economy of the gift. Trust emerges not as contractual calculation but as a vulnerable, communal, gift-like being. This transdisciplinary dialogue proposes a constructive theology of trust for societies facing institutional betrayal, with particular relevance to African contexts.

11. Kopiec Piotr

Theology Informing Politics: Trust as a Bridge between a Responsible Society and Social Cohesion

Language: English · Field: Political Theology · Themes: Politics, Social Cohesion

Biography – Pr Dr habil. Piotr Kopiec is Professor of Theology at the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Poland, and holds a doctorate in sociology. His research focuses on ecumenical theology, Protestantism, interconfessional relations, Christian social teaching, and the cultural and social dimensions of globalization. He contributes actively to international ecumenical research and has authored six monographs and over 150 scholarly articles.

Abstract – This paper argues that social cohesion, understood as a political value, depends on trust among individuals, institutions, and social groups. Trust is not automatic but develops through long-term formation for political, economic, and cultural life. The ecumenical movement recognized this principle at the World Council of Churches' first assembly in Amsterdam in 1948, advancing the concept of a responsible society grounded in critical thinking. Today, polarization, economic inequalities, artificial intelligence, and colonial legacies reinforce the relevance of this concept. Theology can contribute to developing social and political models that foster trust, responsibility, critical reflection, and sustainable social cohesion.

12. Krauze Filip & Pietrzak Andrzej

The Threshold of the Loss of Apparent Obviousness: Religious Trust and Social Credibility in the Perspective of the Actionable Sufficiency Threshold (AST)

Language: English · Field: Social Ethics Postcritical theology ; Themes: Actionable Sufficiency Threshold,

Biography:

Rev. Pr Dr habil. Andrzej Pietrzak, SVD, is the Head of Department and professor of fundamental theology at the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Poland. He specializes in missiology, intercultural theology, and the relationship between Christianity and Latin American cultures. His research addresses mission, inculturation, ecclesial credibility, and the social engagement of the Catholic Church.

Rev. Dr. Filip Krauze is also with the Department of Religious Studies and Missiology at the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Poland.

Abstract – This paper examines the contemporary crisis of trust through the concept of the "Threshold of the Loss of Apparent Obviousness." It argues that trust declines not necessarily when institutions are rejected, but when their credibility ceases to be self-evident. Introducing the heuristic of the Actionable Sufficiency Threshold (AST), the paper explores how individuals commit and act under conditions of uncertainty. It contends that contemporary societies have not abandoned trust but lost cultural conditions that once sustained it spontaneously. Bringing together theology, religious studies, social sciences, and decision theory, the paper proposes a postcritical framework for rebuilding responsible, free, and credible trust.

13. Kouokam Magne Estelle

Registres symboliques, dispositifs techniques et gouvernance: Les médiations de la confiance dans le champ de la santé au Cameroun

Language: French · Field: Social Sciences · Themes: Health, Gouvernance.

Biography – She is an anthropologist and Professor at the Faculty of Social Sciences and Management at UCAC. She heads the Centre for Gender, Health, and Society. Her research interests include health, gender, intercultural mediation, public policy, and local knowledge in Africa.

Abstract – This paper explores how trust is generated in the healthcare sector in Cameroon at the intersection of symbolic frameworks, technical systems and governance. Based on ethnographic research into therapeutic pluralism and the adoption of a connected neonatal incubator, it highlights the role of social mediation, the sacred and recognition in determining whether innovations are accepted.

14. Malonga Bansimba Darius Vidal

De la technique du « faire-croire » à l'éthique de l'être : repenser la confiance comme habitus théologico- philosophique dans les sociétés en crise

Language: French · Field: Philosophy and Theological Anthropology · Themes: Ethics, contemplation, faith, African wisdomi

Biography – A Dominican priest, he holds degrees in mathematics from the École normale supérieure in Brazzaville, and in philosophy and theology from the Catholic University of Central Africa (UCAC).

Abstract – This paper examines the contemporary crisis of trust by criticizing its reduction to technical, managerial and contractual solutions. Drawing on Hannah Arendt and St Augustine, it presents trust as an authentic human relationship, an act of faith and an inner disposition (habitus), rather than an instrument of control. It also explores trust as a response to Revelation and as contemplation, in dialogue with African wisdom concerning the keeping of one's word and communal solidarity. Finally, it advocates.

15. Mayer Annemarie C.

Underway to Restored Trust: A Transdisciplinary Approach to Trust in Ecclesial Ministry

Language: English · Fields: Theology, Transdisciplinarity, Ecclesiology, Trauma Studies, Sociology, Organisational Psychology · Themes: Ministry, Pastoral Integrity, Discipleship, Reconstruction Ecclesiology.

Biography – She is professor of Dogmatic Theology at the Faculty of Theology Trier, Germany, and affiliate professor of the LSRS, focusing on ecclesiology and the church’s relation to contemporary culture.

Abstract – The contemporary crisis of ecclesial credibility shows that trust in ministry can no longer be taken for granted. While the trustworthiness of ministers traditionally has been seen as an expression of discipleship and pastoral integrity, less attention has been paid to the dynamics of trust itself, its loss, and the conditions under which it may be rebuilt. In a transdisciplinary approach, this paper brings ecclesiology into dialogue with organizational psychology, sociology, and trauma studies.

16. Mebenga Mbala Robert

La reconstruction de la confiance à l'ère de l'intelligence artificielle : une lecture éthique à partir de la théorie philosophique de la confiance d'Annette Baier

Language: French · Field: Philosophy and Ethics · Themes: Artificial Intelligence, Technology, Ethics.

Biography – He holds a doctorate awarded jointly by the University of Luxembourg and UCLouvain in 2020. His doctoral thesis examined transhumanism and its promises of moral progress and human happiness. His research addresses the ethical implications of contemporary techno-scientific transformation**s.**

Abstract – How can trust be rebuilt in the age of artificial intelligence? This far-reaching question structures the paper. The rapid emergence of artificial intelligence is transforming practices of decision-making and communication. Focusing on the reconstruction of trust, this contribution offers a philosophical rereading of the crisis of trust through Annette Baier's theory of trust. By conceiving trust as a moral relationship grounded in vulnerability, mutual dependence and a legitimate expectation of goodwill, Baier provides a conceptual framework that moves beyond a strictly instrumental understanding of trust in technology.

17. Mouosso Balong Roland Berger

La confiance comme levier de transformation organisationnelle : le cas du diocèse de Bafia (Cameroun)

Language: French · Fields: Social Sciences and Practical Theology · Themes: Ecclesial governance, African Church, participation, power asymmetries

Biography – Roland Berger Mouosso Balong is a priest and holds a doctorate in Social Sciences from the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome (2026). His research focuses on the sociology of organisations, ecclesial governance, leadership, and institutional collaboration. He is notably the author of Sortir la sexualité et l'amour du marché (2024).

Abstract – This paper examines the role of trust in relations between priests and laypeople within the Diocese of Bafia, Cameroon. Drawing on doctoral research in social sciences and employing a mixed-methods approach, the study analyses how power asymmetries and the limited participation of laypeople in decision-making processes influence trust and collaboration within the Church. The findings highlight the importance of interpersonal trust, organisational trust, and collaborative engagement in improving communication, reducing tensions, and strengthening participation. The author proposes the concept of 'collaborative trust' as a means of promoting shared governance and organizational transformation.

18. Ngono Honorine

GRH dans une paroisse : une question de confiance. Approche théologique, pastorale et managériale Dans l'Archidiocèse de Yaoundé

Language: French · Field: Practical Theology · Themes: Ecclesial management, parish, human resources

Biography – Sister Dr Honorine Ngono is a Missionary of the Resurrection and a retired lecturer at the Faculty of Theology at UCAC, where she continues to collaborate, as well as with other theological training institutes. She has published on the financial autonomy of ecclesial institutions and is a member of SITP and the Trust & Society (T&S) Lab.

Abstract – The Catholic Church, a human and spiritual community, is founded on relationships of communion, participation and mission. The parish, the fundamental unit of ecclesial organisation, is a setting for human collaboration in which multiple actors interact. Human resource management is essential at parish level, and trust is the point of connection between theology, pastoral ministry and management.

19. Ngwashi Mange Beltha

From Hidden Election to Covenant Trust: David's Three Anointings and Legitimate Authority after Crisis.

Language: English · Field: Bible, Old Testament · Themes: Crisis, Governance, Books of Samuel

Biography– A doctorate student at the Catholic University of Central Africa, in the faculty of theology presently awaiting my PhD defense in Biblical Theology.

Abstract – Trust is like a bridge linking people in society to one another. If trusting is adhering to the other, this takes us to what we call "Covenant Trust". The anthropological perspective shows that trust is not universal but manifests itself differently in different societies. Sociologists study trust through the lens of institutions, collective economies, and reason they will tell us that without trust there is no society. This is why we have taken David and his ascension to power over the people of Isreal as a model for our societies today which are going through leadership and trust crisis.

20. Ntamak Joseph Bernard

«Nous-mêmes» : Une modalité essentielle du hemlè (confiance) pour la renaissance de l'Afrique dans la pensée de Jean-Marc Éla.

Language: French · Fields: Theology, Anthropology · Themes: Jean-Marc Ela, African society

Biography – He is a doctoral candidate in pastoral theology at the Catholic University of Central Africa.

Abstract – In the third millennium, oriented towards implementing the African Union's Agenda 2063, the recurring phrase 'ourselves', which runs through Jean-Marc Ela's socio-theological insights, highlights trust (hemlè) as an essential means of Africa's renewal. Ela illustrates this by celebrating intellectual and biblical figures, showing that the quality of human resources is decisive in meeting the challenge of Africa's emergence.

21. Ohandza Joël Francis

Herméneutique de la confiance à l'ère de l'Intelligence Artificielle : crise cataphatique et apophatique.

Language: French · Fields: Theology, Hermeneutics · Themes: Artificial Intelligences, Anthropologies, Otherness

Biography – A priest of the Diocese of Kribi, Cameroon, he holds a doctorate in fundamental theology from the Facoltà Teologica dell'Italia Settentrionale in Milan. He is currently Professor of theological anthropology and ecclesiology at the Catholic University of Central Africa, as well as Professor of fundamental theology at the Higher Institute of Religious Sciences in Yaoundé, Cameroon.

Abstract – Artificial intelligence (AI) is reshaping the foundations of trust by progressively replacing testimony with proof and relationship with performance. This transformation gives rise to a double crisis. Cataphatically, AI makes objectively measurable capacities once attributed to human beings and the divine, thereby unsettling their uniqueness. Apophatically, the opacity of the 'black box' introduces an otherness whose operations can be observed but whose meaning remains inaccessible. Trust thus loses its irreducibly relational, testimonial and eschatological dimension.

22. Okpaleke Ikenna Paschal

Can we trust AI? Magnifica Humanitas and the Fragility of a Church that Speaks for Humanity

Language: English · Fields: Theology, Missiology, Ethics · Themes: Magnifica Humanitas, Artificial Intelligence

Biography– He is assistant professor of Catholic ecclesiology and ecumenism at the Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies (THER) and member of the research institute of Religions, Spiritualities, Cultures, Societies (RSCS) at UCL, Belgium

Abstract – Theories of trust are no longer framed only in reference to humans and institutions, but to human relationship with Artificial Intelligence (AI) as well. This paper addresses the theological interest in the same subject of trust in AI. It critically analyzes the recent encyclical, Magnifica Humanitas (MH) of Pope Leo XIV, thus inviting an ethical interrogation of what might be missing in the human-AI interaction. The paper also highlights the paradoxical tension of repairing ecclesial trust while interrogating AI trustworthiness before the world. This double movement, it argues, demonstrates the critical nature of ecclesial mission in a continually evolving world.

23. Olinger Yves

La confiance en catéchèse. Un chemin de rencontre avec Dieu, avec les autres chrétiens et avec soi-même

Language: French · Field: Theology · Themes: Catechesis, pedagogy

Biography – He is a doctoral candidate at the University of Tübingen and the Luxembourg School of Religion & Society, a teacher, a Catholic priest and Vice-President of the Grand Seminary of Luxembourg.

Abstract – Catechesis, which seeks to help people learn how to live and make sense of their existence in the light of the Gospel, requires three forms of trust: trust in God, trust between catechists and those entrusted to their care, and self-trust. Drawing on catechetical practice in Luxembourg and France, this paper will show how trust develops in these three areas across different cultural contexts.

24. Otabela Claude Armel & Zongo Pingued Windé Norbert

Quand le corps exprime la confiance : psychologie et théologie dans les Psaumes bibliques

Language: French ·Fields: Biblical studies, Theology, Psychology ·Themes: Psalms, psychosomatic memory, biblical poetry, emotions, the body.

Biography:

Armel Otabela is a priest and holds a PhD in Biblical Theology. He is Academic Network Leader of the Trust & Society research project at the LSRS, Visiting Professor at KU Leuven, and Associate Lecturer at the Catholic University of Central Africa (UCAC)**.**

Fr Norbert Zongo is a priest and doctoral candidate in psychology at Bircham International University in Spain. He directs the Foyer Nong-Taaba in Burkina Faso and is committed to childhood, resilience and human dignity.

Abstract – The Psalter abounds in gestures and postures that express trust: raising one's hands, walking, sleeping and dancing. These are not mere ornaments but meaning-bearing expressions in which theology and psychology meet. Psychosomatic analysis reveals that trust engages the human person as a whole, integrating body, emotions and spirit. The body thus becomes a memory of trials and a site of inner transformation towards surrender and praise.

25. Ouedraogo Innocent

Méfiance, défiance et confiance du basilikos en Jn 4,43–54 : pédagogie johannique du croire

Language: French · Field: New Testament, Johannine Studies, Empire Studies, Biblical Theology · Themes: Biblical pedagogy, faith, Johannine semantics.

Biography – A KU Leuven doctoral graduate, Innocent Ouédraogo is a diocesan priest and researcher whose work brings the Bible into dialogue with social justice and human rights in response to contemporary challenges.

Abstract – Drawing on John 4:43–54, this paper analyses the royal official's (basilikos) journey from distrust to a trust grounded in Jesus' word. Through narrative analysis and synchronic and semantic exegesis, it illuminates the Johannine pedagogy of trust. The contribution shows how the biblical narrative offers a model for rebuilding trust in the face of contemporary logics of suspicion and control.

26. Oyongo Ononino Eliane

La Confiance et la Pneumatologie : Sagesse spirituelle et connaissance relationnelle dans le développement africain

Language: French · Fields: Theology, Pneumatology, Biblical Exegesis · Themes: Pneumatology, Book of Isaiah, integral African developments

Biography – She is a doctoral candidate in biblical theology at UCAC-ICY. Her research focuses on African hermeneutics of Isaiah 11 and the pneumatology of integral development.

Abstract – Trust is constitutive of knowledge, justice and integral development. This paper begins with a pneumatological understanding of trust—not as naïve optimism, but as a relational covenant rooted in living communion (Hebrew bitachon). Reading Isaiah 11:1–10 from an African context, it argues that the gift of the Spirit (rûaḥ) makes a leader trustworthy through justice, wisdom and integrity. The gift of knowledge (daʿat) is never isolated; it emerges from a covenantal relationship of trust with God and the community. The prophetic coda (Isaiah 11:10) announces a rhetoric of attraction: the nations freely seek the one in whom they can place their trust.

27. Phouet-Foe Kevin

Anthropologie et patrie : Recherches phénoménologique et herméneutique en vue de la confiance.

Language: French ·Fields: Philosophy, Phenomenology, Hermeneutics, Anthropology, Politics · Themes: Gift, homeland, charities.

Biography – He is a priest of the Diocese of Mbalmayo and holds a doctorate in philosophy, specialising in phenomenology and hermeneutics. He is a permanent lecturer in the Faculty of Philosophy at the Catholic University of Central Africa (UCAC).

Abstract – This research seeks to clarify the idea that trust awakens and flourishes only within the possibilities of meaning offered by an anthropology reconciled with itself. This can be demonstrated, first, by showing that every anthropology is originally grounded in the order of gift; and, secondly, that it is through what is given as such—indeed, through what is entrusted to oneself—that it becomes possible to exist in trust.

28. Santedi Kinkupu Léonard

Éducation et Éthique : leviers pour bâtir une humanité d'espérance

Language: French · Fields: Theology, Educational Sciences · Themes: Education, ethics, resilience, Pedagogy

Biography – A priest and theologian, Léonard Santedi is Rector Emeritus of the Catholic University of the Congo and a member of several ecclesial institutions.

Abstract – In his 'Global Compact on Education', Pope Francis recalled an African proverb: 'It takes a whole village to raise a child.' Education must therefore be understood in its inseparable connection with ethics. In a world marked by doubt, trust in the future calls education to form resilient minds. It is not a refuge from reality, but a way of inhabiting a wounded world without becoming like it.

29. Talla Pafong Stève Loïc

Repenser la confiance : de l'intériorité augustinienne au « tout est lié » de Laudato si'

Language: French · Fields: Patristics, Theology · Themes: Augustine, Pope Francis, Contemplation.

Biography – A doctoral candidate in dogmatic theology, Stève Talla works on the crisis in the relationship between God, humanity and creation, exploring trust as a theological category of relationship**.**

Abstract – This paper examines the crisis of trust as a symptom of a crisis in relationships. Drawing on Augustine, it explores interiority, distentio animi and ordo amoris in order to understand the conditions of relationship. Contemplation emerges as a reorientation that fosters renewed trust. In dialogue with Laudato si' and the idea that 'everything is connected', trust becomes a mediating category within a theology of relationship, linking interiority, relationship and responsibility towards creation.

30. Topuz Birol

From Moral Accountability to Intercommunal Trust: Alevi Communal Ethics in Çorum

Language: English · Field: Moral Theology · Themes: Communal Ethics, Management, Alevi Ethics

Biography – Dr Birol Topuz is a sociologist of religion whose research focuses on Alevi-Sunni relations, Gülen Movement, migration, integration, and diaspora.

Abstract – This paper examines how religiously grounded moral institutions produce social trust in Alevi-Sunni relations in Çorum. Drawing on 108 interviews with equal Alevi and Sunni participation, it argues that ethical norms, moral authority, and sanctions, especially düşkünlük, create accountability, regulate behavior, and make conduct predictable. This sustains intra-communal trust through musahiplik and extends into intercommunal trust, despite the collective memory of the 1980 Çorum violence.

31. Yuyof Christabelle Nabilla

Faire confiance en prison : santé, relations et stratégies de survie des femmes détenues au Cameroun

Language: French · Field: Social Sciences · Themes: Prison, health, women, African society

Biography – A doctoral candidate in anthropology at the University of Yaoundé I, she teaches part-time at the University of Ebolowa, is a social sciences specialist and works as a guidance counsellor**.**

Abstract – This paper analyses trust among women prisoners in Cameroon on the basis of ethnographic research conducted in five prisons: Maroua, Ebolowa, Kribi, Ambam and Sangmélima. It shows that trust develops gradually and remains selective, conditional and reversible. Grounded in loyalty, confidentiality, attentive listening, and mutual assistance, it is an essential resource for health, relationships, and survival strategies in detention.

32. Zelao Alawadi

Construire la société de confiance dans les États d'Afrique subsaharienne : un défi à l'épreuve de la citoyenneté et de la légitimité

Language: French · Field: Social Sciences · Themes: African politics, governance, society of trust.

Biography – Zelao Alawadi is a Professor of Sociology at the University of Yaoundé II and a former Vice-Dean at the International Relations Institute of Cameroon (IRIC). He coordinates the Research Group on Social and Political Dynamics (GREDYSOP) and is an associate researcher at the Institute for Social Policies and Initiatives (IPIS) at UCAC. He has published several scholarly works, including Démocratisation au Cameroun (2016) and Décentraliser au Cameroun (2018). His research focuses on governance, democracy, and development. **Abstract –** This paper analyses the political, institutional, ethnic and religious crises affecting African societies and challenging their governance models. It argues that overcoming these crises depends on building a society of trust founded on the legitimacy of those who govern, recognition of citizens' expectations and participation in the common good.

Drawing on examples from African states, the study examines the links between governance, the social contract and political cohesion. It maintains that trust is not merely a matter of discourse, but a concrete political practice embodied in good governance, justice, and the creation of an inclusive and sustainable political community.

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Theme: "Whom Should We Trust, and Whom Should We Not Trust?"

The Congress will explore the challenges of trust in contemporary theological, ecclesial and social contexts, fostering interdisciplinary dialogue and reflection.

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Trust & Society – The Global Network on Trust will organise a laboratory bringing together researchers from different disciplines to identify the various dimensions of trust and its expressions in African cultures.

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