

Job opportunity for a  
**Postdoctoral researcher**

within a FNRS/DFG (WEAVE) funded project on

**The Role of *Ius Commune* in Asia:  
Law and Economy in the Casuistry of Goa (1563-1606)**

Supervised by

W. Decock (UCLouvain), J.-P. Gay (UCLouvain) & M. Schmoeckel (Bonn University)

Following the award of an FNRS-DFG-WEAVE-research grant (nr. 40037062), we invite applications for a part-time postdoctoral position (80%, three years) on a project entitled *The Role of *Ius Commune* in Asia: Law and Economy in the Casuistry of Goa (1563-1606)*. The postdoctoral researcher will be based in Louvain-la-Neuve and supervised by Professors Wim Decock and Jean-Pascal Gay, while collaborating closely with a PhD-researcher based in Bonn under the supervision of Professor Mathias Schmoeckel.

**Project description**

In 16th-century Asia, where the Portuguese colonial enterprise unfolded alongside Jesuit missionary work, many complex legal cases—often economic in nature—emerged. When conventional legal scholarship offered no clear answers, solutions came from a different type of literature: the writings of Jesuit theologians who, despite their primary concern with the salvation of souls, engaged deeply with complex legal topics. This project studies the case-by-case literature produced by these scholars between 1563 and 1606—a largely unexamined body of work crucial for understanding how law adapted to new contexts, considering the well-recognized role of moral theology in the development of private law. This research investigates how Goan scholars engaged with complex cases from diverse Asian territories and, more centrally, how they drew on sources, principles, and concepts from the *ius commune*—Roman law and canon law—alongside European theological texts in their quest for answers. Rather than viewing legal knowledge as simply exported from Europe, this study understands Goa as an active site of legal reasoning and normative innovation shaped by local realities. Employing archival research, manuscript analysis, and qualitative analysis, the project will map and catalogue sources, themes, and legal strategies. Comparative analysis—both among Goan scholars and between them and their European peers—will further highlight local distinctiveness. The central hypothesis is that Jesuit scholars in Goa pragmatically adapted *ius commune* frameworks to resolve novel legal issues in a colonial setting, fostering innovative approaches shaped by both tradition and the needs of the mission in Asia.

**Job description**

To carry out this research project, a postdoctoral researcher is being recruited by the UCLouvain team. In collaboration with the supervisors, the researcher will develop the abovementioned program, present findings at (inter)national conferences, and disseminate research results through scholarly articles and/or a monograph. The postdoctoral scholar will

also play an active role in organising relevant project seminars and colloquia, and will serve as a mentor to the PhD researcher in Bonn.

### Job requirements

- You hold a PhD degree (or equivalent) in law or the humanities (e.g. classics, history, philosophy, theology), with a maximum of 1 year seniority as a postdoctoral researcher at the start date of your contract
- You have a solid command of Portuguese, Latin and English
- Knowledge of French and/or German is an asset, but not essential
- You have a solid grasp of Roman law, canon law and early modern Catholic theology
- While being an independent mind, you are a team-player

### Job offer

- 36-month, part-time (**80%**) postdoctoral scholarship, starting on **1 September 2026** or as soon as possible thereafter
- The salary conditions, social security, and health insurance will follow the UCLouvain standards for postdoctoral scholars
- You will be part of the “Louvain Lab for Law, History and Society” (LHS), a team of legal historians based at UCLouvain’s Faculty of Law and Criminology and JUR-I, the Institute for Interdisciplinary Research in Legal and Criminological Sciences in Louvain-la-Neuve
- Distance work can be discussed (but in-person attendance of meetings, workshops and colloquia organized in the framework of the project as well as major events of the LHS and JUR-I will be required)
- You will be part of an international team of researchers in Louvain-la-Neuve, Bonn and Oxford

### Application procedure

- Applications should be submitted electronically to the following address: [wim.decock@uclouvain.be](mailto:wim.decock@uclouvain.be)
- An extended CV and a 2-page letter of motivation are required
- Application deadline: **20 June 2026**
- Selected candidates will be invited for an (online) interview at the end of June
- During the interview candidates may be asked to analyse Portuguese and/or Latin source texts
- The successful candidate will be notified early July