



Academia Plutonica
Academic Corporation Plutonica Leuven
in KVS/R/EKV

Origins and History of European Student Traditions

Peter Dirix v. Kosmos
8 March 2022



Academia Plutonica

Summary (1)

- Origins & History (-1800)
 - Middle Ages
 - Enlightenment
 - French Revolution



Academia Plutonica

Summary (2)

- **Origins & History (1800-)**
 - Romanticism: the German world
 - Scandinavia
 - Romance Europe
 - The Netherlands
 - Central and Eastern Europe



Academia Plutonica

Summary (3)

- Origins & History: Belgium
 - Southern Netherlands
 - Belgian student life
 - Romanticism: Flemish catholic traditions
 - The New Order
 - After WW II
 - Some details about the 3 traditions



Introduction

- Students: until 1960s a separate class within the population
- Until French Revolution: privileges
- Have their own traditions, initiation rituals
- Often perform these without knowing why or where they come from



Middle Ages (1)

- First universities from 11th century: Bologna, Oxford, Paris, Toulouse, Salamanca, Coimbra, Naples
- HRR: Prague (1348), Vienna (1365)
Low Countries: Leuven (1425)
- 4 faculties: arts, medicine, law, theology



Middle Ages (2)

- Basic education: arts (*artes*) - baccalaureate/bachelor
- From 13-14 yr., after finishing quadrivium (music, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy) and trivium (grammar, rhetoric, dialectic)



Middle Ages (3)

- Completion: licentiate, master (*magister*) and doctor
- Medicine
- Law (Roman & canon law)
- Theology



Middle Ages (4)

- University = sovereign
- Has its own laws & even prison
- Carrying arms is allowed
- Guild organisation: bachelor (baccalaureus) and master (magister)
- Both students and teachers
- Faculties: elected dean



Middle Ages (5)

- Regional division: 4 nations (*nationes*)
- Leuven: Brabant, Flemish, Holland & Gaulish nations
- Paris: French, Norman, Picard and English/German nations
- Nations elected a procurator
- Procurators elected the rector



Middle Ages (6)

- Prescribed dress: dark coat + monk's cowl; cap for professors
- Traveling students - mostly 13th-14th century: vagantes (goliardi)
- Subculture with initiation and drinking rituals (beiani = pledges/Füchse)
- Carmina Burana (Orff): *Cantilena potatoria*, parts of *Gaudeamus* and *Io Vivat*
- *A, a, a, valete studia* (Leuven)
- Salamander (referring to 4 elements? Similar to Germanic libation)



16th-17th century

- Arise of national states
- Reformation and Contrareformation
- Jesuit colleges
- Development of *bursae* (-> Burschen) -> student residences (*bursa* = purse/grant)
- Regional colleges, e.g. in Leuven: Irish College, English College, Arras College, ...
- Cfr. colleges in Oxford and Cambridge



18th century: Age of Reason (1)

- Absolutism -> state-controlled universities
- Separate associations for students
Landsmannschaften (regional) -> prohibited
- Smaller Baltic universities: general *bursa* or *Burschenschaft*
- Hazing = required
- Pledges = *Pennäler* (cfr. *Penne*)



18th century: Age of Reason (2)

- Organised duels
- Uniform dress in colours of the region
- Often military uniforms like father



18th century: Age of Reason (3)

- Student orders (2nd half 18th century)
- Principle of *Lebensbund* (alliance for life)
- Based on Freemasonry (lodges)
- Initiation rituals
- Introduction of monogram/*Zirkel* (*VCF* - *Vivant fratres coniuncti*)
- Order crosses
- Prohibited in 1793 by Imperial Diet





French Revolution

- Closure of universities (1793)
- Replaced by *grandes écoles*, *écoles centrales* (lycée)
- Occupation of large parts of Europe
- Imperial University (1808), mostly examination institution
- No student life, state control



Meanwhile in Germany... (1)

- Large parts occupied by France
- New model: *Humboldt university*
- Berlin (1810) - Wilhelm von Humboldt
- Same faculties (although often split of arts in philosophy and sciences)
- Combination of education and research
- Became norm in 19th century



Meanwhile in Germany... (2)

- New types of student associations: combination student orders (regulations/*Comment*, outward characteristics, *Lebensbund*, secret symbolism) and *Landsmannschaften* (uniform dress, Latin expressions, duels)
- Various names: *Landsmannschaft*, *Gesellschaft*, *Kränzchen*, *Club*
- Grew into apolitical *Corps*



Romanticism (1)

- Arise of nationalism
- Started with German students as a reaction to the French occupation
- Against *Kleinstaaterei*
- Plea for abolishment of regional societies
- Replacement by a large *Burschenschaft*
- *Urburschenschaft* (1815, Jena)



Romanticism (2)

- *Allgemeine Deutsche Burschenschaft* (1817)
- Fell apart after a few years
- Political societies: pro democracy and a unified Germany
- Motor of German unification
- Colours: black-red-gold
- Adopt eventually student traditions (including duels) of *Corps*



Romanticism (3)

- Ca. 1800: Order crosses replaced by ribbons (*Band*), often worn under jacket
- Student caps, after military model
- Ca. 1820: *Tönnchen*/bierpetje and *Stürmer*





Romanticism (4)

- Student songs
 - drinking songs: *Krambambuli* (1745), *Ergo Bibamus* (1813), *Jucheidi* (ca. 1840)
 - patriotic and regional:
Deutschlandlied, *Der deutsche Rhein*



Romanticism (5)

- Protestant (1836), Catholic (1844), Jewish societies (1882)
(Verbindungen)
- *Lebensbund*
- No duels for Christians
- Principles: *Religio, Patria, Amicitia, Academia/Scientia*



Romanticism (6)

- 1848: ban of student societies withdrawn
- Caps and ribbons are worn openly, also by alumni (*Alte Herren*)
- Origin of dies natalis festivities (*Stiftungsfest*)
- Sponsoring by alumni: houses
- First women's society: 1898, Bonn
- Zipfel and other colours material





Romanticism (7)

- Students = 'rulers of the Earth'
- *Corps* = élitist
- Myth of the student prince
- Stage play *Alt Heidelberg*
- Operette *The Student Prince*
- Abrupt end: WW I



Romanticism (8)





After WW I

- New prime until 1933 (Germany)/1938 (Austria/Czechia)
- Banned by Nazis - many students in resistance
- Restart after WW II
- Many types of societies were restarted, including the fencing ones
- Smaller amounts/percentages of students incorporated
- High school student corporations in Austria/South Tyrol



Germany/Austria now

- CV - TCV - KV - UV (Unitas) - RKDB - Wingolf (Germany, Christian)
- ÖCV - ÖKV - RKAB - KÖL - VCS (Austria/South Tyrol, Christian)
- MKV - VfM : high school corporations Austria
- KSCV - WSC: Corps, Germany
- CC - ATB: Landsmannschaften, Turnerschaften
- DB - ADB: Burschenschaften



Diffusion

- Latvia/Estonia: German tradition since 19th century
- Switzerland: slightly adapted since 19th century
 - Schw.St.V. also has high school corporations
- German corporations in Chile, Rome, Tokyo
- Partially adopted in
 - Belgium
 - Poland, Lithuania
 - Hungary
 - (Romania, Ukraine)
 - (Imperial Russia)



EKV

- Europäischer Kartellverband der christlichen Studentenverbände (EKV)
 - Founded 15/11/1975 in Salzburg by German and Austrian umbrellas
 - 120,000 students and alumni
 - 15 umbrella organisations (Verbände) from Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Belgium (12 university, 2 high school students, 1 mixed - SchwStV)



EKV

- Europäischer Kartellverband der christlichen Studentenverbände (EKV)
 - About 675 corporations
 - Curia:
 - university corporations from Austria, Slovenia, Czechia, Slovakia, France, Ukraine and Lithuania
 - high school corporations from Austria and Romania



Scandinavia (1)

- Sweden + Finland: no revolution, no Napoleon, nations continued to exist
- Still exist at the old universities: Uppsala, Lund, Helsinki
- Very large, officially still regional nations, compulsory membership
- Also exist in Linköping and Umeå, but not compulsory
- Inspektor, kuratel, förmänner
- Sittning/sits/sitsit

Scandinavia (2)



Scandinavië (3)



Scandinavia (4)

- Student cap (~ 1848 in Sweden adopted from Germany, from 1864 in Finland)
- Studentmössa / ylioppilaslakki
- Lund: two colours (blue in winter, white in summer)
- Since 1980s associated with graduation from high school



Scandinavia (5)

- Engineering students' cap and over-all
(studenthallare/opiskelijahaalari)



Scandinavia (6)

- Denmark: studenterhue



Scandinavia (7)

- Norway: duskelue / russelue



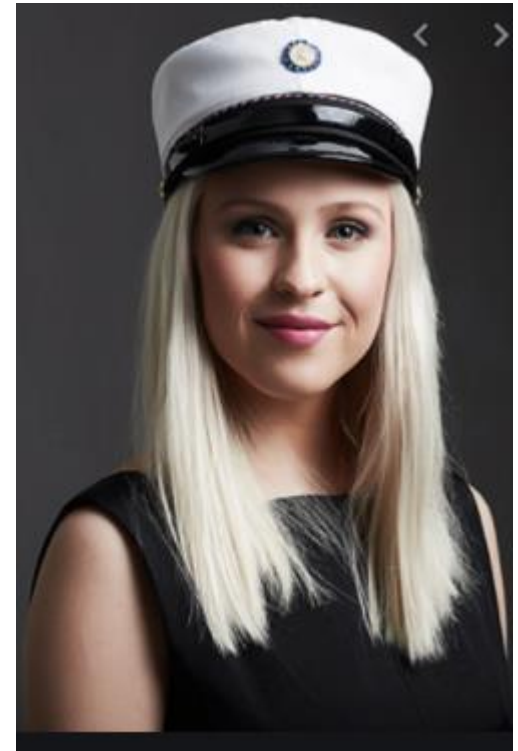
Scandinavia (8)

- Faroe Islands: studentshúgva



Scandinavia (9)

- Iceland: stúdentshúfa



Romance countries (1)

- Goliardic tradition (1888)
 - France: faluche
 - Italy: orders with orsina/feluca - sang/theatre/carnival



Romance countries (2): Italy

- Goliardic tradition (1888)
 - Created at celebrating 800 years University of Bologna
 - Pretending to continue mediaeval vagantes tradition



Romance countries (3): Italy

- Goliardic tradition (1888)
 - 117 Goliardia of Goliardic orders in 45 cities
 - Orsina in 4 colours: blue (law), red (medicine), green (sciences), white (arts)
 - After 1891 replaced by feluca, yellow (business), black (engineers)
 - Mantello + placca
 - Use of pseudonyms



Romance countries (4): Italy

- Goliardic tradition (1888)
 - Song books
 - Gaudeamus igitur
 - Di canti di gioia (song of the Italian students)
 - Bolli on feluca -> seniority (max. 6-7)
 - Capo-città, Principi senatori (ex-presidents)
 - Appointed by predecessor or conclave
 - Priore, duca, marchese, barone, gran maestro, ...
 - Some are regional or per faculty
 - Mostly in Northern and Central Italy
 - Also in Ticino and New York
 - Ordini minori: non-university towns

Romance countries (5): Italy

- *Goliardic tradition (1888)*
 - Disappeared mostly in 1960s ('sonno'), reappeared in 1980s
 - *Activities:*
 - Singing, theatre, carnival
 - Uccellagione/uccellamento (theft of attributes)
 - Gioco goliardico: discussion/speech festival

Romance countries (6): France

- Goliardic tradition (1888)
 - Origins in Bologna
 - Tradition of François Rabelais
 - Faluche: cap based on Bolognese beret
 - 1890: general student hat
 - Disappeared mostly in 1960s, reviving since 1980s
 - Now again in most university cities

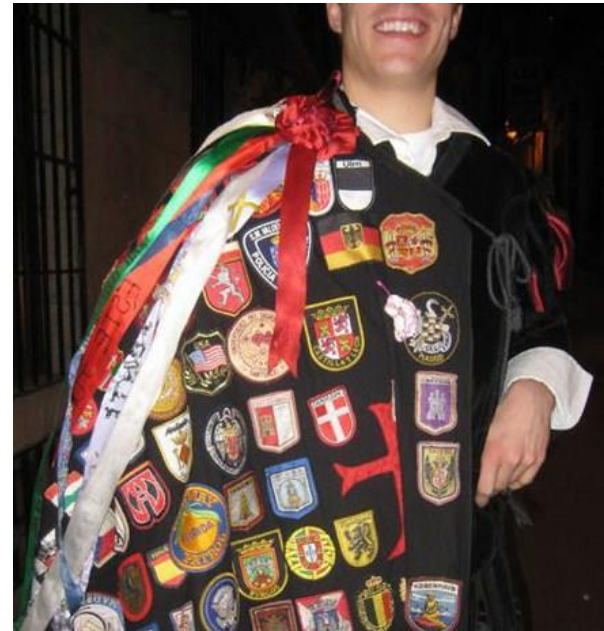


Romance countries (7): France

- Goliardic tradition (1888)
 - Baptism (*baptême*) with 4 trials
 - Elected Grand-maître/Grand-chambellan per city
 - Grand-vicaire in Paris
 - 4 "dioceses": Poitiers, Amiens, Strasbourg and Grenoble
 - National code
 - Colour band depending on discipline, faculty marks

Romance countries (8)

- Iberian tradition: tunas
 - Origins in 14th century in Salamanca
 - Singing/carnival



Romance countries (9)

- Iberian tradition: tunas
 - Members: tunos or tunantes
 - Name allegedly from "king of Tunis"
 - Instruments: lute, guitar, tambourine, bandurria, mandolin
 - 17th-century dress
 - Jubón: jerkin
 - Camisa: white shirt
 - Trunk-house + stockings
 - Beca: ribbon - depending on university/faculty
 - Capa: cape

Romance countries (10)

- Iberische traditie: tunas
 - Pretends to date back to goliardi
 - Probable origins ~1830 in Salamanca
 - 1870-1888: adoption in Portugal (also in high schools, now only in Évora)
 - Rondas (E): performances in cafés/houses
 - Praxe (P): kind of hazing
 - Semana académica (P): burning the becas
 - Portugal: ±300 tunas
 - Also adopted in Latin America



Break

- Plutonica's website

<http://plutonica.be>

- Contact:

plutonica@leuven@gmail.com

The Netherlands (1)

- Corps / Studentenvereniging
 - Composed of *disputen* (mixed/unmixed) and/or *jaarclubs*
 - Dispuut: originally debating societies with eloquence tests
 - Independent *disputen*; country-wide associations with local *disputen*
 - Senaat, reünist, aspirantentijd, ontgroening (cfr. Doop VL), inauguratie (cfr. ontgroening VL), sociëteit

The Netherlands (2)

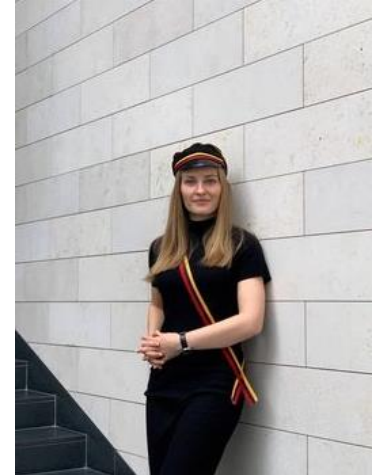
- Corps / Studentenvereniging
 - Since 1886: confessional associations
 - Jaarclubs: after WO II
 - 1960s-1970s: membership numbers drop
 - 1980s: revival, reintroduction dress code and hazing
 - Algemene Senaten Vergadering (umbrella of traditional corps)

Poland

- German/Baltic and Russian influence
 - Corporations
 - Origins in Dorpat/Tartu and Riga
 - Konwent Polonia, Dorpat 1828
 - Arkonia (1879) and Welecja (1883) in Riga
 - Wilder - fuchs - komiliton - filistyn
 - No colours for pledges
 - ~100 corporations in 1919-1939
 - Banned during communism
 - Now ~15 in 6 cities
 - Warsaw, Cracow, Poznań, Wrocław, Gdańsk, Toruń

Lithuania

- German/Baltic and Russian influence
 - Corporations
 - Fraternitas Lituanica (1908) in St. Petersburg
 - Junjoras, senjoras, filisterias
 - Caps and ribbons
 - Board: council of seniors, functions like magister cantandi, magister bibendi, maior domus, scriba
 - Banned during communism
 - 8 active corporations (Vilnius)



Hungary (1)

- Turul Szövetség (1919-1945)
 - Nationalist, Christian
 - Organised by faculty
 - *Lebensbund*, alumni
(dominusoknak/öreguraknak)
 - 40,000 members in 1930s, including non students
 - Caps and ribbons



Hungary (2)



- Foederatio Americana (1921-1946)
 - Catholic
 - Board: komendátor, praeceptor (vice), anonymus (secretary), magister magnus & archiadvocatus
 - 24 societies in Budapest, ±50 rest of country; 16,000 members
 - Ribbons and green cap
 - Max. 50 people/society, owned houses
 - Houses led by senior, corporation by prior

Hungary (3)

- Keresztény Diákegyesületek Kartellszövetsége (KEDEX) (1994-2012)
 - Catholic, colour-bearing
 - 4 societies
 - Danubia Budapest (1989) (high school students)
 - Pax et Bonum Esztergom (1990) (high school students)
 - Puszta Kecskemét (1993) (high school students)
 - K.D.St.V. Suevia-Danubia Fünfkirchen (1991)

Hungary (4)

- Hungarian corporations at mining schools of Leoben en Banská Štiavnica (beginning of 19th century)
- Társas-Kör (Wenen, 1862)
- Corps Franconia Ofen (1867-1914)
- Gothia, sicne 1925 Suevia (1918-1945)
- Suevia Pannonica in Fünfkirchen (jaren '30)
- Burschenschaft Langobardia (1919-?)
- Corps Nassovia (2007, Szeged/Budapest)



Southern Netherlands (1814-1830)

- 3 new state universities (Louvain, Ghent and Liège) & 1 state normal school in Lier (1817)
- University language: still Latin
- State control
- No theological faculties, arts split in to philosophy and sciences
- No real student life



Belgium (1)

- Liberty of education (1830)
- Louvain: Catholic University (1834-35)
- Free University in Brussels (liberal, 1834)
- Specialized institutes: agricultural, veterinary, business and colonial colleges
- Language of education: French



Belgium (2)

- At the start: upper class, no particular student traditions
- Few study circles
- Louvain: *Met Tijd en Vlijt* (1836)
- Ghent: *'t Zal Wel Gaan* (1852)
- Brussels: *Schild en Vriend* (1856), now *Geen Taal, Geen Vrijheid*



Belgium (3)

- Faculty circles since ~1860
- Professors and students
- Still no proper student traditions
- Since 1878 Belgian student cap (*klak of penne*)
- With faculty marks and all kinds of pins





Romanticism (1)

- First wave of democratisation (~1870): doubling of student numbers
- Ca. 2000 students in Leuven
- More Dutch speakers
- Albrecht Rodenbach
 - 'blauwvoeterij'
 - Flemish *knapenschap*



Romanticism (2)





Romanticism (3)

- Development of regional *clubs* and provincial *guilds* (*gouwgilde*) (1870s-1880s)
- Umbrella: *Société générale des étudiants* (1878)
- Flemish student magazine *Ons Leven* (1888)



Romanticism (4)

- 1890s: Catholic reaction to coarseness
- New student cap: *toque/calotte*
 - *Adopted by catholic students in Liège, Namur, Ghent, Mons, Brussels*



- Karel Heynderickx: *Belgian Student Song Book* (1898)



Romanticism (5)

- Climax: Jef vanden Eynde
- In Leuven 1899-1908
- General editor of *Ons Leven*
- President *Vlaamsch Verbond*
- Author and translator of student songs e.g. *Lindenmeisje*, *Filia Hospitalis*, *Juchheidi*, *Goed besluit*, ...
- Productive period: *Aan de schachten*, *Krambambouli*, ...



Romanticism (6)





Romanticism (7)

- Paid for theater and opera performances in Louvain
- Vlierbeekfeesten (since 1904)
- Adoption of German student cap by Flemish catholic student
- Scission of *Société générale*
- Kerlinga: adoption of *clubnamen* (pseudonyms)
- KAV Lovania (since 1896)



High school corporations

- Algemeen Katholiek Vlaamsch Studentenverbond (AKVS)
 - 1903-1935
 - No colours
 - Run by university students
 - Disappeared in the 1930s when the bishops tried to take control



The New Order (1)

- 1920s: struggle for Dutchification - *Slag bij Matadi, De wrede moord van Leuven*
- German cap replaced by *flat* (1919-1932) - already used by Luxembourg student in Louvain before WW I
- 1921: admission of female students in Louvain



The New Order (2)

- Edmond de Goeyse
- Model corporation: *Bezem Lovania Brussel* (1925)
- Reorganisation: foundation of *Seniorenkonvent* (SK)
- Uniform regulations: *Comment* after German/Swiss model (1930) -> *Clubcodex*
- Introduction of *clubpetjes* (Tönnchen)
- Introduction of uniform ribbons and colours
- Adopted via AVHV: *Wikings* (Antwerp), *SK Ghendt*, *THV Mechelen*, *KSC Brussel*



The New Order (3)





The New Order (4)





After WW II

- Further democratisation of higher education
- Leuven Vlaams (1965-1968): struggle to have a monolingual university
- Student = not a separate class in society anymore
- More and more female students (MSK, 1997)
 - Some mixed corporations since 1941
 - Women-only corporations since the 1980s
- Faculty circles become more important /
percentage of corporated students decreases to 1-2%



After WW II

- Since mid-1980s: search for traditions
- Corps Flaminea (1989)
- Re-establishment KAV Lovania (1996)
- Burschenschaft Arminia (2000)
- French Catholic tradition: Vla-Vla, Mechelse, Vli-Vli, (KASK)
- Traditional societies: Castrum (1991, Antwerp), Plutonica (1993, Louvain), Caeruleus (2003, Hasselt), Drakentemmers (re-est. 2003, Ghent), ...



Summary - Belgium

- 3 student traditions with different caps
 - Free-thinking/ULB: penne (\pm 1870)
 - Mostly ULB, VUB, UMons
 - French-speaking catholic: calotte (1895)
 - Mostly UCL, Saint-Louis, UNamur
 - Dutch-speaking catholic:
studentenpet/clubpetje (1907/1929)
 - Majority of Flemish student associations



Terminology: board

- praesidium / comité
- praeses / président
 - addressed as 'senior'
- ouderejaars / ancien
- schacht / bleu (Fuchs/pledge)
- vice-praeses, ab-actis (secretary), quaestor (treasurer)
- schachtenmeester / maître des bleus
 - addressed as 'meester'/'maior'



Initiation: Flanders

- Two stages:
 - Doop
 - Start of pledging time
 - About 6 months
 - Ribbon over left shoulder
 - Ontgroening
 - Definitive acceptance
 - Often with examination
 - Ribbon over right shoulder



Initiation: Wallonia

- Two stages:
 - Baptême
 - Not related to corporation
 - Organized by student committees
 - Passer la calotte/penne
 - Drinking + some examination
 - Only after that allowed to wear the cap



Colours - Flanders





Colours - Flanders

- Ribbon (2.7 cm) - Band
- President's sash
- 'Clubpetje' ('Bierpetje') - Tönnchen
- Cap (only some corporations) - Mütze
- Zipfel (few corporations)
- Arms, flag, table pennant
- Usually no rapier, but wooden hammer (president) and stick (SM)



Cantus

- Cantus (cfr. Kneipe)
- French-speaking: starts with official part, Dutch-speaking: ends with official part (*Oude Rolderklacht*)
- *Io vivat*: student song of the Low Countries
- Salamander
- Latin commands: *Silentium!*, *Ad libitum*, *ad fundum*, ...



Song books

- 3 student traditions
 - Free-thinking/ULB: Les fleurs du mâle (1922), Codex Studiosorum Bruxellensis, Carpe Diem, Florex (1995)
 - French-speaking catholic: Petit Bitu (1980), le Bitu magnifique (2001)
 - Dutch-speaking catholic: KVHV-codex (1935/1955), Gentse codex (1935/2010), Codex Antwerpen (2021) - also containing the *Comment*



Umbrellas: Flanders (1)

- Local organisations for regional corporations: SK Leuven, MSK Leuven, SK Ghendt, SK Diepenbeek-Hasselt
- KVHV (Katholiek Vlaams Hoogstudentenverbond)
 - Political associations: Leuven (1902), Ghent (1889/1923), Antwerp (1973), (Oostende)
 - Apolitical umbrellas for corporations and faculty circles in Brussels, Mechelen, (Aalst)



Umbrellas: Flanders (2)

- NSV (Nationalistische Studentenvereniging, 1976)
 - Antwerp, Leuven, Ghent, (Brussels, Mechelen, Hasselt, Westland, Noorderkempen)
- KVSR (Katholieke Vlaamse Studentenraad, 2016)
 - Leuven, Sint-Katelijne-Waver, Aalst
- OAB (Ordo Academicus Burgundensis, 1998-2008)
 - Leuven, Louvain-la-Neuve, Hasselt, Antwerp



Umbrellas: Flanders (3)

- Umbrellas of faculty circles
 - LOKO (Leuven), FK Gent (Ghent), ASK-Stuwer, Unifac (Antwerpen), BSG, BSK (Brussels), Ambiorix (Hasselt)



Umbrellas: Wallonia

- **Fédé Wallonne (1902)**
 - Regional associations at UCL in Louvain-la-Neuve
- **Conseil Interrégional (1978)**
 - Regional associations in Namur



Guindaille

- French-speaking Belgium
 - Either a speech or a new song (text)
 - Creativity is considered important
 - Often with a sexual slant



More information

- Plutonica's website
<http://plutonica.be>

- Contact:
plutonica@leuven@gmail.com