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Chamber of Commerce
日白協会兼商工会議所



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EDITORIAL

By HE Ambassador Makita Shimokawa, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Kingdom of Belgium

When I arrived here last September as Ambassador of Japan to the Kingdom of Belgium, I recollected my past business trips and travels to Brussels. Now, I was actually going to live and work here, and I can see it is a bustling international city of just the right size with great food, and with much hospitality extended to those who visit and reside here. This all makes Brussels a perfectly comfortable workplace for me, and I feel grateful.

The year of 2016 had marked the magical celebrations of the 150 Years of Friendship between Japan and Belgium, which was an occasion to look back on our common history. It was also a chance for new opportunities and friendships. While the formal celebrations may have ended, let us make use of that



special momentum which was generated then and which still lingers on today as we find ourselves on the doorstep of the Olympic year of 2020. Let us continue to strengthen these close relations.

As of 2018, there are 223 Japanese companies active in Belgium, an impressive number considering the size of the country, but no coincidence. The “capital of Europe” offers excellent access to other major European cities such as London, Paris and Amsterdam, and with a logistics infrastructure linking up Europe with the rest of the world, as well as the presence of a quality workforce, this country remains one of the most important economic hubs for Japan in Europe. The EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) that came into force in February of this year will play an important and beneficial role in bringing the Japanese and Belgian economies ever more closely together.

Let us not look away from our challenges however. International economic uncertainty is increasing due to the rise of protectionism, with Brexit and the trade dispute between the US and China as the most visible examples. At the same time, the expected economic growth rate of the Eurozone and Belgium in 2019 has recently been revised downwards. However, Belgium is in a good position to cope with these challenges, as it has a lot of networks due to political and geographical reasons. This is also where the presence of the BJA makes a difference, through its valuable contributions to the exchanges of business and culture between Japan, Belgium and Europe. As Ambassador, I am here to

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HE Ambassador Makita Shimokawa

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BJA REPORT

The 15th BJA Golf Cup and Golf Initiation 第15回BJAゴルフコンペとゴルフイニシエーション

Saturday, 14 September 2019 – The National Golf Brussels



(left to right) Nori Kunimoto, CEO of Terumo Europe, Edward Bonsel, Managing Director of Willis Towers Watson, and Yoshikazu Matsumoto, Managing Director of Cast Inc., getting ready for a round of golf under a beautiful blue sky.



Under the guidance of the Pros, the Golf Initiation participants are diligently trying to learn how to grip the club correctly.



Ömer Turna, Partner at EY and the Captain of EU team shares the joy of his team victory with Jun Goto, COO of Panasonic Energy Europe and the Captain of Japan Team.

Once again, thanks to the generous sponsorship by EY, together with a number of BJA company members and other organizations, the BJA could welcome members and friends at The National Golf Brussels in Sterrebeek on Saturday, 14 September 2019 for the 15th BJA Golf Cup and Golf Initiation, followed by dinner and prize giving party.

While the heat of the Indian summer was with us, over 30 golf players enjoyed playing 18 holes with pleasant partners and about 15 guests joined together to experience a complete golf

initiation program on one of the newest golf courses in the vicinity of Brussels. Starting with a delicious lunch buffet, the participants received refreshments throughout the day, cocktails before the dinner and numerous fantastic prizes to take home with them before the event adjourned.

The EU vs. Japan team competition result always brings an exceptional excitement. After a sweet revenge by the EU team to steel the victory from the Japan team last year, the EU team successfully snatched the victory again in 2019. Mr Ömer Tur-





na, Partner at EY and the Captain of the EU team was so thrilled to reclaim the winning replica on behalf of his team while Mr Jun Goto, COO of Panasonic Energy Europe and the Captain of the Japan team promised to take revenge next year!

The BJA would like to thank once again wholeheartedly the sponsors for their generosity, and the enthusiastic participation of the members and partners. Thanks to all of you, this annual BJA Golf event had ended with a great success!

The pictures are by courtesy of Mrs Françoise Demeter of H. De Beukelaer & Co.



WE NEED YOU!

The task of the Membership Committee is to attract and retain members and to inform them of the workings of the BJA. The Committee is composed of two chairmen and four dedicated committee members, dynamic people who work for Japanese or Belgian companies in a variety of sectors. Did you know that 650 members have already joined the BJA? Not given to resting on its laurels, the Membership Committee has set itself the target of increasing that number to 700 in 2020!

To do so, we could resort to the mass media or new technologies of course but we feel that traditional networking will prove to be far more popular and accessible. This is where you come in! Have you come across any new acquaintances of late? Do you know any Belgian companies that have contacts in Japan and haven't joined the BJA yet? Or do you know of any Japanese companies that have a place of business in Belgium and aren't members of the BJA yet? If you feel you have an interesting contact, why not pass on his or her details to the members of the Committee?

We really appreciate your cooperation and look forward to meeting you at our next event.

For those of you who have been toying with the idea of becoming an active member of our Committee make sure to contact the BJA Membership Committee or the BJA Office!

Membership Committee Members

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GC Europe wins Global Excellence Award 2019

GC Europe NV has received the highest recognition from the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM*), and has become the first company in the dental industry, the first Benelux-based company and the first subsidiary company of a Japanese corporation to win this award.

High-quality products, good customer relationships, sustainable growth: these are key attributes defining a company's success. In order to assess and improve their performance, many private, public, and Non-profit organisations striving for excellence take part in the EFQM Global Excellence Award.

This renowned quality award is supported by one of the most challenging assessment processes. The theoretical framework for an assessment is based on eight fundamental concepts of excellence defined by the EFQM. These are:

- › Adding value for customers
- › Leading with vision, inspiration & integrity
- › Managing with agility
- › Succeeding through the talent of people
- › Harnessing creativity & innovation
- › Developing organisational capability
- › Creating a sustainable future
- › Sustaining Outstanding Results

In order to find out how each award applicant is performing in these eight fundamental concepts, a group of specifically trained and experienced managers spends a whole week at an applicant's site. They conduct interviews with individuals working in diverse positions and review documents to recognise good and role model practices. Based on their findings, the assessors identify the strengths of the company as well as areas for improvement. Finally, a feedback report is created and placed at the applicant's disposal to facilitate and promote advancements. The average time spent for the assessment amounts to approximately 500 hours per applicant.

The report is not only given to the respec-



tive applicant, but also submitted to a jury of independent experts. They determine the applicant's level of recognition, i.e. decide who will be an Excellence Award Winner and who is recognized as outstanding in one or more categories, for example Outstanding Achievement in Sustainability. Only those organisations with a sustainable exceptional performance in all eight fundamental concepts of excellence can win the EFQM Global Excellence Award. In principle, there can be more than one or even no Award Winner each year, depending on the number of applicants able to adequately demonstrate role model practices.

This year, the Award Ceremony was held in Helsinki, Finland, on 23 October. Among the selected finalists, GC Europe was the only candidate to become the Global Excellence Award Winner. Among the selected finalists were Swiss Post, Bosch Security Systems, BMW, SDLG, Metsä Group, among others.

Who is GC Europe?

The award-winning company GC Europe is a subsidiary of GC Corporation, an established dental company from Japan. It is considered one of the leading oral health companies worldwide. GC Europe is a provider of products and services for dental professionals, its head office and logistics warehouse being located in Leuven, Belgium. From there, the company conducts business with dealer organisations across Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA) and supports the activities of 12 Regional Branches. The

Leuven site is also a place where some of the products are produced, mounted and packed, and where training concepts are developed and courses are conducted.



Since its beginning in 1921, GC has been recognised by dentists and dental technicians for providing high quality products and services. Through partnering with dental professionals, GC leads the way in promoting oral health worldwide, always combining the latest scientific knowledge with foresight of the needs of the customers. The primary concern is oral health



* EFQM is a not-for-profit membership foundation with 30 years of experience in supporting organisations to reach sustainable Excellence.



in the steadily aging societies. This resulted in GC introducing the concept of Minimum Intervention. Its principles are identifying caries as soon as it occurs, preventing its incurrence whenever possible and restoring the affected teeth immediately, thereby ensuring that the maximum amount of tooth structure is conserved.

GC is the world leader in glass ionomer technology, a leading developer of innovative systems for aesthetic dentistry and a driver of innovation in digital dentistry.

Key strengths for which GC Europe is considered role model

For almost a century, GC has demonstrated a passionate commitment in forging a culture of continuous improvement. The company’s values, principles and way of



working is based on an exceptional and unique culture, GC No Kokoro, which has its roots in Nakama spirit. This spirit is the basis of the company’s culture, promoting a sense of people belonging to a community. Leaders in the company live and promote this culture, values and

principles in all areas. These consistent efforts have ensured that GC associates are fundamentally connected to the company’s systems, allowing everyone to grow and prosper together. Associates of GC Europe are particularly proud of how European and Japanese influences converge in business harmoniously.

The core philosophy of GC Europe can be summed up in one word – Semui. This translates into “thinking from the viewpoint of others” and this way of thinking permeates throughout all aspects of the company’s relationships with dental practitioners and dental technicians working with GC products, associates, suppliers and partners.

As a matter of fact, it is this strong culture of transparency and trust that was highlighted as a particular strength of GC Europe by the EFQM assessors. The philosophy places ethical values over short-term growth objectives, and it supports sustainable product development that benefits the whole society.

Another strength identified by the assessors is GC’s Quality Management System (GQM). Since the foundation, GC puts Quality Management as its core of management. It establishes the way of doing things for all associates and provides the entrepreneurial backbone of daily work in all areas. The system supports creativity and innovation, and ensures that the impact of all innovation activities – in processes, product and programme development etc. – are assessed and refined day after day.

Finally, the concept of Minimum Intervention was honoured in the feedback report. It is one of the essential strategies GC Europe employs to improve global oral hygiene by challenging traditional restorative dentistry and promoting preventative methodologies. Minimum Intervention is a vision of the future of dentistry and is the company’s most important contribution to human health to date.

EFQM Global Excellence Award journey

From its beginnings in Japan in 1921, GC has made the journey to excellence a hallmark of all its activities and to this day, every new associate is aware of the role that he or she plays in helping the company to achieve this.

The journey of GC Europe towards winning the Global Excellence Award started in 2006. The company participated for the first time, and received the Committed to Excellence recognition. GC Europe received a 4 star Recognised for Excellence in 2008 and a 5 star Recognised for Excellence in 2010. The first time GC Europe became an EFQM Award finalist was in 2013. Three years later, in 2016, the company won an EFQM Award Prize in the category leading with vision, inspiration & integrity and finally, it is the EFQM Global Excellence Award Winner 2019.

During this journey, the challenge was to keep momentum and energy. GC Europe took each EFQM assessment seriously and used the feedback report to evaluate its current performance and continue to promote further improvement in the identified areas. Skilled and motivated GC associates, who are committed to continuous improvement and excellence, made it possible to overcome the existing challenges and to reach the ultimate goal of receiving the EFQM’s highest possible recognition – the Global Excellence Award.



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Dear BJA Members,

Allow me to start by saying that I didn't expect that the BJA Executive Director, Mrs Oto-Kellens, would ask me to take the helm of this important boat, the role of Chair of the BJA Friendship Committee. I must say that I am very honored. In fact, what would we do without friendship? After all, aren't friends life venture companions helping us to pursue the path of happiness? But let me briefly introduce myself so we can start our new friendship conversation.

I had been living in Japan for seven years, which allowed me to discover Japan day by day in Kyushu (Sasebo), Kansai (Kyoto), and Tokyo. I first went to the Nagasaki Junior College, then to the Nagasaki International University. After that, I went to Bukkyō University in Kyoto where I studied Buddhism (as a scientist). I then enrolled at the Université Libre de Bruxelles, where I spend most of my time thinking about the possible link between 'Western' and 'Eastern' philosophy. This drew me to Japan once again, this time at the University of Tokyo, before ending up in Brussels writing a PhD thesis about the Japanese philosopher Ōmori Shōzō. While doing this, I became a freelance sworn translator and interpreter of Japanese to French and joined the Cool Japan Ambassador program.

My research focuses on Ōmori Shōzō, a leading Japanese philosopher of the 20th-century. My goal is to give a philosophical analysis of his innovative concepts. I address the epistemological problem of reality by means of the logical relationship between Mind and World. I intend to give a comprehensive picture of the ways in which the western philosophical tradition deals with this issue and its entailing paradoxes. In the process of my research, I have written many papers on these objects of studies, which included an edited volume in French in 2016 that discusses the reception of Cartesian philosophy in Japan; and also, more recently was released another volume in French dealing with the philosophy of religion and spirituality in Japan.

This brings me to the view that I have about the BJA Friendship committee. In Japan, when we think about the meaning of the self, one could argue that the self is a personal consciousness that has been constructed by multiple layers. This could be the society, the family members or simply put, our friends, etc. Amongst those layers, allow me to talk about the family and come back to friendship after a short detour.

It is said that, in Japan, the communication style stems from the dependent relationship created at home between mother and child. The use of a maternal figure is observed among members of various social groups outside the home. As symbolized by the mother's presence in the family, it is a relationship of compassion and acceptance of the other, where one feels safe and relieved. In Japanese, we talk about this using the one word 'dependency (amae – 甘え)'. The Japanese attach great

value to establishing a relationship where, while passively waiting for the interlocutor's kindness, one becomes mutually dependent on that interlocutor.

In Japan, the Family is structured with the 'house (ie – 家)'. In Belgium (Europe), the family is nuclear in the sense that the emphasis is on the independence of each member. In Japan a 'house' is a system with a 'head of family (honke – 本家)' of 'successors (bunke – 分家)'. The Japanese are proud of this lineage. Japanese values of the 'inside (uchi – 内)' are formed by the diversity of its social organization and its relationship with the 'outside (soto – 外)' to be found out of the 'home' system. Members of the same group have a sense of 'uchi' and form intimate relationships that respect hierarchical relationships such as age and generation. A good example is the family emotion shared in the workplace, at school, and in the activities of a club such as the BJA Friendship committee.

In that sense, I think that the BJA Friendship Committee is a place that one can find a moment of interpersonal trust, where the feelings and emotions of the members are considered as important as the communication obtained through language and its words. The important thing is to form a 'relational reciprocity' by trusting the other and making efforts to accept his thoughts and ideas. Through relationships of emotional tolerance, I want that our members feel free to acquire a tacit understanding of each-other. The "amae" the feeling of dependency and the feeling of being able to count on the other is the basis of relationships of trust that do not necessarily rely solely on the language of words.

If, in the European society, mutual understanding based on words is a major premise, intentions and requirements are communicated considering distinctions and points of potential conflict between people. In contrast, in Japan, with emotion-based communication, information sharing and communication about people's intentions or opinions can be achieved without an effort to 'convince' the interlocutor inherent in a simple logic of words. I sincerely hope that those first seeming paradoxes will encounter a new kind of vision for the BJA Friendship committee, because as the relation between Europeans shows, everyday friendship is a universal value in which I believe.

Pierre Bonneels,
BJA Friendship Committee Chairman



EU Committee news

THE EU-JAPAN CENTRE FOR INDUSTRIAL COOPERATION

The EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation is a non-profit organisation co-managed by the European Commission (DG GROW) and the Japanese Government, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI). With head office in Tokyo and office in Brussels, staffed with bi-lingual managers and coordinators, the Centre is an important bridge between Europe and Japan. For the past three decades, the EU-Japan Centre has played a significant role in preparing and executing a variety of informative webinars, seminars and dedicated information helpdesk services for the benefit of EU SMEs, research organisations and policy stakeholders. Its range of activities are currently structured in 3 pillars.

1. Policy Analysis and Recommendations
2. Promotion of Industrial Innovation and business R&D Cooperation
3. Business Support Services that aim at facilitating exchanges of experience and know-how between EU and Japanese businesses:
 - › Vulcanus in Europe & Vulcanus in Japan: Every year, highly skilled and motivated students from Europe or Japan are selected to undertake industrial internships in Japan or Europe.
 - › Lean visits in Europe: The aim of 2-day visits is to help raise EU industrial competitiveness. During each visit, selected EU companies will learn lean principles in action with lectures, shop-floor visits, coaching and detailed explanations provided by a host company in the EU.
 - › Cluster/SME missions to Japan: Each Cluster/SME mission lasts 4 days and includes: (1) 1-day partnering event fully organised by the Centre to initiate collaboration between industry associations or cluster organisations. As a result, selected participants have an opportunity to

attend face-to-face meetings with Japanese companies of their choice (2) and 3-day Japanese technological fair leading to possible business opportunities in the targeted sectors like Nanotech or Biotech.

- › World Class Manufacturing trainings (WCM June and WCM November): The 5-day World Class Manufacturing training provides an in-depth analysis of Japanese manufacturing methodology and is aimed exclusively at EU managers with knowledge of WCM and an engineering background.
- › “Get ready for Japan” (GRFJ): GRFJ is a 2-week mission to help 14 EU SMEs to get an in-depth understanding of how to do business in Japan and to have individual meetings with Japanese companies of their choice.

“The experience I gained during this GRFJ (2019) training course has been increasing its value more and more, and already now I can say that it is very important. All the information I have received is of great value and it is up to us how we use it. The overall atmosphere and organization of training contributed to a better understanding of Japan. The most important lessons learned during the training were the knowledge of the mentality and way of thinking and business negotiation of the Japanese. Definitely, this training course should help our company in accessing the local market and networking with Japanese companies.”

(Participant from Czech Republic, attended GRFJ 2019)

More information:

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EU-Japan Centre
for Industrial Cooperation

日欧産業協力センター

設立から32年を迎えた日欧産業協力センター

日欧産業協力センターは、1986年の日・EC閣僚会議における合意に基づき、日欧間の産業協力を担う中核的組織として設立されました。人材育成研修事業から始まり、日EUビジネス・ラウンドテーブル事務局、政策関連事業、日欧企業支援、科学技術・イノベーション協力支援、セミナーおよび人材研修事業等、幅広い分野に対応しています。

また今節は日EU経済連携協定発効に伴い、EPAヘルプデスクを設置し欧州中小企業に向けEPAに対する認知向上と機会利用支援のための情報・サービス提供にも力を入れています。

日本企業向けのビジネスサポートには以下のような事業があります。

エンタープライズ・ヨーロッパ・ネットワーク (EEN) 中小企業の国際化や国境を越えたビジネスパートナー探索の支援を目的としたEUが提供する中小企業支援サービスです。日欧産業協力センターは、同ネットワークの日本における窓口となっています。

EU 理工系大学生向け 日本企業研修「ヴルカヌス・イン・ジャパン」：欧州の理工系学生を対象とした一年間の奨学金付プログラムです。日本での4ヶ月間の日本語研修と8ヶ月間の日本企業におけるインターンシップから成り立っています。日本人大学生向け欧州企業研修「ヴルカヌス・イン・ヨーロッパ」も行っています。

ホライズン 2020 ナショナル・コンタクト・ポイント：ホライズン 2020 は全欧州規模で実施される、最大規模の研究及び革新的開発を促進するためのフレームワークプログラムで

す。日欧産業協力センターは日本政府よりホライズン 2020 の「ナショナル・コンタクト・ポイント」に認定され、日本からの参加支援などを行っています。

日欧技術移転ヘルプデスク：日欧州の大学、研究機関、企業や研究者に向けて、日欧間の技術移転に役立つ情報を発信しています。

SPACE.JAPAN：宇宙関連産業における日欧ビジネスや技術連携をサポートすることを目的としたプロジェクトです。

欧州企業向けにも、日本のビジネス環境に関する理解を深め、協業の機会創出を目的に各種人材研修事業を行っており、毎年多くの欧州ビジネスパーソンを日本に派遣しています。

-最近のプログラム参加者から寄せられた感想：「この研修で得た経験は、(時間が経つにつれて) そのありがたみが増して、今ではとても重要であると(確信して)言えます。私が得た情報はすべてにおいて非常に価値があり、それをどのように活かすかは私たち次第です。全体的な雰囲気と研修の構成により日本への理解を深めることができました。研修中に学んだ最も重要な事は、日本人のビジネスに対するメンタリティや考え方、交渉に関する知識でした。間違いなく、この研修は当社が現地マーケットにアクセスし、日本企業とのネットワークを築くのに役立ちました。」(Get Ready For Japan 2019 プログラム チェコ共和国企業参加者より)

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EU-Japan news

MEETING BETWEEN PRIME MINISTER ABE AND PRESIDENT-ELECT OF THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL (FORMER PRIME MINISTER OF THE KINGDOM OF BELGIUM) MICHEL

On 25 September, Mr Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan, who was visiting New York to attend the 74th session of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly, held a meeting with H.E. Mr Charles Michel, President-elect of the European Council, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Belgium. The overview of the meeting is as follows.

At the outset, Prime Minister Abe stated that he was pleased to be able to meet again for the first time in approximately two years, and congratulated Mr Michel on his election as President-elect of the European Council. Furthermore, Prime Minister Abe stated that the EU was an important partner of Japan that shared the universal values of freedom, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law, and that he intended to work closely with President-elect Michel to further develop Japan-EU relations. In response, President-elect Michel stated that he was pleased to be able to meet Prime Minister Abe again, expressed his gratitude for the congratulations, and stated that he intended to continue to further deepen not only Japan-Belgium relations but also cooperation on issues common to Japan and the EU.

Regarding Japan-EU relations, Prime Minister Abe stated that the Japan-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) was operating well and that he intended to make use of the agreement to further expand trade and investment. He also stated that cooperation based on the Japan-EU Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) was proceeding steadily, most particularly in

the Europa Connectivity Forum, and that he intended to work together to expand these kinds of cooperation. In response, President-elect Michel explained about issues to which he gave priority as the President-elect of the European Council, including the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the EU, climate change, Africa, and other foreign policy themes, and stated that he intended to cooperate with Japan, which shared the values of democracy and the rule of law. Furthermore, Prime Minister Abe welcomed the initiatives by the EU toward further easing of import restrictions on Japanese food products, etc., and then called for its cooperation toward elimination of the restrictions as early as possible.

Regarding North Korea, Prime Minister Abe stated that it is necessary to realize the CVID of all weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles of all ranges, and it is crucial to implement of the United Nations Security Council resolutions to realize it. Furthermore, he called for the understanding and cooperation towards the early resolution of the abductions issue, and President-elect Michel expressed his understanding.

Concerning Japan-Belgium relations, the two leaders confirmed that the ties between the imperial household of Japan and the royal family of Belgium are the foundation of the friendly relations between their two countries, and they agreed to develop the relations of their two countries in a wide range of fields.

Source: www.mofa.go.jp/erp/ep/page4e_001100.html

» keep reading from p.1

actively increase the involvement of the Embassy of Japan in the activities of the BJA, in order for us to stand firm together against uncertain economic times.

We have looked at our past and our future. What about the present? Preserving the business environment which has been established with such great care and energy is just as important. A current issue which is of concern to many is the delay in the issuance of the so-called single permits. I can say that the Embassy of Japan in Belgium is working together with the Belgian authorities around this issue and is aiming for a quick resolution of the matter. Safety is another. Although the terror-

ist attacks of 2016 have left a deep impression in our collective memory, all indicates that the threat of terrorism is declining. Nonetheless, we are actively cooperating with the Belgian authorities as well to make Japanese businesses feel at ease here.

When I reflect upon the role the Embassy of Japan in Belgium can play in all of this, I envision it to be a place that is open, and easily accessible to all. So contact us, or pay us a visit, we will be there for you.

Twitter Account of HE Ambassador Shimokawa:
twitter.com/ambshimokawa

EU AND JAPAN CHART NEW GROUND IN GLOBAL CONNECTIVITY

On Friday 27 September 2019, the European Commission launched its Europa Connectivity Forum – an innovative multi-stakeholder international conference aimed at fostering dialogue and strengthening ties between governments, financial institutions, and private sector actors in Europe and beyond. Building on the already close cooperation between the EU and its Asia-Pacific partners, this first edition of the Forum was held under the theme EU-Asia Connectivity: Building Bridges for a Sustainable Future.

The President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, who delivered a keynote speech in the opening plenary session, said: *“What we do politically must respond to the expectations and worries of our citizens. Increased connectivity is part of this response, because it benefits our people and our economies. Because it creates stability and prosperity for all.”* He added: *“Our European approach to connectivity is at the heart of our partnership with Asia, and we have a clear message: the Eu-*

ropean Union wants to engage more and to reinforce the connections between Europe and Asia in a mutually-beneficial way.”

The EU and Japan: taking the lead on sustainable connectivity

At the invitation of President Juncker, Shinzō Abe, Prime Minister of Japan, was the Forum’s special guest and delivered a keynote speech at the opening plenary. President Juncker and Prime Minister Abe concluded a Partnership on Sustainable Connectivity and Quality Infrastructure between the European Union and Japan, underlining further the strategic importance of the EU-Japan partnership that both parties have been committed to strengthen over the last years.

This new Partnership is the first of its kind, highlighting connectivity as a key priority in the European Union’s work as a global actor. It confirms Europe’s ambition to work together with like-minded partners in promoting connectivity that is sustainable across the board – fiscally, economically,

socially and environmentally.

Generating global debate on the European approach to connectivity

The Europa Connectivity Forum is politically underpinned by the Joint Communication ‘Connecting Europe and Asia – Building Blocks for an EU Strategy’, launched by the European Commission and the High Representative in September 2018. In the Strategy, the EU sets out its approach to connectivity, which has been at the very heart of successful European integration.

The Forum, which was livestreamed, highlighted the major opportunities of stronger connectivity, as well as explore the many challenges. These range from multilateral governance aspects and the vast financing needs – making it essential to partner up with the private sector and mobilise private investments – to the importance of developing mutually agreed, interoperable standards and norms to underpin 21st century transport, energy, digital and human connectivity.

Source: ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_19_5851

HIGH-REPRESENTATIVE AND VICE-PRESIDENT FEDERICA MOGHERINI VISITS TOKYO TO BUILD ON SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENTS IN EU-JAPAN RELATIONS

On 22 October, the High Representative and Vice-President of the European Commission Federica Mogherini represented the European Union at the enthronement ceremony of His Majesty the Emperor Naruhito in Tokyo, alongside representatives of over 190 countries and international organisations. The High Representative on the occasion of this visit also met with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Toshimitsu Motegi, and the Minister of Defence, Taro Kono. Her meetings provided an opportunity to revisit some of the landmark achievements that have marked the past five years of EU-Japan relations. Signed at the 2018 EU-Japan Summit, the Strategic Partnership Agreement, provisionally applied since February 2019, and the Economic Partnership Agreement, in force since February 2019, are landmark deals that have provided a solid basis to develop our close cooperation, promote our shared interests, and bring tangible benefits to people’s lives through increased trade and investment.

With Ministers Motegi and Kono, the High Representative discussed areas on which the EU and Japan have agreed to cooperate more closely, notably connectivity as well as security and defence matters. The Partnership on Sustainable Connectivity and Quality Infrastructure, which Prime Minister Abe and President Juncker signed in Brussels on 27 September, paves the way for close co-

operation bilaterally, multilaterally and in third countries on transport, energy, digital and people-to-people contacts. The EU is also committed to strengthening its security cooperation in and with Asia, and in this context is ready to develop a security and defence cooperation partnership with Japan, including on cyber and maritime security and crisis management. The High Representative also exchanged views with both Ministers on regional and international issues, including the Korean Peninsula, the South China Sea, the Gulf region and Afghanistan.

High Representative Mogherini also met with Fumio Kishida, member of the Diet and former Minister for Foreign Affairs. She thanked him for his support in preparing the Strategic Partnership Agreement and the Economic Partnership Agreement during his mandate as Foreign Minister.

The High Representative also met with Japanese academics and representatives of think tanks and civil society. She emphasised that shared interests and the convergence of views of the EU and Japan on many issues of global relevance, from free trade to democracy, human rights, and from nuclear non-proliferation to effective multilateralism, will continue to provide the bedrock of the EU-Japan partnership and friendship.

Source: eeas.europa.eu/delegations/japan/69309/high-representativevice-president-federica-mogherini-visits-tokyo-build-significant_en

news for the members

400 YEARS OF MANNEKEN-PIS

The original statue of Manneken-Pis is 400 years old. From 16 October 2019 to 15 May 2020, the City of Brussels is celebrating this anniversary with a program that highlights the history of the fountain.

In the 15th century, Manneken-Pis already played an essential role in the drinking water supply in Brussels. In 1619, the authorities in Brussels ordered a new version of the statue from the sculptor Hieronymus Duquesnoy for the renovation of the fountain: the column, the basin and the statue were then replaced.

This 400th anniversary of Manneken-Pis is celebrated with several events:

› **Manneken-Pis treasure hunt at Winter Wonders**

From 29 November 2019 to 5 January 2020, visitors of the Winter Wonders (and Christmas market) can look for Manneken-Pis. A large treasure hunt is being organized at the trail of the Christmas event in Brussels. A geolocalisation app takes players of all ages on a treasure hunt and offers the chance to win a prize in the shape of Manneken-Pis, this year's guest of honour at Winter Wonders.

› **Manneken-Pis at the City Museum**

Visit the Brussels City Museum and explore its room dedicated to the famous fountain and its history:
Manneken-Pis Room
Brussels City Museum
Grand-Place
From Tuesday to Sunday from 10h to 17h
The entrance ticket for the Museum also gives access to the GardeRobe MannekenPis.

› **Pop-up display at the GardeRobe MannekenPis**

From 16 October 2019 to 31 May 2020, a pop-up display at the GardeRobe MannekenPis highlights the history of the costumes of Manneken-Pis and the dressing of the statue.

GardeRobe MannekenPis

Rue du Chêne 19

1000 Brussels

From Tuesday to Sunday from 10h to 17h

› **Design a costume for the 400th anniversary of the Manneken-Pis**

To celebrate his 400th birthday, the museums are inviting young Brussels citizens to create a new outfit for Manneken-Pis. Every primary school in the City of Brussels can submit a drawing or prototype. A jury will select an entry, which will be produced either by the winning class or by the statue's official dresser. Tagged as the 400th anniversary outfit, the design will be added to the GardeRobe's collection, following an official presentation ceremony at the City Hall on 7 May 2020. An exhibition will also present all of the schools' entries.

› **Souvenir coin**

The Royal Mint of Belgium and the Royal Dutch Mint are officially producing the new Belgian 2.50 euro coin marked '400 years of Manneken Pis'. This coin, specially struck to honour Manneken-Pis, is packaged in a colourful coincard and is legal tender in Belgium. The coin is available at: www.herdenkingsmunten.be

Source:
brussels-express.eu/400-years-of-manneken-pis



SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITY FOR THE 16TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR JAPANESE STUDIES (EAJS) AT GHEENT UNIVERSITY

The Japanese Studies Department at Ghent University has been selected to host the 16th International Conference of the European Association for Japanese Studies (EAJS), August 26-29, 2020. The Japanese Studies program is well-established at Ghent University and in recent years we have seen an increase in student numbers and in teaching and research staff. The Japanese Studies Department has built a network of 14 Japanese partner universities and organizes student workshops with Kanazawa, Kyushu and Tohoku Universities on a yearly basis. We will also host the Japanese Language Proficiency Test in 2019 for the second time. Furthermore, we work closely together with the City of Ghent in its sister-partnership with Kanazawa and we also house the Kanazawa University Liaison Office for Europe. As part of their curriculum, our students can follow a two-year minor in Economic Studies. Moreover, in order to obtain their MA degree, all students at our Department are now required to take up internships at companies and public institutions in Belgium as well as Japan.

We are glad and honored that the EAJS Council decided to award the organization of the 2020 conference to Ghent, the EAJS conference being a major international event in Japanese Studies, which attracts more than 1000 participants from Europe, Japan and the US. The conference brings together experts in the field of Japanese Studies as well as language teachers to increase knowledge about Japanese history, society, religion, politics and economy and provides a platform to discuss recent developments in Japanese linguistics and language teaching. It will also provide the opportunity to connect the general



public and Japanese Studies through a photo exhibition on Japan and other cultural events in the city of Ghent.

However, in order to organize an academic event this size and guarantee the quality of the event, we highly depend on public, corporate and private sponsorship. While we already received support letters from the Japanese Embassy, the City of Ghent, as well as from the Province of East-Flanders, we also reach out to the international business community and BJA members for financial support. We can offer our sponsors promotion on our conference website, in the printed program, in the conference report and at the venue itself. As a sponsor of the 16th International Conference of Japanese Studies, there will be ample opportunity to reach an inter-

national and influential audience and to increase your visibility and good reputation amongst relevant professionals.

Should you wish to become a sponsor of the 16th International European Conference for Japanese Studies or to find out more about different sponsorship types, do not hesitate to contact: andreas.niehaus@ugent.be.

Sincerely,
The organizing committee,

Andreas Niehaus,
Mick Deneckere,
Marlies Holvoet

Contact:
andreas.niehaus@ugent.be

news for the members



Mitsuko Uchida & Jörg Widmann © Claudia Höhne



Bach Collegium Japan & Masaaki Suzuki © Marco Borggreve



Screens of Memories - Naomi Kawase © Jean-Pierre Dalbéra

SUPPORT PROMINENT JAPANESE ARTISTS IN THE HEART OF EUROPE

BOZAR – Centre for fine arts

The Centre for Fine Arts (BOZAR) located in Brussels, the capital of Europe, welcomes more than 1.2 million visitors each year to nearly 6.000 activities such as: exhibitions, concerts, projections, debates as well as corporate events in its landmark building in Brussels.

BOZAR is a multidisciplinary platform for contemporary intercultural dialogue with an international mission guided by a commitment to artistic excellence.

Furthermore BOZAR has a long tradition of promoting Japanese art and culture throughout its program. Every year, prominent classical as well as non-classical Japanese musicians come and perform masterpieces in the prestigious Henry Le Boeuf hall. Besides that, important exhibitions are regularly hosted that propose new perspectives on Japanese culture, the latest being a dive into Japanese expressionism from the 1950s and

1960s proposed in the Centre for Fine Arts during the winter of 2016-2017 season.

Given the breadth of its activities, as well as its unparalleled network throughout Europe and beyond, BOZAR is uniquely positioned to initiate a pan-European dialogue with Japan. The increasingly multicultural and interdependent reality of today's societies, as well as their rapidly changing nature, lends a sense of urgency to the efforts of building bridges between people.

Upcoming Japanese artists

During the 2019-2020 season, BOZAR will offer new opportunities for Japanese companies to participate in the foregrounding of Japanese culture in Brussels. Music wise, after the breathtaking performance of Mitsuko Uchida with clarinetist and composer Jörg Widmann in October, two major concerts showcasing Japan's contemporary classical music scene will be presented at BOZAR.

The refined orchestral sounds of Japanese composer Toru Takemitsu's *How Slow the Wind* will resonate through the Henry Le Boeuf Hall on the 4th of March 2020. The NHK Symphony Orchestra from Tokyo will be led by conductor Paavo Järvi and accompanied by Khatia Buniatishvili on piano. The intimate piece *How Slow the Wind* will render every corner of the orchestra audible, and sets the scene for the concert as a whole. Pianist Khatia Buniatishvili will lead the entire orchestra through her powerful piano technique for a piano concerto by Beethoven as well as Rachmaninoff's second symphony.

Thirty years ago, Japanese organist and conductor Masaaki Suzuki (Kobe, 1954) founded the Bach Collegium Japan, which he heads to this day. They will be performing at BOZAR on the 21st of March 2020. The orchestra and choir are specialised in playing Baroque music. Together they went on a wonderful journey through the whole of Bach's oeuvre, with extremely fa-



BOZAR by night © Yves Gervais



Henry Le Boeuf hall © Bruno Vessiez



Henry Le Boeuf hall © J Latteur

vourable reviews from audiences at home and abroad. The clarity, austerity and spiritual power for which Masaaki is famed, are appropriate to this performance of Bach's St John Passion.

Regarding other artistic disciplines, BOZAR hopes to present in the summer 2020 the "INFINITY ROOM" by the Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama to offer visitors the possibility to enter in a different state of mind, to experience an out-of-body experience created through repetition and light. In the pipeline for 2021, an important retrospective on the filmmaker Naomi Kawase mixing film projections, installations and conferences of the artist is currently being planned. As is the case for her films, the installations Spring-Summer-Fall-Winter and Screens of Memories are strongly inspired by the filmmaker's native town Nara. Those impressive panoramic installations were already presented at the Centre Pompidou in Paris in fall 2018 and will be hosted by BOZAR in 2021.

BOZAR offers a wide variety of ways to support those artistic projects according to company's needs. From sponsoring an exhibition or concert to a VIP business event to invite privileged clients, BOZAR can offer unique tailor-made solutions.

Platform of creative exchange

Moreover, BOZAR and its wide network of partners allows companies to engage in a deeper creative exchange. As a cultural platform where dialogue and diversity are central, BOZAR is committed to building deeper partnerships in line with the current needs of companies. Those can take multiple forms and lead often to a mutual and stimulating recognition of their work between artists and employees. For example, an energy company co-organizes with BOZAR a series of stimulating talks, debates and performances around the future of energy which allows creative approaches to feed business reflections. On the other edge, the European project Studiotopia, encourages renowned and emerging

contemporary visual artists to host a scientist or researcher in the independent & inspiring environment of their studios, reversing the usual approach whereby artists are invited to work at R&D departments of universities or companies. With the objective of creating bridges, BOZAR is ready to explore new possible ways of collaboration that can get the most out of both worlds.

The ambition of BOZAR, through its wide cultural program, is to create curiosity and discovery. The discovery of something new beyond boundaries, which allows to engage in an experience of inspiring beauty and reflexion. As an individual or as a company, BOZAR is there to facilitate your way to those unique moments of cultural enrichment. So don't hesitate to get in touch. The prestigious setting and the extensive experience of the BOZAR-team awaits you.

6th Young Professionals Cross-Chamber Networking Night

Thursday, 17 October 2019 – Microsoft Innovation Center Brussels



The participants could try on the virtual reality helmets and movements-controlled computers.



Philippe Gosseye delivering his inspiring speech.



Mathilde Brasseur, Manager Corporate Affairs Belux at JTI and BJA member, networking with participants from other chambers.

The Cross-Chamber Network is an initiative born out of the wish of several chambers of commerce, including the BJA, to increase their visibility and organize events together in order to expand the networking opportunities of their members, especially the younger generation. Together with Amcham Belgium, AmCham EU, the Belgian-Chinese Chamber of Commerce, the Belgian-Italian Chamber of Commerce, ICC Belgium and with the support of several other chambers of commerce, the BJA invited young professionals to a thrilling networking night kindly hosted by Microsoft.

The 120 participants were welcomed at the Microsoft Innovation Center, where they could try Microsoft's latest interactive technologies, such as virtual reality and movement-controlled computers. They then listened to an inspiring speech by Philippe Gosseye, Senior Director at Dell Technologies Marketing, on B2B marketing in the digital era.

The event ended with a networking cocktail where the participants had the opportunity to make new business contacts and exchange ideas. Each of them received a copy of Mr Gosseye's book 'the Extraverted Nerd'.



The Japanese Collection in Leuven – Louvain: An unbelievable history comes alive for its centennial

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE 1920S JAPANESE DONATION

The Ravages of the Great War

One of the greatest but most forgotten cultural heritages of KU Leuven and UCLouvain in terms of its global history is about to celebrate its 100th anniversary: the 1920s Japanese book donation. In 1926 the last shipment of, in total, over 3,100 Japanese titles comprising almost 14,000 volumes – most of them Early Modern books of the Edo Period (1600-1868) – arrived at Leuven University. This Japanese donation is a lesser-known part of the global dimension of the international programme to rebuild the famous University Library that had been destroyed in 1914.

The Visit of Crown Prince Hirohito

During the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, the Japanese delegation was asked to collaborate in the restoration of the library. As a result, a Japanese National Committee was then established in the following months. An important milestone in the Japanese donation efforts was the visit to the ruins of the Leuven University Library by the Japanese then-Crown Prince and later Shōwa Emperor Hirohito in June 1921. Upon his return to Japan, the Imperial Household Ministry of Japan announced the donation of 10,000 Yen – an immense sum at

subishi), the Sumitomo family and the Mitsui family, as well as by the National Bank of Japan.

A Time Capsule of Pre-modern Japan

The donated money was to be used to assemble a “Japan library” to give to Leuven as a representation of “Japanese Civilization” in Europe. From the very beginning, the aim was not only to contribute to the restoration but also to turn Leuven into a center for the study of Japanese culture and history, indicating Japan’s new self-confidence after the First World War.

The Japanese National Committee headed by Shibusawa employed Wada Mankichi, director of the library of Tokyo Imperial University and head of the Library Association. Wada, Japan’s father of library studies and a legendary bibliophile, was to oversee the selection. Consequently, the donation became the most comprehensive collection of Early Modern Japanese books – mainly from the 17th, 18th and early 19th century – in Europe in terms of the meticulously systematic way in which it was organized. The various books were carefully selected and categorized into several fields, ranging from literature, history,



The Disastrous Earthquake of 1923

On 1 September 1923 the disastrous Great Kantō Earthquake struck the Tokyo-Yokohama region, with a death toll of more than 100,000 people and destroying large parts of Japan’s capital including its most important libraries. Many countries immediately started to collect donations for the survivors and to support the reconstruction. To the great admiration of many observers in Japan substantial contributions came from Belgium – which was itself still suffering from the ravages of the Great War – including books from Leuven University. Despite the loss of millions of rare books in Tokyo, the Japanese National Committee, in close collaboration with Belgian Ambassador Albert de Bassompierre, pushed for the continuation of the donation efforts and the first shipments started to arrive in Leuven.



Crown Prince Hirohito visits the ruins of the Leuven University Library in 1921



Viscount Shibusawa Eiichi (1840-1931), the “Father of Japanese capitalism”

that time – to the reconstruction efforts. This led to further major donations by Japan’s most renowned business leader Shibusawa Eiichi, by influential affluent families such as the Iwasaki family (Mit-

subishi), the Sumitomo family and the Mitsui family, as well as by the National Bank of Japan. The donated money was to be used to assemble a “Japan library” to give to Leuven as a representation of “Japanese Civilization” in Europe. From the very beginning, the aim was not only to contribute to the restoration but also to turn Leuven into a center for the study of Japanese culture and history, indicating Japan’s new self-confidence after the First World War.

The Japanese Collection in Leuven – Louvain: An unbelievable history comes alive for its centennial

The Second World War

The new Library was almost completely destroyed by fire in 1940 during heavy fighting in the surroundings of Leuven. In Japan it was assumed that nothing had survived the catastrophe, but miraculously, both the almost 14000 Japanese books and the furniture survived the fire.

The Partition in 1968

In 1968 when Leuven University split into KU Leuven and UCLouvain, the book donation was transported to Louvain-la-Neuve where it has been well-preserved to this day. But in the decades to follow it was forgotten by the world, although the bookshelves were later reused at KU Leuven when the new East Asian Library was established in the early 1980s. Despite se-



rious attempts on both sides, the full potential of this important heritage of both universities could not be realized until now. Professor Willy Vande Walle, the founder of the Department of Japanese Studies at KU Leuven, previously already showcased a selection of the collection in 2001 with the exhibition “Orientalia”, and emphasized the im-

portance of the donation in several international publications. Indebted to his efforts and to those of Ms Emilie Vilcot at UCLouvain, who tirelessly improved the state of preservation of the collection in recent years, this joint fundraising campaign of KU Leuven and UCLouvain aims at finally letting the collection come fully alive.

THE FUTURE: CO-OPERATION TO VALIDATE THE JAPANESE DONATION

The Japanese Collection

In a joint effort by KU Leuven and UCLouvain, a new professorship will be established with the aim of developing the enormous potential of the Japanese 1920s donation – not only for the academic community but also for the wider public in Belgium and beyond. The full set of the 1920s bookshelves has an im-

mense symbolic value to both universities by representing their connection to Japan, and is to be properly restored.

From October 2020 to January 2021 a major exhibition on “1920s Japan in Leuven – The Japanese Book Donation and Beyond”, organized by Prof Dr Jan Schmidt and Dr Demmy Verbeke, will be held at KU Leuven. As a first cornerstone to introduce the forgotten donation to the public, the exhibition catalogue published by Leuven University Press will introduce its history and 100 representative books. Part of the fundraising is intended to subsidize these efforts.

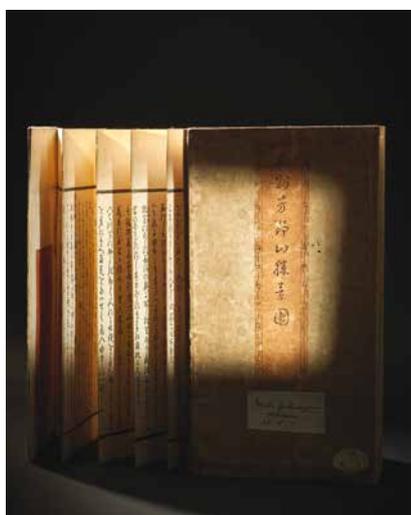
These initial steps will lay the groundwork upon which the new professorship will develop the collection and also make it digitally accessible as a joint effort of UCLouvain and KU Leuven along with Japanese project partners such as the National Museum of Japanese History in Sakura. Just in time for the upcoming 600th anniversary of our university, this fundraising effort will help to honor the centennial of the 1920s Japanese

donation as an integral part of our global history.

The KU Leuven and UCLouvain's Co-operation Strengthened by Japan

The University of Leuven is almost six centuries old. Many of Europe's leading scholars refined their talents in Leuven. Writing the European continent's intellectual history without paying due attention to great minds like Erasmus, Vesalius, Mercator and many other Lovanienses is next to impossible. Leuven is where Georges Lemaître formulated his Big Bang theory and Christian de Duve conducted research that won him the 1974 Nobel Prize in Medicine.

In 1968 the bilingual University of Leuven was split into the Dutch-speaking KU Leuven and the French-speaking UCLouvain. Hailed as Europe's most innovative university, KU Leuven offers a myriad of disciplines that all proudly belong to the top 100 in their field. Its publication record puts KU Leuven at the forefront of the global conversation. UCLouvain is one of the highest-ranked universities in



Panorama's of Mt. Yoshino in Yamato Province, by Kaibara Ekiken, 1713 Washū Yoshinoyama Shōkeizu (45F1, p. 461 in catalogue)



the francophone world. It is a European pioneer in educational technology, and was the first French-speaking university in Europe to offer open online courses on the edX platform.

Fifty years after the scission, the two universities have grown very close together. They relate to each other like daughters of one and the same mother. Unity in diversity, that is the reality of today.

There is intense research collaboration,

the two sisters co-invest in multilingual programmes and joint research, they position themselves jointly in the capital city of Brussels and on the international forum. The two together form an academic powerhouse in Europe. They educate more than 80,000 students from over 100 nationalities. Their drive to innovate is clear: €698 million in annual research investment, hundreds of projects funded by European research programmes, and a joint portfolio of almost 200 active spin-offs.



Today, the two universities are once again united in their common objective of strengthening links with Japan and Japanese universities and maximizing the value of the Japanese collection donated to the university in the 1920s. The precious collection was donated by Japan to symbolize the friendship between Japan and Belgium, after the library of Leuven was completely destroyed and burned during the First World War. Today, the collection also symbolizes the intense collaboration and intertwining of the two parts of the Universitas Lovaniensis. One hundred years after the donation, Japan reunites KU Leuven and UCLouvain again.

Pictures courtesy of KU Leuven and UCLouvain

HOW TO SUPPORT THIS CO-OPERATION

› Donations to the KU Leuven UC Louvain

20-21 Japan fund

If you wish to support the KU Leuven UCLouvain 20-21 Japan Fund, you can make a donation to the fund. Donations up to 5.000 EUR or less, can be made by a simple bank transfer to the KU Leuven IBAN account number BE45 7340 1941 7789, BIC code KREDBEBB, mentioning “1SK-FOJAPT-P3610”.

For larger amounts, we ask you to sign a letter of intent prior to the bank transfer. In this case, please contact our legal advisors for further info or advice.

Donations starting from 40 EUR are tax-deductible. To this end, you will receive a tax certificate.

› Launching a funding appeal

Are you interested in launching a funding appeal for the KU Leuven UCLouvain 20-21 Japan Fund on the occasion of a party or an activity? Please contact the KU Leuven University Fund so we can inform on how the invitees or participants can obtain a tax advantage.

› Organizing an initiative or event

Please contact the KU Leuven University Fund for advice and support if you want to organise an initiative or event in favour of the KU Leuven – UC Louvain Fund.

› Sponsorship for the KU Leuven – UCLouvain Fund

Please contact the KU Leuven University Fund if your company wants to support the KU Leuven UCLouvain 20-21 Japan Fund in the form of a commercial sponsorship. In return KU Leuven will mention the logo of your company on its website. Your company will receive an invoice with the applicable VAT (for Belgium 21% VAT). The legal advisors of the KU Leuven University Fund can assist you in drawing up a sponsorship agreement.

Contact:

KU Leuven University Fund, +32 16 32 37 39
or by e-mail: universiteitsfonds@kuleuven.be



news from the members

BOOK PUBLICATION

« PHILOSOPHIE DE LA RELIGION ET SPIRITUALITÉ JAPONAISE »



Edited by BJA member Pierre Bonneels and Prof. Baudouin Decharneux, this book raises questions of philosophical and religious anthropology located in Japan. Within a broader framework than 'Japanology' itself, the book aims to establish how Japanese conceptions react to Western (mainly European) conceptions and vice versa. This approach is based on the comparison, the heart of the sciences of religions and focuses as much on the perceptions as on the representations of the cultures involved. The term spirituality is therefore carefully examined in the light of its Western context and its delicate application to the diversity of its Japanese manifestations.

In the introduction, Pierre Bonneels and Baudouin Decharneux write about the current light Perennial Philosophy through the multiple facets of philosophical thoughts present in the Japanese socio-cultural space (Shintoism, Taoism, Confucianism, Buddhism, Christianity, etc.). The attempt is to examine, briefly, how unity in diversity has gradually been expressed in the representations of fine arts, literature, institutions and material culture in Japan compared to the West.

Another BJA member, Prof. Andreas Thele, brings together some aspects of Montaigne's Essays with Japanese

thought. The analysis of notions such as flexibility, movement, moderation or idleness allows us to discover in Montaigne's wisdom an original and trans-cultural contribution. In this comparative context, particular attention is paid to the writings of the monk Kenkō and to the notions of Zen Buddhism.

If you are looking for a book that helps you to explain Japan's spirituality deep roots, you will find a good companion in your venture.

Book details :

ISBN 978-2-406-08411-2

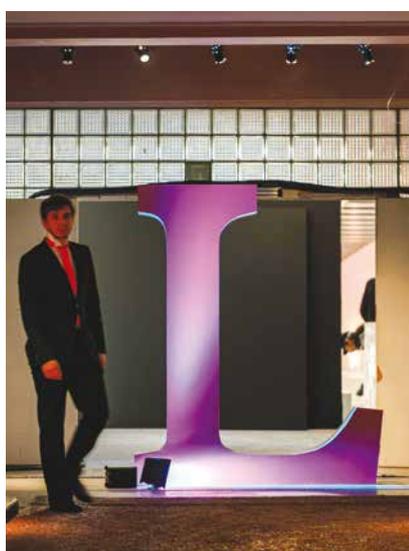
or ISBN 978-2-406-08412-9

Japanese culinary culture.

*Azumaya, Japanese green tea experts, at **events, workshops** for you and companies.
You can contact us via: info@azumaya.eu*

50 YEARS OF PRESENCE IN BELGIUM... AND OF RELATIONSHIP WITH JAPANESE COMPANIES

As Linklaters Belgium celebrates its 50th anniversary this year we look back at the firm's historical presence in the country and how the firm played a role in the development of Belgo-Japanese trade relationships.



The Firm celebrated its 50 year of Belgian presence on the 10th of October in Brussels.

Linklaters traces its history back to 1838 when it was founded in the UK. It was already an established brand when it opened an office in Brussels in 1973. But the firm's local presence has diverse roots.



Tanguy Van Overstraeten is awarded the Order of the Rising Sun, with Gold Rays and Rosette by His Excellency Ambassador Hajime Hayashi.

In 1969, a group of young Belgian lawyers, including Jean-Pierre de Bandt, came back from the USA to create their own law firm. Their vision was the partnership model that they had experienced in America.

The model involved a truly international grouping of attorneys of different nationalities who shared expertise, clients and revenues, and were exclusively focused on business and tax laws.

Their idea was quite revolutionary at the time – and it worked. The new firm grew and became the uncontested market leader over time. Today, we would call it a start-up, a disruptive force in the most positive sense.

The firm's ambition went far beyond Belgium. Under the leadership of Jean-Pierre de Bandt, the firm successfully opened offices in New-York and London, then forged alliances with prominent firms in France, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Spain and Sweden as well as several Eastern European Countries.

It then merged with Linklaters in 2002, creating Linklaters De Bandt which has become Linklaters LLP today.

The firm was the first in Belgium to hire Japanese associates and to count a Japanese lawyer among its partners. It was also the first law firm to join a Belgian official mission to Japan in 1984.

Since then, the flame of the Belgo-Japanese relationship within Linklaters has been passed to Tanguy Van Overstraeten, who is also the BJA's Vice President and Chair of its Executive Committee. Today, Linklaters is proud to serve many of the largest Japanese companies operating in Europe as well as Belgian (and more generally European) companies with presence in Japan.

Tanguy can also rely on our Linklaters' office in Tokyo. The firm opened its office in Japan back in 1987, with the first UK partner registering as a gaikokuho jimusho (a foreign lawyer entitled to practise his own country law). On 1 April 2005, the day a new Bar Regulation was introduced permitting international firms to hire Japanese lawyers, Linklaters established Japan's first integrated partnership between Japanese bengoshi and foreign lawyers.

Our success with Japanese firms also



Jean-Pierre de Bandt makes the cover of Trends Business weekly on May 1990.

builds on the myriad of relationships built internationally between Linklaters and Japanese companies who expanded their business across the oceans in the last decades and have become undisputed international leaders.



HRH Prince Philippe of Belgium visits Linklaters Brussels office on 24 March 2004.

- › **Tanguy Van Overstraeten**
(BJA Vice President and Chair of the Executive Committee)
- › **Bernd Meyring**
(Managing Partner Linklaters Belgium)

The BJA would like to extend a warm welcome to its newest members:

Corporate Member

Epiq

We are a worldwide provider of legal services, serving law firms, corporations, financial institutions and government agencies—helping them streamline the administration of business operations, class action and mass tort, court reporting, eDiscovery, regulatory, compliance, restructuring, and bankruptcy matters.

\$1b+
revenue (USD)

80+
offices

14
data centres

5,500+
people

Olivier Aelterman is a Regional Account Director for the Benelux at Epiq, based in Brussels, where he acts as a primary contact and first-line guidance to his clients. Olivier has distinguished experience in legal support and document discovery in the EU as well as a high-level background in global Antitrust and Litigation matters.

David Sannar is the General Manager for Epiq in Japan, where he oversees teams providing support for client matters and operations. David has significant experience managing cross-border computer forensics and document discovery matters between Asia, the EU and the United States.

Justin Collins is the Regional Vice President for Epiq in Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA). He is responsible for client relationships and business development in the region, and has teams in Brussels, Frankfurt, London and Zurich. Prior to joining Epiq in 2018, Justin spent 20 years working in IT managed services.

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