

Belgium-Japan Association

& Chamber of Commerce ASBL- VZW



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Trade Flows & Cultural News

'A world of trials, and if the cherry blossoms, it simply blossoms' (Issa)

by HE Ambassador Branders,
Belgian Ambassador to Japan

I am writing this message as cherry trees are blossoming all over Japan.

This is my fourth hanami season since my arrival in Tokyo, and I have come to wait for it with as much anticipation as the Japanese. Winter is finally over and the cherry blossoms bring with them a sense of excitement for all the challenges the New Year will bring us.

I read that hanami now has become very popular in Washington DC, where Japanese and Americans alike are flocking under the sakura trees to celebrate the arrival of spring.

If this habit does not already exist in Belgium, I can only hope that BJA members will quickly lead their Japanese and Belgian friends and colleagues into embracing this nice tradition and enjoying a glass of beer or sake under the cherry trees.

2005 was an eventful and hugely successful year for the friendship between Japan and Belgium. Our relationship will certainly continue to blossom in 2006. We already got off to a good start, with the long-awaited opening of the new Museum for Japanese Art in Laeken on the first day of spring. Thanks to the tenacity of the curator Mrs Kozyreff and the help of many Japanese and Belgian companies, the Belgian public can now discover Japanese art in its many forms ranging from armours to kimonos, lacquer ware and woodblock prints. I am looking forward to visit the museum on my next return to Brussels.

Here in Japan, Belgian art also continues to foster. To celebrate the 35th anniversary of the sister city agreement between Ghent and Kanazawa, the Kanazawa Museum of Modern Art, one of Japan's most

stunning museums, will host an exhibition from SMAK Ghent, starting at the end of April. And in the second half of the year, the Royal Museums of Fine Arts will stage a prestigious exposition in major cities of Japan. These are only two examples. Many more exchanges exist, on many different scales. All of them are driven by passionate Belgians and Japanese with a love for art and a warm heart for Belgo-Japanese relations.

Another upcoming event is the Young Executive Stay (YES)-programme, which will be co-organised again in November of this year by the Belgium-Japan Association and the Belgium-Luxemburg Chamber of Commerce in Japan. Organised under the auspices of HRH Prince Philippe, this export promotion programme allows young executives to come to Japan for two weeks to learn about business practices and explore the Japanese market for their products. By teaming up the executives with Japanese MBA-students from Waseda University and with a coach/businessman in Japan, this programme goes a step further than a merely commercial one, bringing an important extra value to all participants, both Belgian and Japanese. Many opportunities exist on the Japanese market for high-quality products and services. With the support from the YES-programme, some of these young businesses should become Belgium's next success story in Japan.

The Japanese economy is once again in full gear. This will no doubt give a new boost to business ties between our two countries, both in Belgium and Japan. The year ahead certainly looks promising; let us all work together to make it a big success.



HE Ambassador Branders,
Belgian Ambassador to Japan

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Tokyo, April 2006

Business Seminar Insights into the Recent Japanese Economy by Mr Masaru Yoshitomi

吉富勝氏が語る昨今の日本経済の見方

1 March 2006 - Hotel Metropole, Brussels

On Wednesday, 1 March, the Belgium-Japan Association and Chamber of Commerce had the pleasure in organizing the Business Seminar on 'Japanese Economy' by Dr Masaru Yoshitomi, President and Chief Research Officer of the Research Institute of Economy, Trade and Industry in Japan. Thanks to the kind support by HE Shohei Naito, Ambassador of Japan to Belgium, over 55 enthusiastic participants attended this seminar. The program began with a warm welcome by Mr Luc Willame, President of BJA, followed

by a short introductory speech by HE Ambassador Naito who honoured the participants with his presence. Dr Masaru Yoshitomi then gave a thorough presentation on the recent Japanese economy, to which the audience showed a deep interest in listening to his insights. After the seminar, they all took this unique opportunity to meet and exchange some views on current economic issues with such a distinguished economist, Dr Yoshitomi, during the cocktail.



Dr Masaru Yoshitomi, President and Chief Research Officer of the Research Institute of Economy, Trade and Industry in Japan giving his insights into the Recent Japanese Economy.



The audience paying attention intensively.
Mr Van den Bosch, General Manager of Euro Panels Overseas, took an opportunity to ask questions to Dr Yoshitomi during QA session.



Mr Willame, President of the BJA, giving an introductory speech to the audience.



HE Ambassador Naito of Japanese Embassy to the Belgium honored the participants with his kind words of welcome.



Exclusive visit to ASIMO Studio and Honda Europe

14 March 2006



ASIMO Robot stands proudly on top of the stage during a demonstration conducted by Mr de Breuckelaer (right).



The participants joined together with the ASIMO waiving to the photographer for a group photo.



(From left) Mr Ichimi, President of Honda Europe greeted the visitors, Mr Hayashida, Managing Director of Nippon Express, Mr Shiiki, General Manager of Nippon Express, and Mr Van Nijlen, Managing Director of Japan Consulting Service.



Mr Denecker, Director of Honda Europe enjoys the company of Mr Akiyama, Director of EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation.



On Tuesday, 14 March, the Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce had the pleasure in inviting the company members of BJA to the exclusive visit of the ASIMO Studio in Zaventem and of Honda Europe in Gent.

At the ASIMO Studio, Mr Jean-Luc de Drahe, Events Coordinator & Communication of ASIMO Studio and Mr Rainer Müller, General Manager of Honda Logistic Center in Germany welcomed the group of 30 participants. The members were thrilled to see the ASIMO Robot, walking up and down stairs during the demonstration given by Mr de Breuckelaer.

After a buffet lunch offered at the Studio, the members left to the facility of Honda Europe in Gent, where Mr Sadao Ichimi, President of Honda Europe, greeted them upon arrival. After a short introduction given by Mr Noë Denecker, Director, the participants made a visit inside the Parts and Motorcycle Warehouse and the Car Logistics site, which was followed by a Q&A session and a cocktail kindly offered by the Honda. The bus ride back to Brussels, kindly sponsored by Flanders Investment & Trade, was filled with stories of robotics and logistics.

Thanks to a generous offer by Mr Ichimi, this exclusive visit was a huge success. The participants were all impressed not only with ASIMO Robot, the world's most advanced humanoid robot, but also with the facility of Honda Europe, built upon a concept of 'Logistics without frontiers'.

EU - 日本**Seminar Japan & EU Economies on the upswing - Strategies to explore market opportunities**

講演会: 日本・EU経済の向上にあたり、市場開拓の機会を得る方策

7 March 2006 - ING, Brussels



The EU Committee of Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce and Dutch & Japanese Trade Federation (Dujat) co-organized a seminar on 'Japan & EU Economies on the upswing – Strategies to explore market opportunities'.

Under the initiative of the BJA EU Committee, 80 enthusiastic participants attended this highly successful joint seminar, kindly hosted by ING Bank. Mr Schobbens, Head of Corporate Clients at ING and Chairman of the EU Committee, made the opening remarks, followed by Minister Kuroda of the Japanese Mission to the EU, who honoured the event with his presence and with his kind welcome speech. Mr Herbert D., Head of Unit B1, Development of Industrial Policy, European Commission, addressed some important issues on the European Union's Lisbon Agenda and 'Competitiveness', while Mr K. Aso, General Manager of Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ gave his view on Japanese Economy.

A panel on 'Investments in Japan by European companies' of 4 speakers; Mr B. Degroux, General Manager, FRISK International (Belgium), Mr M. Gotink, Corporate Account Support Japanese Accounts, ASML Netherlands B.V. (Netherlands), Mr Lageman, Holland Milieutechniek (Netherlands), and Mr C. Beauduin,

CEO, Van de Wiele (Belgium); was lively moderated by Mr Arashima, CEO & President of TMME Co.

After the coffee break, a panel on 'Investments in Europe by Japanese companies' of 3 speakers; Mr N. Otsuki, President Teijin Holdings Netherlands B.V. (Netherlands), Dr J.C. Bourmanne, Chairman, Ajinomoto Omniche (Belgium) and Mr K. Yazaki, Executive Vice-President, Yazaki Europe Ltd (Germany); was moderated by Mr L. Willame, President of the BJA. Closing Remarks by Mr G. Jarzembowski (European Parliament), Chairman of EU-Japan Parliamentary Friendship League were followed by a conclusion of Mr Willame with a word of thanks especially to the sponsors, Toyota Tsusho Europe, Frisk, ING, Aon, Toyota, for their kind support to this joint event.

During the break and the cocktails, there was ample opportunity for networking and for exchanging information about Japanese and European investment issues with representatives of all organisers, EU representatives and company representatives.

It proved to be a unique and wonderful opportunity to listen to many high level speakers from Belgium, Netherlands, and Germany.



Mr Willame, President of the BJA (middle), enjoyed the company of Mrs Matsumoto, Project Manager of the BJA and Baron Snoy, Director at Marsh and BJA Board Member.



Mr Delanghe discussing the Japanese economy with Mr Aso of the Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ.



From the left: Mr Schobbens, Head of Japanese Corporate Clients and Chairman of BJA EU Committee, Mr Herbert, Head of Unit B1, Development of Industrial Policy, European Commission, Mr Degroux, General Manager, FRISK International (Belgium), Mr Beauduin, CEO, Van de Wiele (Belgium), Dr Pulch, Deputy Head Japan Desk, European Commission

Mr Arashima, CEO & President of TMME Co. discussing Japanese and European investments with Mr Schobbens of ING and Dr Pulch of the Japan Desk of the EC.

Mr G. Jarzembowski (European Parliament), Chairman of EU-Japan Parliamentary Friendship League exchanged views on Europe with Minister Kuroda of the Japanese Mission to the EU, and Dr Pulch of DG RELEX.

Annual General Assembly of the BJA Speech of HE Prime Minister Verhofstadt

BJA総会並びにヴォルフォフスタッフ首相の講演会

27 March 2006, - Hotel Le Plaza

On 27 March, an audience of approximately 70 members attended the BJA General Assembly, held at the beautiful Hotel Le Plaza.

Mr Daniel Thielemans, Managing Director Corporate Banking Fortis Bank and Vice-President of BJA, reported on the financial results of 2005, followed by Mrs Anja Kellens, Executive Director, who presented the 2006 budget.

Mr Nicholas Sepulchre, CEO of Sogeman and Chairman of the Membership Committee, delivered a complete 2005 report of the Membership Situation, with the objectives of the Committee for 2006. Mr Thielemans, as Chairman of the Business Committee gave then his report on the activities of the Business Committee.

The Cultural Committee Report brought Baron François Boels to the floor sharing the past events organized by the Committee. The Youth Committee Report 2005 was presented by the YC Chairman, Mr Olivier van Beneden. The name change of the Youth Committee to Friendship

Committee was announced and approved. This name change was welcomed by all ages and emphasized the dedication towards the enhancement of friendship relations between Japanese and Belgians. Lastly, Mr Thielemans announced the Statutory Nominations and proposed the new Board of Directors.

Before adjourning to the cocktails, HE Prime Minister Verhofstadt honoured us with his presence and delivered an insightful speech on the relations between Belgium and Japan.

Various elements were raised, starting from the visit of the Prime Minister to Japan end of last year, the direct flight issue, the treaty on Social Security, Belgium's tax cuts and many other aspects concerning Belgium and Japan.

The inciting speech was appreciated by the attendants, and brought many ideas to roll over the tongues while enjoying the cocktails.



If you would like to read the speech of HE Prime Minister, kindly find it at:
http://www.bja.be/publications_statistics.php



From the left: Mr le Hodey, Vice-President of the BJA, Mr Moorkens, President of FEBIAC and Honorary Vice-President of the BJA, HE Ambassador Naito, HE Prime Minister Verhofstadt.

Hoping for a bright future of Belgian-Japanese relations; from left: HE Ambassador Naito, Mr Arashima, CEO President of TMME Co. and Vice-President of the BJA, HE Prime Minister Verhofstadt, Mrs Kellens, Executive Director BJA, and Mr Moorkens, Honorary Vice-President of the BJA.



HE Prime Minister Verhofstadt with Mr Ogata, General Manager of Yamato International Europe Belgium, one of the most recent investments in Belgium.



Logistics, an important issue for Belgium and the three gentlemen in the picture: Mr Hayashida, Managing Director and Mr Shiiki, General Manager Ocean Cargo of Nippon Express Belgium with in the middle, Mr Tielemans, Commercial Director of the Antwerp Port Authority.



Mr Arashima, CEO President of TMME Co. and Mr Thielemans, Managing Director Corporate Banking Fortis Bank, two Vice-Presidents of the BJA sharing views on the action plans for 2006 and beyond.

Business Seminar ‘Success in Japan’

日本市場での成功

26 April 2006 - Ministry of the Flemish Government, Auditorium Maria Baers

The BJA YES Committee, in cooperation with AWEX and Flanders Investment and Trade, had the pleasure to invite you to the Seminar ‘Success in Japan’ and this in the framework of YES V, the fifth edition of the Young Executive Stay (YES) Program, a commercial export project to Japan.

Mrs Kellens, Executive Director of the BJA welcomed the audience, followed by an interesting speech on Export to Japan by Mr Hanatani, Minister at the Japanese Embassy in Belgium. ‘Trade Relations Belgium-Japan’ by Mrs l’Hoost, Deputy Director-General of the Belgian Agency for Foreign Trade & YES Committee Member, was colourfully highlighted through the many statistics and graphs.

Hearing all positive economic signals made the audience hungry for hands-on experiences from the business people. Mrs Wittamer, CEO Wittamer, Mr Wyszegrodzki, Commercial Director Donaldson & Partners, and Mr De Taeye, CEO Tele Atlas, vividly advised the participants on issues of patience, trust, business cards, respect, quality of product, and many others.

Mrs Blondé, Managing Director of zealand and Chairwoman of the YES Committee concluded and expressed the hope that many exporters would consider the YES Program to be beneficial to their company.



1.
Mr Wyszegrodzki and Mr Da Costa of Donaldson & Partners were sharing fashion news with Mr Stimmer of BJ Trading and YES Committee Member.

2.
Mr De Taeye, CEO Tele Atlas was explaining the usage of his maps to Mrs Blondé, Managing Director of zealand and Chairwoman of the YES Committee.

3.
Mr Hanatani, Minister at the Japanese Embassy in Belgium enjoyed the conversation of Mr Boyle of ING.

4.
Mrs Wittamer, CEO Wittamer and Mr Kojo, General Manager of Kataoka & Co., exchanged experiences in the export field.



“Shinnenkai” (New Year) dinner

25 February 2006 - Brussels

On Saturday 25 February, the BJA Youth Committee (now called Friendship Committee) organized the traditional ‘Shinnenkai’ (New Year) dinner in a Chinese restaurant, in the center of Brussels. About 40 participants came, occupying most of the restaurant!

We were sitting randomly among the 5 big round tables, which gave us the opportunity to speak to new people and make new friends. While we enjoyed the delicious Chinese dishes, the Youth Committee (well, I should get used to call it ‘Friendship Committee’ now!!) presented its new name and its program for 2006: lots of exciting events are coming!!

At the end of the meal, a Bingo game was organized with many prizes such as movie tickets, an iron, a book on 400 years of Belgium-Japan relations, etc. kindly offered by the BJA. After the dinner, some of us went for another drink at the nice St Gerry café.

Looking forward to the next event!!!

Olivier van Beneden, Chairman of the Youth Committee (now Friendship Committee)

2月25日(土)BJA-YC(Youth Committee)は、伝統的な新年会をブリュッセルの中華料理店で行いました。およそ40人が会に出席し、お店を貸しきったような状態でした。

5つの円テーブルに散らばったメンバーは、新しい友と出会って、交友を深めました。おいしい中華料理を囲みながら、YCの新メンバーと2006年度のイベントが発表されました。(ワクワクするイベントの面白押しです!)

食後には、bingoゲームが行われ、映画のチケットやアイロン、本等の懸賞がBJAより提供されました。

興奮さめやらず、その後、St Gerry Caféへ行ったメンバーもいました。

次のイベントが、ますます楽しみです。

Takako, newest committee member



News for the Members

Special Concerts JAPANESE IMPRESSIONS

Naoko Senoo (flute) and Nico Vancouver (piano) will play Japanese folksongs with the Helicante chamber chorus of Meise, conducted by Rik Ghesquiere.

- on Sunday 18 June at 11:00 am
The Japanese Garden, Hasselt
Gouverneur Verwilghensingel, B-3500 Hasselt
- on Sunday 25 June at 3:00 pm
National Botanic Garden of Belgium Nieuwelaan 38
B-1860 Meise
Info: www.naoko-senoo.be

スペシャルコンサート 日本的印象

瀬尾直子(フルート)ニコ・バンクーバー(ピアノ)
ベルギーの作曲家によってアレンジされた日本の民謡集などをメイスのヘリカンテ室内合唱団と指揮者リック・グスキエールと共に演奏する。

- 6月18日(日)午前11時ハッセルト日本庭園
Gouverneur Verwilghensingel, B-3500 Hasselt
- 6月25日(日)午後3時国立植物園
Nieuwelaan 38, B-1860 Meise
情報: www.naoko-senoo.be

First Queen Paolaprice for Education 2005 'Rekenspel'

A new method for learning mathematics by playing for the first class of the primary school. For the first time mathematics is what children like the most!! Some Japanese principals and teachers are interested to introduce the method in Japan. Therefore the author is looking for someone to translate the teachers manual (200 pages) for free in english. A Japanese principal will translate the english version in Japanese.

We hope to be able to realise this project.
Contact or information: Mr Jos Castermans
Vogelzanglaan 31, 1910 Kampenhout
j.castermans@worldonline.be, GSM: 0486/32.11.98



Nico Vancouver & Naoko Senoo

Interview:

Masahiro Imamura on life in Belgium

by Kris Sierens – Managing Partner of BeforeTheHype



Mr Imamura at Woluwe Park.

We talked to Masahiro Imamura, president of Nissan Belgium as part of our series on how leading Japanese executives view Belgium. He talks about green impressions, tasteful high standards, provincial and cultural differences, the qualities and talents of Belgian employees and about not to be so modest.

Mr Imamura has lived in Belgium a total of ten years. He came for the first time in 1982 and stayed until 1988. Then he returned in 2002. When he first arrived in Belgium, Japanese people didn't know much about Belgium, except that it was the capital of Europe. Luckily, his wife, who had studied here, informed him about Belgium and she advised him to focus its greenness. Today, more than a decade later, the lush green of Brussels and its environs continues to amaze him. Knowing that the beauty is due primarily to the rain helps him accept the 'occasional' bad weather. Meanwhile, Japanese awareness of Belgium has grown considerably. The average Japanese knows there is much more to Belgium than just Brussels and Bruges. They certainly know about our most famous products such as chocolate, beer, and delicious gourmet food.

Nissan created its first European presence in Belgium 40 years ago when it was still known under its former name of Datsun. When the decision was being made to begin operations in Europe, several countries were

considered. At that time France didn't allow Japanese car manufacturers but Belgium already had a market established. Since Nissan Belgium was mainly a marketing company, it meant that, compared to a manufacturing plant, high wages were not such a big problem. Today, factories are located in Spain and UK, but there are no plans to relocate to Eastern Europe.

Mr Imamura considers Belgian employees to be very well educated. They are, for the most part, multilingual and they work 'relatively' hard. He uses the word relatively because, compared to average Japanese worker, Belgians focus more on enjoying life. But Mr Imamura finds actually finds this to be a positive thing. While Japanese employees are typically very loyal and get promoted within their own company, Belgians seem to be less concerned with company loyalty, because they gain their promotions by changing companies. He points out that this is often better for the individual, since it gives them a chance to show their real abilities and capacities. Japanese employees on the other hand, are much more focused on a team effort.

Belgians are very open minded and flexible notes Mr Imamura. They readily accept cultural differences, making it very easy for foreigners to live here comfortably. Whenever there's a problem of establishing close relations with Belgians, it is mainly because Japanese



Mr Imamura at Golf de Rigenee.

expatriates tend to stay within their own community. But on the golf course he has made many Belgian friends. Tennis is also one of his favourite sports along with sailing. However, he finds the North Sea a bit too rough for his taste. If Mr Imamura returns to Japan, he will certainly miss many things about Belgium, and especially Brussels. What he will miss most are the city's many green parks and the wonderful food. Even in a small bistro you can find the most delicious dishes, including his two favorites, mussels and waterzooi. But he says, Belgian food is becoming much more popular in Japan, so perhaps leaving won't be so bad.

While it is easy to recognize that Belgium is a country of three regions, the funny thing is that Mr Imamura also feels the differences between the provinces. This is quiet remarkable, he says, for such a small country. In his job, he travels a great deal to visit the many Nissan dealers and from time to time they end up in a local pub. He loves to people-watch and can easily spot the cultural differences between say Limburg and Antwerp or East- and West-Flanders. For him, the coastline is still the most beautiful place to be, as long as he is standing with his back to the high-rise apartment buildings.

When asked what could be improved in Belgium, Mr Imamura explains that employees are very well protected in Belgium, which means that the costs related to this

are very high. This system can also be a restraint on further development. Administration is also a primary concern. If employees improved their overall feeling of responsibility, this would a major step forward. More stable weather would also help, he laughs, but that is out of anyone's hands to control.

As always, we asked the CEO being interviewed if he had any valuable marketing tips for Belgian companies who want to be successful in Japan. Mr Imamura said that the perception of Belgium is very good in Japan, so Belgian businesses should capitalize on that. Stress the quality of Belgian products and the services delivered and the Japanese market will respond. Belgian companies needn't be so modest.



News from the Members



Beyond East and West

'Beyond East and West', a photo and pottery exhibit featuring works by Anne Randerson, PhD, an active BJA member, and Mr Russel Fouts, a local ceramic artist, will take place this August in Brussels.

Aiming to promote cultural exchange between Europe and Japan, the artists will give a conference entitled 'Culture and aesthetics in Japan, appreciation of nature – our personal experiences,' where they will describe their diverse impressions as students years ago in Japan.

To illustrate her photos of Japan, many depicting its lush, natural surroundings, Dr Randerson will speak about her exceptional experience as a Ph.D. researcher in northern Japan. Touching on the deep appreciation the Japanese have traditionally felt towards nature, the topic of her 6-years of research, she will describe their sensitivity towards it, from aesthetic, philosophical and spiritual standpoints.

Mr Fouts, who spent two months in Tokoname with a home-stay family and studied with Japanese pottery masters, explains:

"While studying in Japan I met a ceramic artist whose work I admire greatly. Kusakabe Masakazu showed me his traditional Japanese house and wonderful pots. After exploring his work together, he said, 'I'd like you to see my Treasure Room.' He took me to a room which contained the ceramic pieces he felt were his very best work. These were his 'treasures.' I was awestruck. Ever since that day, I have kept my creations that mean the most to me. The most beautiful pieces. My own treasures."

This is an occasion for Mr Fouts to present his special gold-leaf pieces and Dr Randerson to display her exceptional photos of Japan.

EXHIBIT: 9-17 August, Cultural and Information Centre of the Embassy of Japan, Avenue des Arts, 58, 1000 Brussels.

Opening evening: 9 August. **Conference:** 11 August. **Inquiries** (English, French, Japanese, Dutch): Anne Randerson: 0485.35.70.29, anneranderson@hotmail.com; (English, French): russel.fouts@skynet.be, www.MyPots.com.

The Museums of the Far East: Opening of Museum of Japanese Art



Designed by the French architect Alexander Marcel (1860-1928), the Japanese Tower and the Chinese Pavilion with its kiosk and annex form a remarkable and exotic whole that was among the last big architectural projects commissioned by Leopold II. They present an oriental appearance, but were constructed according to European principles and with Belgian materials; Parisian artists designed the decoration. With a view to

News from the Members

authenticity, however, the cladding of the buildings was specially fabricated in Japan and China: for example, the decorative architectural elements of the Japanese Tower come from Yokohama and the entrance pavilion – designed for an attraction at the World Exhibition of 1900 in Paris – was commissioned in Tokyo. The polychrome woodwork of the main building of the Chinese Pavilion and its kiosk comes from Shanghai. The pavilion's annex, originally intended as a coach-house and garage, and therefore as a service building, was not decorated.

Of the main buildings, the Japanese Tower was inaugurated in 1905 and the Chinese 'complex' in 1910. Both were bequeathed to the State, which entrusted their administration to the Royal Museums of Art and History. The buildings bear witness to the economic and cultural links between Europe and the Far East at the beginning of the twentieth century, as indeed do the collections that are now exhibited in them, which are of objects made specially for export to the West. The Japanese Tower houses decorative porcelain manufactured for Europe between the mid-seventeenth century and the mid-eighteenth century, together with Japanese decorative objects that drew wonder at the World Exhibitions of the second half of the nineteenth and the early twentieth century. The Chinese Pavilion is home to important collections of porcelain covering the entire range of Chinese porcelain production for the European market in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, transported via the East India Company.

After thorough restoration, the Chinese Pavilion's service annex was opened to the public at the beginning of 2006, having been designated as the Museum of Japanese Art. Displayed here now are items of classical Japanese art from the collections of the Royal Museums of Art and History, which focus principally on the Edo period (1600-1868). It will naturally never be possible to see the 12 000 or more items together, as most of them cannot withstand long-term exposure to light and other circumstantial factors. Consequently, they will be exhibited in alternation, exhibition being according to a number of set themes illustrating Japanese mastery in the fields of metalwork, lacquerwork, painting, engraving, textiles, ceramics and sculpture.

Practical details

Museums of the Far East (the Japanese Tower, the Chinese Pavilion, the Museum of Japanese Art)
Avenue Van Praet 44, B – 1020 Brussels
Information:
Tel.: +32 (0)2 268 16 08, Fax: +32 (0)2 268 16 50
info@kmkg.be , www.kmkg.be

Linklaters Wins Law Firm of the Year at Legal Business Awards 2006

Linklaters has been named Law Firm of the Year at the Legal Business Awards 2006, held on 9 February at the Grosvenor House Hotel in London.

The judges singled out 'the coming together of [Linklaters'] pan-continental top table prowess' and praised the firm for 'delivering answers to the global questions dogging the Magic Circle, coupled with a ruthless pursuit of excellence and ambition'. They also noted that 'Linklaters unlocked in 2005 the key to profitability on a global scale that is oft glimpsed and so rarely enacted.'

The awards, which were attended by more than 1,000 lawyers, were announced by comedian Alan Davies.

Tony Angel, Linklaters Managing Partner and Senior Partner Anthony Cann accepted the Law Firm of the Year award.

Jean-Pierre Blumberg, Managing Partner of Linklaters De Bandt, said: 'We are absolutely delighted to have won this prestigious award – it recognises the tremendous progress we have made globally as a firm and reaffirms our market-leading reputation for providing the highest quality advice on the most complex and innovative transactions in the market.'

www.linklaters.be

リンクレーターズは、2006年リーガル・ビジネス・アワードのローファーム・オブ・ザ・イヤーを受賞しました。

リンクレーターズは、2月9日ロンドンのグローヴナーハウスホテルにて開催された2006年リーガル・ビジネス・アワードにおいて、ローファーム・オブ・ザ・イヤーを受賞しました。

審査員の方々からは、「(リンクレーターズが)大陸横断的に優れた能力を結集している」との評価を受け、また「優秀さと向上への飽くなき追求と共に、英国系5大法律事務所が取り扱う世界規模の問題につき解答を提供していること」について賞賛を受けました。また「リンクレーターズは、2005年には世界的規模において収益性をあげているが、これは稀にしか達成することのできないことである」とも評されました。

本賞は、1000名を超える法律家が出席する中、コメディアンであるアラン・ダヴィ氏によって発表されました。

News from the Members

リンクレーターズのマネージングパートナーであるトニー・アンゲルと、シニアパートナーであるアンソニー・カンが、同賞の授与を受けました。

リンクレーターズ・デバントのマネージングパートナーであるジャン・ピエール・ブルムバーグは、「我々は、このような名誉ある賞を受賞することができたことに大変喜びを感じています。この賞により、我々がローファームとして世界規模で大きな進歩を遂げていることが認められ、また我々が市場における最も複雑かつ最新の取引について最高品質のアドバイスを提供するマーケットリーダーとして名声を頂いていることが再確認されました。」と述べました。

www.linklaters.be

15 years of Vintage Productions

In 1991, Antwerp-based Vintage Productions began producing pan-European communication strategies for multinational corporations. Today, working with a team of 47 professionals, Vintage is part of the top 5 independent communication agencies in Belgium. On 12 May, Vintage celebrated 15 years of successful European communication in Antwerp.

From its offices in the heart of Antwerp, Vintage thinks and works on a pan-European scale. At Vintage, Europe is a verb. Vintage also strives for optimal integration of online and offline communication, an approach that distinguishes the company from traditional advertising agencies. As a full-service agency, it offers an extensive range of marketing communication tools: brochures, ads, websites, microsites, 3D animations, ...

www.vintage.be

EU - 日本

EU-Japan Relations

15th JAPAN-EU SUMMIT FRamework Initiative for Exchange Networks and Dialogues: FRIEND

Setting the 10 year period from the year 2001 as the Decade of Japan-Europe Co-operation, Japan and the European Union (EU) have set down an Action Plan for EU-Japan Cooperation to serve as specific guidelines. This plan recognizes the importance of promoting personal and cultural exchanges, and has promoted cooperation in various fields as one of its priority objectives.

Furthermore, setting 2005, the midway year in the Decade of Japan-Europe Co-operation, as the EU-Japan Year of People-to-People Exchanges, approximately 1,900 diverse exchange programmes were carried out between Japan and 25 EU countries, which had the effect of deepening the relationship between the population of approximately 455 million in the 25 EU countries and the people of Japan.

With a view to carry these achievements into the future, Japan will further promote personal exchanges and dialogue so as to continue to maintain and develop

the high level of interest toward the mutual exchanges of people between Japan and the EU which was seen throughout 2005.

1. Exchanges of Young People

In order to create a basis for future Japan-EU relations, Japan will implement exchange programmes for the young people of Japan and the EU and promote mutual understanding.

(1) Japan-EU Foreign Student Exchanges

Japan accepts students from EU member states. Japanese students are dispatched through the EU-Japan Pilot Co-operation in Higher Education, which is a multinational student exchange programme with the goal of facilitating student exchanges between Japan and the EU.

(2) Inviting Youths from the EU

Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme: Youth from EU Member states as a whole will continue to be eligible for the participation in the JET Programme. In addition, the gradual increase in the number of participants in the JET programme from EU Member States will be considered, in response to requests from

EU-Japan Relations

Japanese municipalities.

Study Tour of Japan for European Youth: Youths who demonstrate great promise of assuming positions of leadership throughout European countries in the future are invited to Japan in groups. This is carried out in EU Member States as well as candidate EU Member States.

Japan-Europe Mutual Understanding Scholarship Program for high school students: Two types of invitation programmes, long-term (six months) and short-term (five weeks), are carried out targeting high school students in EU Member States.

Vulcanus programme: These are programmes which enable Japanese and EU undergraduate and graduate students in scientific and technical fields to receive in-house company training. Students are dispatched for a period of one year between Japan and the EU where training (comprised of language training and in-house company internships) is carried out for students from the other location (Japan-EU joint undertaking).

(3) Working Holidays

The working holiday system which is implemented between Japan and certain EU Member States is currently undergoing review regarding newly expanding the system to Denmark, Italy, and Ireland.

(4) Exchanges of Young Diplomats

The acceptance of young European diplomats to the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which is implemented among certain EU Member States, will be reviewed in terms of also including other EU Member States.

2. Exchanges in the Economic Area

In addition to inviting policy makers and experts on economy from EU Member States and the European Commission, the EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation will implement exchanges of parties with business interests that serve as leaders who are important to Japan-EU relations in order to promote exchanges between the economic circles of Japan and the EU (Japan-EU joint).

EU experts Invitation Programme: Officials and experts from EU Member States and the European Commission are invited to Japan with the aim of promoting understanding of Japan.

Programmes for providing training to accepted trainees: In order to vitalize trade and investment between Japan and the EU, programmes for providing training related to issues like the business conditions of Japanese corporations to accepted trainees are carried out aimed at middle management executives and parties with business interests in EU Member States (Japan-EU joint undertaking).

Exchange programmes for experts on investment

promotion: Exchange programmes for Japan-EU experts on investment promotion are carried out based on the Cooperation Framework for Promotion of Japan-EU Two-Way Investment (Japan-EU joint undertaking).

3. Exchange of Intellectuals and Experts

The exchange of researchers supporting Japan-EU relations on a mid to long-term basis, as well as invitations and dispatches of experts on an EU-wide scale, will be conducted in order to promote shared awareness regarding various issues that exist between Japan and Europe.

(1) *Invitation and Dispatch of Researchers between Japan and the EU*

Japan Society for the Promotion of Science: The invitation and dispatch of researchers in every academic field is conducted throughout all of Europe, including EU Member States. Specifically, in line with each career stage and the visitor's research objectives, various invitation channels are provided. Moreover, outstanding young Japanese researchers are dispatched to research institutes and the like in EU Member States. In addition to this bilateral joint research and seminars, as well as the exchange of researchers, are promoted based on memorandums and similar agreements between the corresponding institutes in European countries.

Japan Foundation programmes: The Japan Foundation extends invitations to persons conducting research related to Japan from among scholars and researchers in humanities and social sciences fields in European regions, including EU Member States. Japanese researchers are also dispatched to Europe.

(2) *Invitation, Training, and Dispatch of Intellectuals and Experts between Japan and the EU*

Invitation of opinion leaders: Invitations are extended to those who exert a significant influence on the formation of public opinion in EU Member States (opinion leaders), so that they get a first-hand understanding on Japan.

Dispatch of experts: Japanese experts and scholars, among others, are dispatched to EU Member States to give lectures.

Japan Foundation programmes: The Japan Foundation invites cultural specialists (individuals or groups) from EU Member States for a fixed period of time and provides opportunities for them to engage in activities such as exchanges with interested parties in Japan, joint research, or creative activities. Moreover, pre-eminent specialists of Japanese culture are dispatched to EU Member States to provide introductions to Japanese culture, and grant programmes are utilized to support Japanese culture introductory programmes in EU Member States through cultural figures in the private sector.

Season versus culture: summer

夏

No summer in Japan would be complete without fireworks. Japanese *hanabi* (fireworks), which many argue are the world's most gorgeous and elaborate, are famous for their perfect roundness and harmoniously blended, multicolored layers that blossom out into the night sky. Each year in July and August fireworks festivals are held throughout Japan.

A Long History

Fireworks, which were invented in China during the Tang dynasty (618-907), reached Europe by way of the Silk Road. Japan's first brush with hanabi is said to have occurred in 1613, when they were introduced to Shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu by an envoy of the British monarchy. In the middle of the Edo period (1603-1868) hanabi became favorite entertainment of daimyo (landholding military lords) and wealthy merchants, who would order displays from firework makers and enjoy the performances from their boats. In 1733 Shogun Yoshimune organized a fireworks display along the Sumida River to pay respects to the many people who died of a terrible famine the previous year and to ward off evil spirits. This was the start of the renowned Ryogoku River Festival.

At festivals around Japan spectators can often be heard calling out 'Tamaya!' 'Kagiya!' These cheers refer to the names of the two families that became the biggest hanabi producers during the Edo period and catapulted the Ryogoku River Festival into the nation's biggest display of fireworks. At the first festival in 1733 the Tamaya family set off some 20 rockets that created a sensation. In 1810 the Kagiya clan branched off from the Tamaya, resulting in an annual battle for hanabi supremacy that became a favorite event for the Edo public. From the Taisho

(1912-26) through the Showa (1926-89) eras, well-known firework makers began surfacing throughout Japan and, as hanabi-making techniques improved, the country's fireworks gradually acquired their own unique flavor.

Old-World Tradition

The Ryogoku River Festival of the Edo period has since come to be known as the Sumida River Fireworks Festival. It is the biggest fireworks display in the greater Tokyo area, where more than 20,000 rockets are launched annually from the Sumida River, which flows along the eastern part of Tokyo, including Ryogoku. The most thrilling part of the festival is a competition among 10 manufacturers – 7 local and 3 from other parts of the country whose displays have received critical acclaim – that never fails to dazzle the crowd.

source: JIN

Summer Haiku

ねむりても旅の花火の胸にひらく

大野林火

滝落ちて群青世界とどろけり

水原秋桜子

プラタナス夜もみどりなる夏は来ぬ

石田波郷

*Even when asleep
the fireworks I saw on the way
splash open inside my head*

Oka Ryūka

*The waterfall pours down:
a thundering world of ultramarine*

Syuashi Mizuhara

*Plane trees
bright green in the night
Summer has come*

Ishida Hakyō

source: Prof W.F. Vande Walle, Japanese Studies K.U. Leuven

What is Haiku?

Haiku is one of the most important form of traditional Japanese poetry. Haiku is, today, a 17-syllable verse form consisting of three metrical units of 5, 7, and 5 syllables. Since early days, there has been confusion between the three related terms *haiku*, *hokku* and *haikai*. The term *hokku* literally means 'starting verse', and was the first starting link of a much longer chain of verses known as *haika*. Because the *hokku* set the tone for the rest of the poetic chain, it

enjoyed a privileged position in *haikai* poetry, and it was not uncommon for a poet to compose a *hokku* by itself without following up with the rest of the chain.

Largely through the efforts of Masaoka Shiki, this independence was formally established in the 1890s through the creation of the term *haiku*. This new form of poetry was to be written, read and understood as an independent poem, complete in itself, rather than

part of a longer chain.

Strictly speaking, then, the history of *haiku* begins only in the last years of the 19th century. The famous verses of such Edo-period (1600-1868) masters as Basho, Yosa Buson, and Kobayashi Issa are properly referred to as *hokku* and must be placed in the perspective of the history of *haikai* even though they are now generally read as independent *haiku*.

source: Haiku for People - www.toyomasu.com/haiku

Fukushima, Island of Good Luck

By Mrs Tiene Vertriest, Project Manager, Yamagata Europe, and Editorial Committee Member

日本

At first glance, Fukushima may not seem the most obvious choice when one is considering where to establish a new business location, but from the experience of our affiliate company Yamagata Fukushima Factory, which is located in the prefecture, we know this region has a lot to offer and is definitely worth a closer look.

The facts: Fukushima is located in the southern part of the Tohoku region and borders the Pacific Ocean to the east and the Kanto region to the south. Based on size it is Japan's third largest prefecture. Covering an area of 13,781 km² (Belgium covers 32,545 km²), for only 2,105,657 inhabitants (October 2004), this prefecture is a comfortable and spacious place to live.

But what makes Fukushima attractive for establishing a business? First, and most important, is its strategic location. Serving as the connection between the Tohoku and Kanto areas, Fukushima provides opportunities for expanding business activities in both markets. Access to the Tokyo metropolitan area and other major cities is guaranteed by high-speed transport infrastructure. Railways, an airport, seaports and expressways guarantee fluid, efficient domestic connections and also provide easy access to neighbouring countries and beyond.

The Tohoku Shinkansen provides a link between Tokyo and Koriyama, the centre of Fukushima, requiring just 75 minutes of travel time. There are also foreign container services operating out of the Onahama Port.

Another strong point is the firmly established production base. There is a significant concentration of electrical machinery production, Japan's major industry. Companies focusing on high-tech manufacturing, such as those in the semiconductor industry, are particularly strong. Automobile and other transportation-related industries are experiencing a growing trend. Fukushima is home to companies such as Nissan, Fujitsu AMD Semiconductor Ltd., ON Semiconductor Technology, Atlas Copco Iwata K.K., and many others.

The economy is increasingly becoming a knowledge-based economy. In this context, it is important to know that Fukushima is making serious efforts to attract knowledge-intensive foreign investment. Companies can benefit from the expansion of regional research facilities. R&D activities are flourishing as a result of collaboration between the private, academic and public sectors. The local government is making concerted efforts to stimulate software-related and high-technology industries, and several projects

have been established to support this development. The 'Intellectual Cluster Project' was initiated by the prefecture to promote R&D focused on the medical and health care fields. The region hopes to see a market worth ¥110 billion established within the next 10 years. The 'High Tech Plaza' research institute is a project founded in Koriyama to actively support industrial research facilities.

The plaza includes advanced test and research facilities that are available to companies and provides technological assistance by specialists from universities and other research institutions.

Another important criterion when considering an investment in Fukushima is the availability and quality of a well-educated labour force and intellectual resources. Fukushima is home to 9 universities; 6 of these universities/colleges focus on science and technology.

The University of Aizu is Japan's first college to specialize in computer science and engineering. As the centre of IT research activities in Fukushima, it also plays an important role in the information exchange among academic, industrial and government organizations.

Another attractive aspect of Fukushima is the availability of low-cost industrial sites.

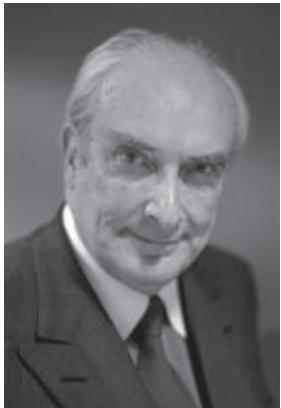
The average land price for industrial sites is about 40% of the national average. Prices for industrial sites in coastal areas in the Kanto district are about 4 to 7 times higher. Furthermore, the prefecture is providing significant support to companies through subsidies, loan arrangements and preferential tax agreements.

What makes Fukushima interesting for Belgian companies? Belgian investment in Japan is mainly concentrated in the machinery, chemical, trading and service sectors. These sectors are well represented in Fukushima. R&D investment is on the rise, and it is particularly in this area that Fukushima has a lot to offer. Fukushima is an inexpensive, well connected, and well developed location with close proximity to a major market. The quality of life is also excellent, offering magnificent nature and clean water, not to mention delicious rice and the finest quality sake! After all the literal translation of 'Fukushima' is 'Island of Good Luck'.



Focus on Belgium

The Port of Antwerp, interview of baron L. Delwaide, 20 April, 2006



The port of Antwerp handled 160,054,365 tonnes of cargo in 2005, an increase of 5.1 percent on the previous year. Since 2000 the volume has risen from 130 to 160 million tonnes, an increase of 22 percent. Antwerp once more confirms its position as the largest and fastest-growing port in Belgium and the second-largest in Europe. The container volume in Antwerp rose to 74,593,112 tonnes in 2005, representing growth of 9.2 percent. Expressed in TEU (twenty-foot equivalent units) this represents an increase of 6.9 percent, to 6,482,029 TEU. The expanding container volume in Antwerp confirms the need for extra container handling capacity. Since 2000 the container volume (in tonnes) handled by Antwerp has risen by 68 percent, and in the past decade it has increased nearly three-fold.

Baron Leo Delwaide, alderman for the Port
(Picture: courtesy Antwerp Port Authority)

Antwerp is a port in full expansion. The ‘Deurganck Dock’ projects on the Left Bank, the recent signature of treaties regarding the deepening of the river Scheldt, the challenges created by the ever increasing volumes of goods transiting to and from its large Hinterland are just a few aspects of the continuous developments of the port to prepare the future.

In recent years, there have been several initiatives and events to promote the Port of Antwerp and its possibilities among the Japanese business community. They range from participation to economical missions successfully led by Prince Philippe, to specific visits of the port of Antwerp or sister port of Nagoya. Most of us will remember the wonderful days of the Soccer World Cup in Japan in June 2002.

We felt that it was the right time to update our information about the Port of Antwerp given the challenges ahead, and had the privilege to interview baron Leo Delwaide, alderman for the port, on 20 April 2006.

Which Japanese companies are present in Antwerp, could you give us a few examples?

One can basically distinguish 3 sectors: the chemical industry (Kuraray, Nippon Shokubai...), the shipping lines (NYK, K-Line, Mitsui OSK), and the distribution (Mazda, Sumitomo Warehouse, Meiko Kaiun, NYK Logistics, Nippon Express...) Some Japanese companies have been established for many years in Antwerp, but we still regret the lack of direct calls of container shipping lines from Japan to Antwerp. Most Japanese container traffics are ‘indirect ones’.

There are of course historical reasons for this situation, but we are convinced that it might change in the future, when there will be a better perception among the

Japanese community of the many possibilities that our port has to offer compared to its neighbours.

What are the advantages of Antwerp?

The main advantage of the Port of Antwerp is its inland location (see map). Whereas it is true that vessels calling the port have to sail along the river Scheldt an extra 70 km in both directions, this has significant advantages in costs and even in time for further distribution/logistics of the goods.

Time advantage: coming to and from the Port of Antwerp from and to the sailing route will take approximately an extra 10 hours in total compared to ports located closer to the sea. However, the productivity (amount of loaded and discharged goods per hour) of the Port of Antwerp is so high that it usually largely compensates these 2 short trips. By the way, it is important to note that Japanese ports also have an excellent reputation for their efficiency, which is among the highest in the world.

Cost advantage: this is one of the most important aspects of course! Transportation by vessel is extremely cheap compared to truck (train, barge) transportation. Therefore, the possibility of using large vessels to bring goods to inland locations is a significant advantage for the total distribution and logistics costs, since it will reduce the trucking part of the transportation sequence. We are also located right in the middle of the ‘Blue Banana’, the most important economic zone in Western Europe.

When all these aspects are considered, distribution of goods in Western Europe through Antwerp really makes sense, and the Port is certainly the most competitive one in the range Hamburg – Le Havre. This is something

Focus on Belgium

that should certainly be evaluated in more detail for the distribution of goods coming (and going to) from Japan, since we believe there is still a lot of potential.



(Picture: courtesy Antwerp Port Authority)

The 'Blue Banana'

The so-called 'Blue Banana' belt constitutes the economic heart of Western Europe, accounting for a major part of its GNP. Antwerp is located right in the middle, allowing an optimal flow of goods in the area.

What about the future?

1. Opening of the Deurganck dock. (Left Bank of the River Scheldt)

The Deurganck dock was officially opened on 6 July 2005 in the presence of HM King Albert II of Belgium, Flemish Minister President Yves Leterme, Flemish Minister of Public Works, Energy, Environment and Nature Kris Peeters and Flemish Minister of Finance, Minister of Budget and Town & Country Planning Dirk Van Mechelen.

Antwerp is currently the only port in North-West Europe to offer new capacity for container activities. Together, the terminals at the Deurganck dock will eventually offer an annual capacity of roughly 6.4 million TEU. According to estimates by the Port Authority and the terminal operators, the Deurganck dock will reach full

capacity by 2010 or 2011.

The dock will then have 2,470 m of quay and 125 ha of backquay on the East side, and 2,740 m of quay and 200 ha of backquay on the West side. The width of the dock varies from 450 m at the entrance (at the river end) to 400 m at the back. The depth of water at low tide is 17 m (55 ft. 9 in).

2. The port and its sea access.

The past year was particularly important for Antwerp in its efforts towards further deepening of the River Scheldt (to allow bigger vessels to come to the Port at all tides). After a long period of negotiations and studies, four treaties were signed on 21 December 2005 by Dutch and Flemish government representatives in the Dutch city of Middelburg. Kris Peeters, Minister of Public Works, Energy, the Environment and Nature, signed on behalf of Flanders, and the Dutch Minister Karla Peijs and Melanie Schultz van Haegen, Secretary of State for Transport and Water, signed on behalf of the Netherlands.

The first treaty deals with implementation of the 2010 Development Sketch, making improvements to flood safety, accessibility of the Scheldt ports and nature conservation in the Scheldt estuary. The deepening of the Scheldt, which the port of Antwerp insisted on so strongly, forms part of this treaty. This will enable ships with a draught of 13.10 m (43 ft) to reach the port at all times, independently of the state of the tide. However, it will not be necessary to dredge the entire river: the navigation channel is already deep enough at most points. All that is required is to eliminate a few local shallows or 'thresholds'. There are nine such thresholds, two in the Flemish part of the river and seven in the Dutch part, and each of them will be deepened by 1.4 m (4 ft 7 in). The dredging work should start in late 2007 and will be finished in late 2009. Before the dredging work can actually start, however, a number of procedures will have to be completed and permits obtained, both in the Netherlands and in Flanders. Both countries have undertaken to ensure that this goes ahead as quickly as possible.

ベルギー

Focus on Belgium

「アントワープ港」-レオ・デルヴァイド男爵のインタビューより(2006年4月20日)



2005年、アントワープ港の貨物取扱量は前年より5.1%増加の1億6005万4365トンに達しました。2000年より、当港の貨物取扱量は1億3000万トンから1億6000万トンへ、22%の増加を見せています。アントワープ港がベルギー国内で最大かつ最高度成長の港であり、またヨーロッパでは第2の規模を誇る港であることを再確認することができます。2005年、コンテナ貨物取扱量も9.2%増加し、7459万3112トンにまで上昇しました。TEU換算にすると、6.9%の増加率で、648万2029TEUに達したことになります。このコンテナ取扱量の拡大は、通常量以外のコンテナ取扱能力の必要性を示しています。2000年以来、アントワープ港のコンテナ取扱量（トン換算）は68%増加し、過去10年間では、約3倍に増加しています。

レオ・デルヴァイド男爵、アントワープ港議員
(Picture: courtesy Antwerp Port Authority)

アントワープは、現在まさに発展中の港町です。左岸の“ドイルガンク・ドック (Deurganck Dock)”プロジェクト、スケルト川の河床掘削（川の深さを深くすること）に関する条約の締結、そして拡大し続けている広大なハンターランドとの物流が生み出す数々の挑戦は、未来に向けたアントワープ港の準備のごくわずかな一部に過ぎません。

近年、日本のビジネス界において、アントワープ港とその将来性の紹介を目的としたいくつかの活動やイベントが行われました。これらは、フィリップ王子が主導を取り成功をおさめた経済代表団への参加から、アントワープ港とその姉妹港である名古屋港の関係者相互訪問にまで幅広く及びます。2002年6月の日本のサッカーワールドカップの素晴らしい日々を思い出す方も多いでしょう。

我々は、今がまさに数々の挑戦を目の前にしたアントワープ港に関する情報を更新する好時期だったと感じており、2006年4月20日、アントワープ港議員であるレオ・デルヴァイド男爵にインタビューさせていただく機会に預かったことを光栄に思います。

アントワープに進出している日系企業の例をいくつか挙げていただけますか？

基本的に3つの分野に分けることができます。化学産業（クラレ、日本触媒等）、海運（NYK、“K”LINE、三井OSK）および物流（マツダ、住友倉庫、名港海運、NYKロジスティックスジャパン、日本通運等）の3つです。アントワープに進出して何年にもなる日系企業はいくつありますが、まだ日本-アントワープ間直通のコンテナ航路の不足を感じます。日本のコンテナ輸送のほとんどは“間接的”なものです。

これにはもちろん歴史的な理由が関係していますが、日本社会が彼らの近隣港と比べて我々の港の持つ多く

の可能性に対してより良い認識を持った時、この状況が変わってくることを我々は確信しています。

アントワープのメリットは何ですか？

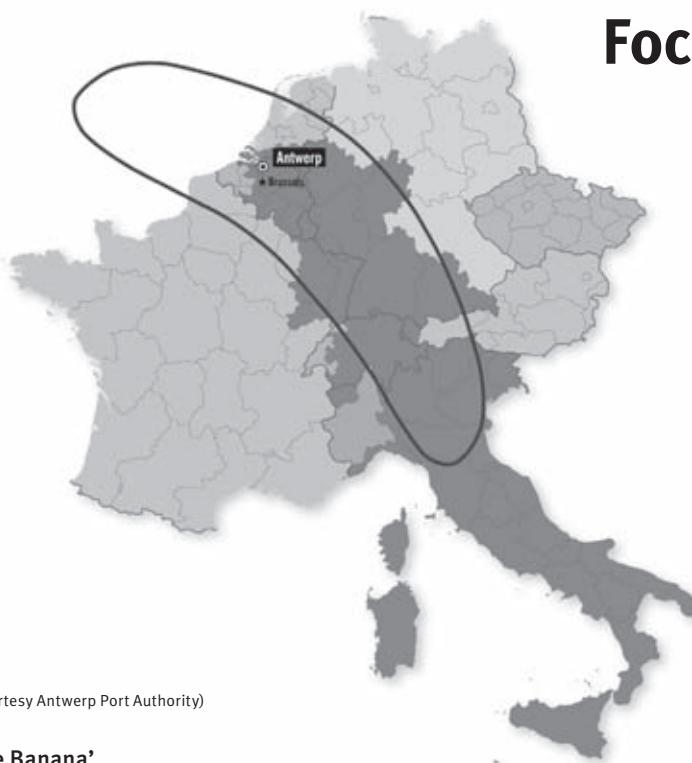
アントワープ港の最大の利点は、その内陸の地理条件（地図参照）です。内陸の為、船はスケルト川沿いに70kメートル余分に航行しなければならないのですが、これは、より遠距離の物流におけるコスト面と時間面において、大きな利点となります。

時間面の利点：海に近い港と比べ、アントワープ港は航行ルートとの往復におよそ10時間多く要します。しかし、アントワープ港は生産性（1時間の積み込み及び荷降ろし商品量）の高さでこの欠点を補うことができます。また、日本の港も効率性の高さでは評価が高く、世界でもトップレベルであることもここで述べておく必要があるでしょう。

コスト面の利点：コスト面は、当然ながら最も重要な問題の1つです。海運は陸運（トラック、列車等）に比べ、非常に安いです。したがって、海運で内陸部に商品を持ち込むことは、陸運輸送を減少させることに繋がり、物流全体のコスト面で大変大きな利点となります。また、アントワープ港は西欧の最重要経済地域である“ブルーバナナ”的まさに中央に位置しています。

これらすべてを考慮に入れて初めて、アントワープ経由の西ヨーロッパの商品流通が本当に理解できます。アントワープ港は、確かにハンブルク・ル・アーブル間で最も競争力のある港です。日本との商品物流においても、この部分はもっと評価されるべきだと思います。まだまだ多くの可能性を秘めているはずです。

Focus on Belgium



The 'Blue Banana'

いわゆる“ブルーバナナ”ベルト地帯は、西欧におけるGNPの大半を占め、経済の中心を担っています。アントワープはそのちょうど中央に位置し、流通最適地となっています。

将来についてお聞かせいただけますか?

1. 新埠頭ドイルガンク・ドックの稼動（スケルト川左岸）

ドイルガンク・ドックは、ベルギー国王アルベルト二世、フランダース政府大臣イヴ・レテルム、フランダース政府公共事業・資源・自然環境大臣クリス・ピータース、フランダース政府財務・国土計画大臣ディルク・ヴァン・メヘレン立会いのもと、2005年7月6日に正式に稼動開始しました。

現在、アントワープは北及び西ヨーロッパにおいて、唯一コンテナ取扱量の増加を見せている港です。将来、新埠頭ドイルガンク・ドックの年間コンテナ取扱量はおよそ640万TEUに達するでしょう。港湾委員会及びターミナル・オペレータによる推定では、2010年または2011年までにドイルガンク・ドックの能力は最高に達する見込みで、東側に2,470メートルの波止場と125ヘクタールの裏波止場、西側に2,740メートルの波止場と200ヘクタールの裏波止場を有する予定です。ドイルガンク・ドックの幅は、入り口部分（川の終点）では450メートル、後部では400メートルと異なります。水深は干潮で17メートル(55 ft. 9in)です。

2005年末までに、船はドックの東側で最高1,000メートル、西側で最高1,250メートルの深さで係留することが可能となり、2006年始めの第2段階浚渫工事により、東側・西側ともさらに400メートルずつ深くなりました。第3段階浚渫工事は、現在の臨時ダムの後方で2007年初めに始まることになっています。

2. 港とその海上アクセス

昨年は、スケルト川の河床掘削工事（水深を深くし、干潮・満潮時共により大きい船の利用を可能にする）に関し、アントワープが大きな進展を遂げた年でした。長い交渉と研究の後、2005年12月21日、オランダのミドルブルグにてフランダース政府代表とオランダ政府代表間で4つの条約が締結されました。フランダース政府代表として公共事業・資源・自然環境大臣クリスピータースが、オランダ政府代表としては運輸・公共事業大臣カラ・バイス及びメラニー・スヒュルツ・ファン・ハーヘン運輸公共事業副大臣が署名しました。

この条約は、“2010年計画”的実現とスケルト川入り江部分に関する政策及び管理面での協力、スケルト川領域の共同航海管理について言及しています。

1つ目の条約では、洪水対策の改善、スケルト港の利便性の改善、スケルト川入り江の自然保護等、“2010年計画”的実現について述べられています。アントワープ港が強く強調するスケルト川の河床掘削工事についても、この条約内で述べられています。この工事により、潮の状態に関わらず、13.10メートル(43ft)の喫水で船はいつでも港に着くことができるようになります。しかし、川全体を浚渫（しゅんせつ）する必要はないでしょう。ほとんどの部分において、水路はすでに十分深いと言えます。必要なのは、一部の浅瀬部分を除去することです。この浅瀬部分はフランダース地域に2ヶ所、オランダ地域に7ヶ所、合計9ヶ所あり、それぞれ1.4メートル(4ft. 7in)の深さまで削られます。浚渫工事は2007年後半に始まり、2009年後半に終了する予定です。しかしながら、浚渫工事に着手する前にしなければならない手続きはたくさんあり、オランダとフランダースの両方で許可が下りなければ始められません。両国とも、この事に関してできるだけ迅速な対応を約束しています。

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Statutory nominations

The Board of Directors would like to inform you of the acceptance of four resignations from the Board: Mr Todoroki of Marubeni Benelux, Mr J.P. Beherman of Beherman Auto, Mr H. Shimizu of Mitsui & Co. Benelux and Mr S. Ishida of Sumitomo Benelux.

We would like to thank Mr Todoroki, Mr Shimizu and Mr Ishida for their continuous support and dedication to the BJA during their stay in Belgium. We will miss their friendship, honest ideas and wise suggestions, but wish them good luck in their future careers upon return to Japan.

Mr Beherman also tendered his resignation from the Board, but will continue his support by staying a company member. Mr Beherman was one of the co-founders of the BEJAT, that later merged into our association. One of his most remarked initiatives was a most efficiently organised mission into Japan of a group of automotive supplying companies, back into the late eighties. Until last year he was organizing the yearly Golf tournaments of the BJA.

The BJA would like to thank him deeply for all his precious time and ideas during all the decades of dedication to the BJA.

We also will welcome two new Board Members, successors to Mr Ishida of Sumitomo Benelux and Mr Shimizu of Mitsui & Co. Benelux. We deeply appreciate the warm support of Mr Manabe of Sumitomo Benelux and Mr Masuko of Mitsui & Co. Benelux who are taking up the role of their predecessors on the Board of Directors.

Lastly, we hereby would like to inform you of the official re-nominations for a period of three years:

Mr M. Imamura, Mr N. Sepulchre and Mr L. Willame.

The nominations were approved by the Board of Directors and were voted during the BJA General Assembly on 27 March 2006.

New Members

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

Associate Member

IP TRADE
(*Telecommunications*)
4, rue des Chasseurs Ardennais
4031 Angleur
Tel: 04 364 04 69, Fax: 04 365 23 46
E-mail: dmattivi@iptrade-networks.com
Website: www.iptrade-networks.com
BJA Contact:
Mr Magdalena SERATI, Head of Administration

Individual Members

Couple:
Mr and Mrs Nicolas & Nami Van Hoecke

Regular:
Ms Fiona Cromarty-Lawtie
Mr Natalio De Pina
Mr Claude Deroose
Mr Theo Jonker
Mr Willy Kempel
Mr Karel Mul
Mr Yoshitaka Oto
Mr Carlo Stultjens

Student:
Ms Mariko Kano
Ms Kumiko Koyama
Ms Eva Verrydt

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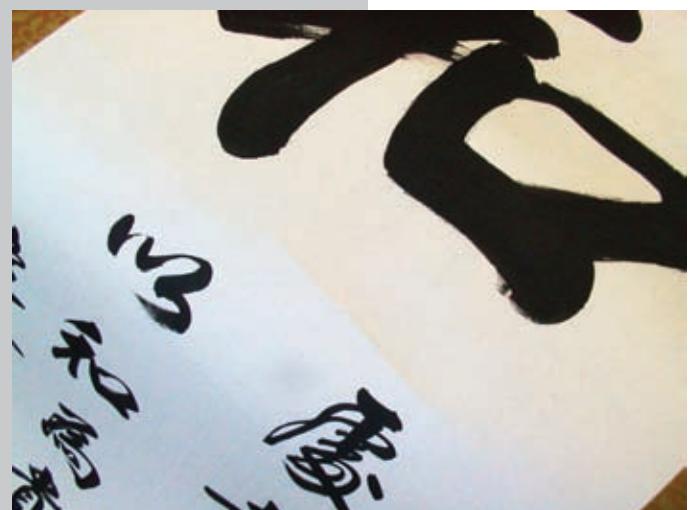
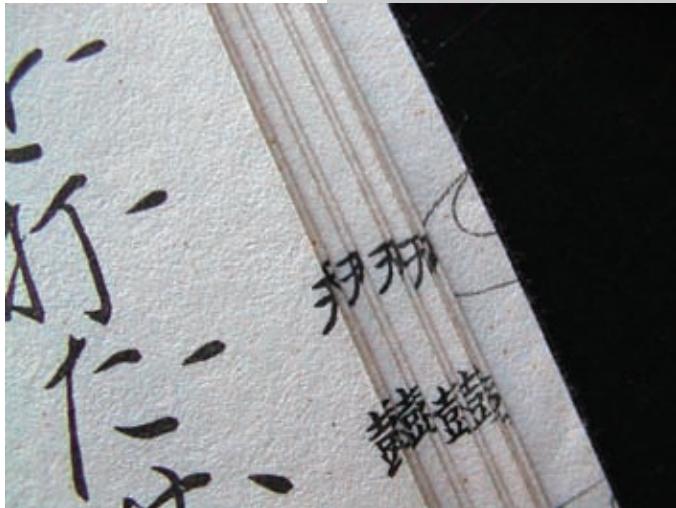
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