The Sea Otter Islands: Geopolitics and Environment in the East Asian Fur Trade

Shadows of Modernity: Hybrid Identities of Buraku Outcastes in Japan

East Timor and the Power of International Commitments in the American Decision Making Process

Syed Hussein Alatas: His Life and Critiques of the Malaysian New Economic Policy

Betel Nut Culture in Contemporary Taiwan

A Note from the Publisher
Shadows of Modernity: Hybrid Identities of Buraku Outcastes in Japan
By Nicholas Mucks, M.A.P.S.

Abstract
The emergence of modern Japan was a complex process in which burakumin and other minorities were affected differently than the majority culture. Burakumin face discrimination because they traditionally had occupations considered polluted and were outcaste by society. Compared to the institutional discrimination during the Tokugawa period and the social discrimination of the Meiji era, prejudice toward burakumin today is comparatively invisible. As a subculture facing discrimination, the Meiji era moral suasion depicting what was ‘Japanese’ helped to create a burakumin hybrid identity acclimating to the dramatic changes in social and cultural norms of the time. Similar to the way identity, community, and environmental spaces redefine the characteristics of burakumin historically, these same spaces continue to be deconstructed and reinvented today as new temporal spaces from globalization and technology broaden the opportunities for burakumin in Japanese society.

Introduction
At various locations throughout Japan in the spring of 1875, over 26,000 peasants rioted to demand that the minority group called burakumin be relegated back to a social status of being outcaste (Hane 1982, 144; Devos and Wagatsuma 1973, 37). Mob outbreaks such as this occurred sporadically after the Meiji government abolished Japan’s official class system with the Emancipation Edict of 1871 (37). The policy promoting social mobility, however, had little to do with civil rights. It was motivated to regulate all landholdings, including the tax-free farmlands occupied by burakumin, and bring them under centralized governmental control. (Devos and Wagatsuma 35; Jansen 2000, 459).

The plight of the burakumin today is an example of how civil rights can be dramatically affected by social policy. Etymologically, burakumin stands for “hamlet people”, but there is no biological way of differentiating burakumin from majority Japanese; the prejudice that exists is due to the sociocultural factors of ancestry and place of birth (Sugimoto 2003, 189). The burakumin face discrimination because they traditionally had occupations considered polluted (e.g., butchers, executioners) and were outcaste by Tokugawa society. Compared to this institutional discrimination during the Tokugawa period and the social discrimination of the Meiji era (despite legal equality), overt prejudice toward burakumin today is comparatively invisible (Onishi 2009, 1-3; Neary 1998, 50-78; Sugimoto 190). Due to the nature of this discrimination, official estimates range from 1.2 to 3 million burakumin in over 6000 buraku districts throughout the country; this makes them the largest minority group in Japan (BLL 2005, 1; Nishimura 2010, 122). Buraku communities continue to be segregated, and ko-seki (family registries) are routinely used to discover whether a person comes from a buraku neighborhood in order to discriminate against them (Sugimoto 191; Neary 52).

The purpose of this project is to isolate the roles that urbanization, modernity, and globalization are playing in pulling burakumin out of the shadows and into the foreground of contemporary Japanese society. This discussion will examine the ways in which coexistence is emanating from within, not outside of, the spaces of identity, community and the environment dominated by majority Japanese. What role do legacy social structures play in continuing to affect burakumin because they have been classified as a strategic ‘Other’ by majority society? Why are they limited access to social resources? How can we use current scholarship to discover ways to deconstruct previously imposed notions of cultural deñilement and inferiority?

In order to analyze the role that burakumin are playing in bringing broader attention to their sociocultural conditions in Japan, three concerns will receive attention. First, I want to find the tension between majority and minority identities by investigating the mechanisms used to cultivate a national homogenized Japanese identity. This tension is a key factor determining the interdependent reflexive identity established by burakumin when choosing their level of assimilation into or exclusion from this national identity based on how much they identify with being burakumin. Second, I want to uncover the interplay between various communities in Japan, including urban buraku neighborhoods known as dōwa projects and the many civil rights organizations pushing for change, and the cessation of the Special Measures Law affirmative action legislation in 2003. Finally, I plan to analyze how globalization and information access can bring attention to these issues, such as when historic maps of Tokyo published on Google Earth created a public outcry from many burakumin.

Origins
A hybrid culture results from the confluence of previously separate cultural processes synthesizing to create new norms, traditions and practices. The emergence of modern Japan was a complex example of this process, in which burakumin and other minorities were affected differently than the majority culture. As a subculture facing discrimination this discrimination created a hybrid identity for burakumin acclimating to dramatic changes in social and cultural norms. In order to understand how an ethnically identical Japanese group has become hybridized, it is important to assess the historical influences that were the building blocks of contemporary Japanese society and culture.

Due to the unique dichotomy between Shinto and Buddhism, repugnancy towards death as impure has a long tradition in Japan. The association of killing animals and eating meat with impiety in Buddhism and the correlation of death as defiling and impure in Shinto together stimulated a public opinion that occupations dealing with death were also impious and impure (Jansen 122; Pharr 2004, 134). During the Nara period (710-784 CE), people who worked in occupations considered polluted were called eta (extreme filth) or hinin (non-human). These people became “specialists in impurity” (Pharr 2004, 134). They had a wide range of vocations that were related to death, considered unclean, or low-ranking; these included butchers, tanners, leather workers, bow-mak-
ers, shrine laborers, beggars, dyers, and producers of bamboo goods (Hane 139-143; Sugimoto 2003, 189). The concentration of burakumin in the Kansai region, where the capitals Nara and Kyoto existed, reflects the important role certain burakumin played in purification ceremonies for deceased emperors as funeral attendants during this time (Ohnuki-Tierney 1989, 78).

In the Medieval period (1185-1603 CE), hinin were a heterogeneous group with sociocultural flexibility who were considered nonresidents exempt from taxes and other obligations (Pharr 2004, 134; Ohnuki-Tierney 84-87). They could traverse regional boundaries controlled by different lords as artists, craftsmen, and religious workers, allowing them more mobility than many other strata within society (Ohnuki-Tierney 87). Occupational specialization during this period had two particular effects on the perception of polluted occupations. First, it separated responsibilities into more finite occupations, thus people who cleaned shrines, cared for the dead, or worked with animal hides became more distinguishable from other artistic and religious occupations and were more easily associated with impurity than before (Ohnuki-Tierney 78-84). Second, increased specialization helped to change the perception of people with these occupations as being polluted themselves (Pharr 134). In other words, it became more difficult for people to leave occupations considered polluted, effectively creating the stratification necessary for the institutionalization of burakumin as outcastes in the Tokugawa period.

The central government of the Tokugawa period (1603-1867) institutionalized a semi-feudal caste system consisting of samurai, peasant, artisan, and merchant classes (Neary 55). This policy reinforced the existence of the outcaste seimin (humble people), which consisted of eta and hinin, at the bottom of this hierarchy who filled a societal need for undertakers, kawatsu (leather producers), tatami floor makers, executioners, or certain types of entertainers such as prostitutes (Hane 141; Jansen 123; Neary 54; Nimalka et al. 2007). Due to these rigid class boundaries, it is suggested within existing scholarship that the demand for leather armor created jobs that only burakumin could fill, thus creating the vehicle for the institutionalization of burakumin as outcastes in the Tokugawa period. The inability of burakumin to leave their outcaste status led to perceptions of their impurity becoming coupled less with occupation and more to neighborhood and family ties (Neary 55). The outcaste community was institutionalized by the time of the Meiji restoration; when the government officially abolished the class system, discrimination continued because it was socially ingrained (Hane 144).

**Literature Review**

In stark contrast to the 1986 proclamation by Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro that “Japan has one ethnicity, one state, and one language”, the ideology of Japan being a mono-ethnic nation is less supported by scholarship as more research is conducted on the buraku problem, both domestically and internationally (Lie 2001, 1). Although an abundance of scholarship about the identity, civil rights, nationalism, and modernity of Japan has existed for decades, the concept of minorities as a hybrid culture among a dominant majority is relatively recent in this literature. Within this context, elucidation of several constructed spaces becomes apparent: individual identities, social or group dynamics, and environmental characteristics. A literature review about the multi-ethnicity of Japan is a medium to both highlight interdependence of these spaces and to de-construct them.

Identity is a malleable construction sensitive to the external influences of social values and political atmosphere. A large proportion of scholarship about the individual identity of burakumin focuses on how these influences affect a burakumin’s accepted identity as being either separate from or part of the majority; this was most prevalent in the Meiji and prewar policies that still have influence today. This scholarship also supports the idea that burakumin and other minorities were used as scapegoats in literature, imagery, advertising, or other mediums to construct a belief that burakumin were inferior. After the edicts in 1871, poor peasants in a way had an identity crisis fearing that they would become outcastes themselves. Burakumin became scapegoats to vent frustrations about the financial hardships caused from rampant modernization during this time (Devos and Wagatsuma 35). Statements today are not too dissimilar from those that occurred during the peasant riots 130 years ago. Alastair McLauchlan’s interviews with several burakumin from Osaka in 2001 illustrate the continued identity struggle that many burakumin face. One person stated, “Why can’t they understand that we are all humans, mainstream and burakumin... yet how pitiful to be judged solely on the place we were born in” (McLauchlan 2003).

Aggregated, identity diffuses into a group. It is the construction of this imagined community that most dramatically affects burakumin today. Family, community, institutions, and civil rights groups reinforce or attempt to deny the discrimination of burakumin in marriage, occupation and education. Supporting the idea that, similar to the United States and Europe, Japan is a multicultural society, contemporary scholarship focuses on civil rights issues within Japan as having parallels to those in other countries (Neary 77; Lie 1; IMADR). Within this scholarship burakumin are part of the larger context of analyzing social discrimination throughout the world.

Environmental space is a tangible construction built to embrace the organic community. For burakumin, the environmental space is absolutely integral to their current situation because it is not only the protocol for prejudice when using koseki (family registries) to discover where someone is from but it is also where the strongest communities of burakumin exist (Tomonaga 2007). Scholarship about this space focuses most poignantly on the renovation of buraku neighborhoods known as dōwa projects and how the Special Measures Law affects the improvement of the identity and community spaces of burakumin. This next section will investigate the causes of a unique burakumin identity within majority society.

**Identity Constructions – ‘Japaneseness’**

The construction of identity is a colossal topic within the social sciences. Investigating the mechanisms used to cultivate a national homogenized Japanese identity and...
the interdependent reflexive identities established by buraku
kumin can shed light on the tension between the majority and
minority identities. The idea of ‘Japaneness’ and the factors
of pre-war Japan involved in creating these ‘racialized’ rela-
tions, such as minzokuron or nihonjinron, further exacerbated
the exclusion of certain populations on the basis of character-
istics presumed to be inherently Japanese (Sugimoto 2003, 31;
Weiner 1998, 1-8). The term minzokuron refers to race, ethnic-
ity, or people – min meaning ‘people’, zoku meaning ‘country’,
and ron meaning ‘theory’. This concept became integral to
nation-building during the Meiji period and later heavily
influenced Japanese literature. Nihonjinron (theories about
Japanese identity or culture) characterized traits such as ways
of thinking, social behavior, or language structure considered

There was a belief that Japanese people had particularly
strong in-group connections, racial uniformity, and harmony
with nature as compared to Western societies (Sugimoto 184-
185). Further definitions of ‘Japaneness’ were broken down
into nationality, ethnic lineage, language competency, birth-
place, current residence, and level of cultural literacy (187).
The Japanese construction of “Otherness” is also strongly tied
to the notions of uchi and soto, or inside and outside. While
majority Japanese identity was considered uchi, burakumin,
other minorities, and Westerners were considered soto (Neary
The soto explanations of the newfound social mobility and
unity of burakumin during the Meiji period were as people
ethnically different such as being Korean, Christian heretics,
or having “one rib-bone lacking” or “distorted sexual organs”
(Lie 2007, 122). These were all used to depict an ‘Other’ by
classifying what was or was not Japanese thought and behav-
ior.

Michael Weiner suggests that the imagined community
of the nation was conceived domestically during the Meiji
period through the use of nihonjinron in media to character-
ize ethnic homogeneity and stimulate a new sense of national
purpose and identity in the populace (Weiner 1-8). The moral
usasion campaigns during the Meiji period were motived to
compete with the much wealthier Western powers and
sought to redefine the character and everyday life of Japanese
people (Garon 1997, 8). Although the burakumin were only
a tiny piece within this broader context, theories of social-
Darwinism modeled after Western imperialism proliferated,
promoting a consanguineous majority identity that ostracized
and looked down upon them as separate, similar to the way
blacks were treated in the United States and Europe at the
time (Weiner 3-6). The tendency for burakumin to be less edu-
cated, in poorer health, and with less material development
made them inferior in the discourse of what was perceived to
be a modern and progressive majority identity (Weiner 11, Lie
2007, 125). While the Japanese academic and intellectual com-
unities pursued ways to identify characteristics uniquely
Japanese, political leaders eventually used this perceived hier-
archy over groups considered less advanced to justify exclu-
sion of burakumin, absorption of the Ainu in Hokkaido, and
domination over Korea and Taiwan (Weiner 9-13). In short,
state-inspired nationalism offered a definition of a homog-
ous Japanese identity in relation to the West and to other
citizens domestically, which marginalized those who were not
part of that identity.

Community amidst Discrimination

For burakumin today, the most ardent discrimination
occurs in marriage, occupation, and education, yet some of
these challenges can be allayed with the support of family,
the community, and civil rights groups. Having transitioned
from the institutional discrimination of the Tokugawa period,
where burakumin were outcaste as people with occupations
considered polluted, and the social discrimination of the
Meiji era, where burakumin were legally equal yet experi-
ced prejudice based on where they lived, prejudice today is
comparatively invisible and burakumin are not being wholly
outcast (Onishi 2009, 1-3; Neary 1998, 50-78). A study in 2006
discovered that three factors continue to plague burakumin: 1)
discovery of new buraku lists; 2) propaganda and discrimina-
tion on the Internet; and 3) cases of property purchase avoid-
ance and reorganization of school districts to exclude buraku
communities (Tomonaga 2007). According to the Osaka
Human Rights Museum, discrimination is supported by
“modern social values such as blood or family lineage, which
simultaneously reinforce prejudice and disdain of the public
against buraku” (Osaka Liberty).

Interrmarriage rates are also comparatively low between
burakumin and non-burakumin, despite their being generally
physically indistinguishable. Research by sociologist Charlie
Morgan suggests that there are three social factors affecting
marriage rates between burakumin and non-burakumin: mar-
rriage candidate preference; third parties, such as extended
family members; and marriage market constraints (Morgan
40-42, 51). He found that burakumin problems parallel those
of African Americans in that they experience high levels of
residential segregation. It is the social spaces where people
meet that in fact has the most influence on intermarriage be-
cause, following intermarriage patterns of African Americans,
burakumin meet less in the traditional spaces of universities
and workplaces due to segregation but have a higher ten-
dency to meet in local neighborhoods (Morgan 51). This may
or may not be true because people often hide their buraku
status. Many people who marry a non-burakumin hide their
background from their children and family because many poten-
tial partners receive strong opposition from family mem-
bers considering it “unrespectable” (BLL 2005, 1; Nishimura
2010, 134). Another study discovered that many majority
parents even prefer their children not to play with burakumin
because they are fearful that the children’s attitudes might in-
stigate intermarriage once they are of age (McLauchlan 2003).

Pierre Bourdieu’s “epistemic reflexivity” is the concept of
self-reference in sociology where an individual examines
and ‘bends back on’ or refers to the mainstream identity,
thus instigating their identity construction.2 The challenges
that people face with their burakumin identities are helped by
family and community, which eventually become the founda-
tion for building a reflexive identity. Explaining this reflexive
identity construction, Christopher Bondy frames it within the
burakumin paradigm, “a key factor in identity formation and

http://www.pacificrim.usfca.edu/research/perspectives
social interaction comes through the reactions of those from outside [buraku] districts” (Matsushita 2002; Bondy 2002). Represented in the 1987 book Why the Dōwa are Scary (Dōwa wa kowai-kou), Muichi Maekawa (burakumin) and Keiichi Fujita (researcher) showed that many majority Japanese are afraid of burakumin and the neighborhoods because of ignorance – holding a belief that burakumin are dangerous – and from a few publicized cases of burakumin who extort money using perceptions of fear (Nishimura 122).

A study at Osaka Education University interviewed eighteen Japanese youths (18-25 years old) from various occupations and classified buraku identities on a range from strong to complete abandonment/assimilation (Matsushita 2002; Bondy 2002). One of the most interesting discoveries was the correlation of a person’s identification as burakumin to the reaction from people outside dōwa projects, the influence of family support or structure, and the strength of burakumin social networks (Matsushita 2002; Bondy 2002). Since the discrimination from outside these neighborhoods tends to be high, only those people with stronger support structures develop a powerful identification to being burakumin; other people without these structures in place (e.g. from poorer neighborhoods with less resources) have a tendency to abandon, be conflicted, or maintain multiple identities allowing them to interact with non-burakumin (Matsushita 2002; Bondy 2002). All case studies demonstrated this, and one 24-year-old female with a strong identification stated, “I was always told [in school] that those of us from buraku districts had to be responsible; to have pride in who we were, and I came to believe it” (Matsushita 2002).

Despite infighting for authority over burakumin issues, many civil rights groups have increased awareness for the buraku problem at the international level. The Buraku Liberation League (BLL) has over 200,000 members in thirty-nine prefectures (Sugimoto 192; Neary 66). The aim of the BLL is to: 1) develop legal solutions to better the lives of burakumin; 2) pressure the government to improve environmental conditions beyond urban renewal; and 3) prohibit discrimination by individuals or groups (Neary 70). The BLL is known for being militant and has been effective at creating community awareness by targeting newspapers, magazines, and other media, including authors and journalists, then publicly shaming them or forcing them to give a public apology (Sugimoto 193; Yabuuchi 2004, 285). The Japan Communist Party (JCP) was also influential in improving the burakumin paradigm within society. However, due to conflicts with the BLL over educating youth in public schools, the “Yata Incident” in 1969 culminated in several JCP-affiliated teachers getting injured (Pharr 2004, 85-86). Another group named Zenkairen (National Buraku Liberation Alliance) separated from the BLL in 1979 and similarly often came at odds with the BLL’s aggressive tactics. Despite continued problems in the treatment of burakumin today, the Zenkairen disbanded in 2004 due to a belief that the burakumin issue had been resolved (USJP.org 2005).

Urbanization & Legislation

In 1951, the National Committee for Buraku Liberation (which became the BLL in 1955) pressured the Kyoto government officials to mark on city maps where there were inadequate water supplies, sewage systems, garbage disposal, and fire hydrants, as well as areas that suffered high rates of public health problems. They discovered that all such areas were within the eighteen buraku neighborhoods (Devos and Wagatsuma 76; Neary 61). Similar to “Jim Crow” in the U.S. South, buraku communities were segregated with poor infrastructures and had a lower educated populace with higher welfare dependency rates (Lie 2007, 124). Due to the geographic nature of buraku discrimination, it is an integral characteristic of the burakumin liberation movement, and affirmative action legislation pushed by the BLL has been essential to improving the lives of citizens living in dōwa projects (Neary 50-78).

Passed in 1969, the SML provided funding for dōwa projects classified as needing substantial funding, including policies for new housing, hospitals, small enterprises, agriculture, employment, libraries, or other community services (Neary 64; Paine and Ingersoll 2009). Ending after 33 years in 2002 (with one five-year extension), the SML supplied over 12 trillion yen and dramatically changed the lives of many burakumin (Paine and Ingersoll 2009). The Director of the Buraku Liberation and Human Rights Research Institute, Kenzo Tomonaga, projects that the most beneficial future for such legislation is the prohibition of discrimination, effective compensation for victims, and measures at the national level to mitigate discrimination because dōwa projects do not disappear despite the changing communities (Tomonaga 2007).

However, much like other affirmative action campaigns internationally, the SML was not without problems. The act was vague regarding who would receive funding, and due to the fact that it is difficult to differentiate a buraku person from a non-buraku impoverished Japanese living in a dōwa project, ensuring that SML funding actually went to improving the lives of burakumin was not guaranteed (Neary 64). Also, many prominent scholars state that the SML only allocated funding to specific dōwa projects, leaving many with little or no help (Reber 1999, 355). The reliance of many burakumin on government aid and its perceived unfairness by many non-burakumin additionally caused friction between the BLL, local communities, and the government (Reber 355).

Temporal Constructions

Identity, society, and the environment all have a temporal nature due in part to, among many other reasons, globalization improving information access (Tehrani 2006, 79). Today, burakumin can deconstruct discriminatory spaces by negotiating new networks, such as online groups or social media, where they can share their identities with less discrimination (INDI 2003). However, this technology can also bring new challenges. A recent example was the release of an historic maps layer of Tokyo published in 2009 on Google Earth which had clearly marked labels of where eta villages used to be located (Abalaster). By transposing a contemporary layer of Tokyo today on top, users could easily distinguish the loca-
tion of buraku communities and use it to discriminate against them. There was an outcry by the BLL and other burakumin rights groups to have the labels removed because it was believed this new technology could be used to infringe on their rights. The BLL succeeded in getting the references removed and sent a letter stating that Google should “be aware of and responsible for providing a service that can easily be used as a tool for discrimination” (Alabaster; Lewis 2009).

For many minorities in Japan, the bureaucratic limitations of being considered non-Japanese and, more importantly, the inner conflict many face who must hide their cultural background by being “in the closet” is becoming less of a social obstacle today (Lie 2001, 80-82). The most profound example is previous chief cabinet secretary Hiromu Nonaka. Being public about his buraku lineage, he was politically successful in spite of slander from other politicians, such as Taro Aso, who were openly prejudiced against burakumin (Onishi 2009, 1). Regardless of discrimination, or more likely because of it, there are many other popular communities that burakumin participate with in contemporary society. As Japan urbanized in the 1960s, more people discovered leisure and entertainment. (Lie 2001, 54-58). Members of minority groups including burakumin, Koreans, Chinese, Ainu, and Brazilians found solace in the safe havens of sumo wrestling, baseball, enka, television, literature or manga through the 20th century (Lie 2001, 53-82). Kenji Nakagami was burakumin, for example, whose work titled “The Cape” won Japan’s prestigious Akutagawa Prize for literature in 1976.6

Although the Internet is another venue for discrimination to occur, there are many emerging groups to combat this prejudice. As discrimination on the Internet (cyber-discrimination) becomes increasingly common, groups such as the International Network against Discrimination on the Internet (INDI) have responded by contacting the authors, or the Internet Service Providers (ISPs) if necessary, to remove offending content (INDI 2003). While cyber discrimination exists, digital diasporas of burakumin using the Internet to create a sense of community have also become a tool for burakumin to “come out of the closet” without having to suffer potential social consequences (Nimalka et al. 2007).

The burakumin rights movement has also become internationalized by being framed in the context of global civil rights issues that affect every society. The International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism (IMADR) was founded in 1988 by burakumin, and it has since grown into a network of citizens, committees and partners across the globe (IMADR).7 IMADR is currently working internationally with other NGOs to defend against human rights violations in Sri Lanka, on literacy campaigns with the UN, and to help create policies that protect migrant workers. Working with other international organizations will make the buraku rights movement stronger.

Summary and Conclusions
The relationship between identity, community, and the environment is causal for the burakumin. In Japan, as in other countries, the relationship between minority groups and the majority is always changing and shaping, pressing and pulling; it is in perpetual flux, and this dynamism propels social movements and community construction (Tehranian 2006, 79). Some scholars argue that Japan’s socioeconomic conditions are not conducive to a fully liberated civil rights movement because the government provides no legal protection to victims of discrimination. There are also sociological challenges, such as the common belief that the best remedy for the buraku problem is to ignore it (Reber 1999, 355).

While recognizing that challenges continue to exist, as the paradigm for burakumin shifts, this research implies that the various constructions are all temporal in nature. Whether it is identity, community, or the environment, change is inevitable. This may include a deterioration of the sense of community as burakumin assimilate and disappear into majority society, where the buraku problem will disappear over time or become increasingly silenced because fewer people will be distinguishable as burakumin and more non-burakumin will inhabit buraku neighborhoods (Tomonaga 2007). A more hopeful outcome is that buraku heritage will be remembered as something uniquely Japanese within the international context of global civil rights movements. Perhaps the future will consist of a cultural renaissance honoring burakumin for their important place in Japanese identity and history. Increased media attention, public awareness, and scholarship may also disassociate the perceptions of burakumin from being impure and will advocate for equal treatment in society. Abolishing the koseki family registries altogether would allow burakumin more freedom, reducing the potential of being discriminated against because of where they or their families are from. Identity, community, and environmental spaces redefine the characteristics of burakumin discrimination during the Tokugawa and Meiji periods, and these same spaces continue to be deconstructed and reinvented today. As new temporal spaces resulting from globalization and technology are discovered, burakumin will have new opportunities to renegotiate the definitions of space in Japanese society.

ENDNOTES
3. The denunciation tactics of the BLL are widely criticized and often instigate violence between the BLL, the police, and the public (Nishimura 2010, 125). There are many cases of the BLL’s extremely aggressive actions; in one case a school principle allegedly committed suicide because he was stuck between the pressure of the BLL and the board of education for having students sing the de facto national anthem Kimigayo, which was considered representative of the state’s pre-war involvement in education (Japan Echo 1999, April 2010).
4. The BLL and JCP had different ideologies about the education of youth: the BLL believed that affirmative action and assimilation would improve the academic achievement of burakumin student, and the JCP did not. The “Yata Incident” evolved because school teachers supporting an Osaka Teacher’s Union JCP candidate refused to discuss teaching materials that the BLL considered discriminatory. The
events culminated in detention of these teachers by the BLL for more than a day, forcing them to publically denounce their actions. This was considered a major victory for the BLL because the Osaka High Court supported this behavior as a legal right of protest. See Pharr, Susan. 2004. “Burakumin protest: The incident at Yoka high school,” 133-146.

5. The digital maps came from the University of California Berkeley collection overseen by David Rumsey, a collector of over 100,000 historical maps. Rumsey worked with Google to build the new layers and was also ultimately the person to remove the references to eta. Many critics say that this is another example of Google capitalizing on other people’s information yet not recognizing the implications of making unenclosed information available, such as the way Google Maps street view could be used to invade people’s privacy (Alabaster; Lewis 2009). See the Japanese historical map collection of University of California, Berkeley at http://www.davidrumsey.com/japan/

6. The Cape and Other Stories from the Japanese Ghetto by Kenji Nakagami (Translated by Eve Zimmerman) draws a dramatic portrayal of what life is like for people living in a buraku community.

7. IMADR is a non-profit organization devoted to eliminating discrimination and racism by empowering discriminated groups to represent themselves, promoting transnational solidarity among these groups, and advocating legislation to eliminate discrimination and racism internationally. IMADR has consultative status to the UN Economic and Social Council. www.imadr.org/

REFERENCES


Sugimoto, Yoshio. 2003. An Introduction to Japanese Society, ed. Sugimoto, Yoshio, La Trobe University, Second ed. 477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia: Cambridge University Press.


http://www.pacificrim.usfca.edu/research/perspectives


Nicholas Mucks received his M.A. in Asia Pacific Studies from the University of San Francisco in 2010. Starting this summer, he will be joining the Japan Exchange and Teaching program to work in Japan as an assistant language teacher. Nicholas has also written on Internet censorship in China, Islam in Malaysia, library science education in Japan, sustainable electricity production in Japan, and energy security in East Asia.