B8630 BURAKKU RAGUN (JAPAN, 4-12, 2006) [ANIMATED TV SERIES]
(Other titles: Black lagoon)

**Credits:** director/writer, Sunai Katabuchi ; original manga, Rei Hiroe ; English adaptation, Stephen Hedley.

**Summary:** Animated series (24 episodes) set in contemporary Japan, Southeast Asia and the South China Sea. In the opening episode we meet Rokuro Okajima, a young, meek, mundane, and metropolitan Japanese salaryman. His business trip to South East Asia to deliver a data disc for his company turns from pleasure cruise to festival of pain when modern day pirates board his ship and take him hostage. These soldiers of fortune, Revy (a hot-blooded, foul-mouthed female gun nut), Benny (a mild-mannered misfit who runs the team’s communications and IT), and their captain Dutch (a burly, black veteran of Vietnam) can be merciless, maniacal, and mean. Together they make up the crew of the patrol boat Black Lagoon. They are the exact opposite of Rokuro in every way, but eventually as ‘Rock,’ he throws his lot in with them after another mercenary group, hired by his employer, targets them to steal back the data disc that Rokuro was carrying. The series, a Japanese and American co-production has been described as *Cowboy bebop* meets *Firefly* and *Apocalypse now*. Benny is even a reasonable facsimile of Wash with his blonde hair, Hawaiian shirt, and quick tongue. Rock is like Simon, a white-collar professional who has taken up with the mercenaries against his will. Instead of trawling the outer reaches of space, Black Lagoon patrols Asian rivers and coastlines, warding off attacks right and left from other mercenaries, gangsters and pirates.

Hall, P. “Black Lagoon: the second barrage, 001” *Video librarian* 24/1 (Jan/Feb 2009), p. 76.

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