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The Postcolonial Encounters between Taiwan and Japan through Popular Culture: Confessions in *Ainori* and *Cape No. 7*

This research aims to capture the postcolonial encounters between Taiwan and Japan, through the exchanges of mutual gazes and cultural imaginations produced and mediated through the realm of popular culture. It will examine the consistently high-rating Japanese reality TV show *Ainori* (1999-2009) selecting Taiwan as one of the global tourist locations for “discovering” postcolonial Taiwan in 2007 and the latest hit Taiwanese movie *Cape No. 7* (2008) accentuated with strong postcolonial nostalgia flowing between Taiwan and Japan. As *Ainori* and *Cape No. 7* reveal, confession is a site of struggle for releasing and confirming the authenticity of the repressed postcolonial emotions towards Japan and Taiwan. Confession functions as a postcolonial justification of its own right for the Taiwanese postcolonial subject with a denied colonial past involving with Japan which seems to be quickly avoided by Japan and KMT led by Chiang Kai-shek from China after the end of world war II. This study will suggest that Taiwan’s postcolonial complex for Japan needs to be de-stigmatized, recognized, understood and healed. It might be a better solution to Japan’s misjudgment of postcolonial Taiwan by transcending either the overcompensation of Japan’s sense of guilty or its nationalist triumphalism. Besides, the unequal power relationships between Japan and Taiwan might be destabilized through positive transformation and investments in reciprocal dialogues/interactions.