

# Creative Immanence, Affects and Cetacean Imagination: A Deleuzian Reading of Hung-Chi Liao's Ocean Writing

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## Abstract

In this short paper, I attempt to use Deleuzian theories to interpret a series of poetic prose pieces on whales and dolphins by the famous Taiwanese writer and fisherman, Hung-Chi Liao. The idea of immanence is important throughout the whole Deleuzian philosophical enterprise. In *What Is Philosophy?*, Deleuze explains that concepts are events and the plane of immanence is the reservoir of conceptual events that give rise to the image of thought. In other words, the plane of immanence is the absolute ground of philosophy where concepts are created and thus indicates a possibility of virtual creativity. From this perspective, when we read Liao's remarkably poetic prose pieces on whales and dolphins, we feel that his alternative form of contact with the ocean is an event, a crucial moment of deterritorialization that has brought him to "actualize" his creative immanence. In his thirties, after a traumatic event that forced him to break away from the land, the ocean as a line of flight became Liao's "rhizomatic territory" to create a new life. Whales and dolphins are intelligent marine mammals and his contact with them seems to have indirectly triggered the creative force of the imma-

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(Received: 18 November 2013; Accepted: 19 May 2014)

nence in him. The ocean imagination has invited him to dive into “a line of becoming.” As Deleuze has argued in *A Thousand Plateaus* that every becoming is an involution, not an imitation, Liao’s ocean writing on becoming dolphins and whales has brought him to a new identity—a very successful writer with a deep connection to the ocean.

**Keywords:** Deleuze, Hung-Chi Liao, immanence, affect, cetaceans, becoming

It should be said of all art that, in relation to the percepts or visions they give us, artists are presenters of affects, the inventors and creators of affects.

(*What Is Philosophy?* 175)

The famous Taiwanese prose writer Hung-Chi Liao was born in 1957 in Hualien county, the eastern part of Taiwan. Since 1993, he has received several major literary awards<sup>1</sup> for poetic prose in Taiwan; for the last twenty years, he has published almost twenty works on cetacean imagination, ocean culture and the fisherman's life. Before becoming a well-known writer, he underwent many hardships in various occupations: he was frustrated working in a cement factory, entered the shrimp business in Indonesia but failed to attain a sense of achievement, and returned to Taiwan and entered local politics to fight against social injustice. Still, none of his occupations seemed to harmonize his unstable life before his mid-thirties. He was particularly disappointed in society's power struggles, which he saw were based on mutual aggression and hierarchized consciousness.

In 1995, at the age of thirty-five, out of despair, Liao decided to begin a new life as a fisherman. This decision connects to the Deleuzian theoretical concept of deterritorialization, as Liao made a line of flight toward the ocean to explore a horizontal rhizomatic territory, away from the hierarchical arborescent land. This drastic break from his previous identity did not, in fact, stabilize his life; at first, life as a fisherman brought him the doubts and anxieties of readjustment to a new environment. After several years, however, there was an amazing breakthrough in his career: he began to recruit people who showed interest in dolphins and whales and set up a long-term ocean research project on the cetacean lifestyle in the eastern part of Taiwan in 1996. He became the chief founding director for the famous "Kuroshio Ocean Education Foundation" (黑潮海洋文教基金會), which organizes annual inspirational programs on the oceanic environment and cetacean culture.

Most critical analysis of Hung-Chi Liao's literature has focused on the Taiwanese culture and the ritual of the fisherman's life; it seldom discusses how the ocean or the cetacean imagination creates an affective process of becoming

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<sup>1</sup> Hung-Chi Liao has won several important local literary awards for prose writing, such as the *China Times* Literary Award (1993 and 1995), Wu Cho-Liu Literary Award (1996), UDN Booker Award (1996 and 1997), Taipei Literature for Annual Writing Project (1998), Lai Ho Literary Award (2003), Wu Jung-Fu Literary Award (2006), Chiu Ko Annual Prose Writing (2007) and Singapore National Library Annual Best Literature for the Ocean prose writing. He has been a writer-in-residence at several universities, such as Hong Kong Baptist University, Shih Hsin University (Taiwan), and Tunghai University (Taiwan).

for spiritual transmutation. Thus, in this short paper, I attempt to understand Liao's writing on the cetacean imagination, and to explore how his poetic reveries on these non-human oceanic others may give rise to the enlightening inspiration that generates creative affect for spiritual self-transmutation. I use Deleuzian philosophy to elaborate on the creative force, affect, within the mystery of immanence, and also to discuss how the sublimation of traumatic memories into works of art can actually heal inner wounds.

### I. Creative Immanence

Perhaps, one of the most provocative arguments that Deleuze and Guattari launch in their protest against psychoanalysis is the reinterpretation of the mystery of immanence, a new understanding of the unconscious forces of self-affirmation that invites the development of potential creative power. Indeed, psychoanalysis ignores the alternative perspectives that understand the creative power of immanence in a more positive sense. Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus*, in which the authors argue against the idea of the unconscious as the theater based on the triangular daddy-mommy-me familial romance, liberates the subject from the burden of a predestined path of fate. The Deleuzian concept of "the desiring machine" breaks away in a more "productive" way from the Freudian notion that the unconscious has a mechanism of repression with its negative forces and impulses.

Affect, in Deleuze's sense, is indeed closely related to the creative forces within the immanence; it unfolds the virtual power of transcendent intensities and actualizes it into the images of thought. On the other hand, affect, in Freudian psychoanalysis, is related to the unconscious forces of repression and dreams are frequently understood as the affects of unconscious thought. Yet, this psychoanalytic understanding of affects is rather negative and limited. In fact, the notion of affect in Deleuzian theoretical framework does not directly correspond to the conscious level of "feeling" or "emotion" though oftentimes other critics may understand the term, affect, in this way. Affect and affection in Deleuze's theories are not the same; the former refers to the virtual forces within the transcendent immanence; the latter indicates the conscious level of emotion. In other words, affection is the actualized and concretized level of the virtual forces of affect. Thus, before elaborating on the concept of affect in the Deleuzian philosophical context in great detail, it is important to first explore the notion of immanence in Deleuzian theories, in order to achieve a better understanding of affect as the creative force for the artist in a more positive sense,

which is different from the psychoanalytic sense of repression in the unconscious level. Consequently regarding Liao's writing on cetacean imagination, the reader can better understand how these dolphins and whales, as non-human others, could bring him infinite enlightening inspiration to create a new mode of life. That is, through the contemplation of the nonhuman animals, it triggers the creative forces of affects and thus to Deleuze, artists are the presenters or creators of affects and the nonhuman becomers.

In Deleuze's theoretical framework, "philosophy is not a simple art of forming, inventing, or fabricating concepts . . . philosophy is the discipline that involves *creating* concepts" (*What Is Philosophy?* 5). That is, the philosopher is the inventor and creator of concepts. The concept of duality in Deleuzian theories should not be understood from the perspective of the Hegelian dialectics, but rather as a process of becoming in a degree of difference. Thus, the reader discovers dual notions, such as the virtual/the actual, affect/affection, percept/perception, figure/figuration, pure immanence or plane of immanence/immanence, to name just a few here.

Influenced by Spinoza's idea, as articulated in *Ethics*, that the body and the mind are united because God can be understood as substance, Deleuze further develops this notion in his theoretical framework arguing against Kantian transcendental idealism and postulates that the immanence has its creative act in transcendence. To Spinoza, God and Nature are one and the same thing, and thus the thinking nature is thinking substance.

Bodies are not distinguished in respect of substance. That which constitutes the form of the individual thing consists in a union of bodies. But this union, by hypothesis, is retained in spite of the continuous change of component bodies. There the individual thing will retain its own nature as before, both in respect of substance and of mode. (Spinoza 74-75)

Moreover, Spinoza believes that the human mind is capable of affecting the body through perception; thus it is obvious that the human mind cannot be separated from the human body.

This theory leads Deleuze to elaborate his belief that transcendence is inherent within immanence. In *What Is Philosophy?*, Deleuze explains that the plane of immanence neither directly corresponds to "the concept" nor to "the image" but rather refers to the chaotic infinite creative forces, or virtual potentiality, in which images are gradually actualized. "It is the horizon itself that is in movement" (*What Is Philosophy?* 38). This infinite movement is double within the folding and unfolding process from one to the other and so "it is in this sense that thinking and being are said to be one and the same" (38). The plane of immanence is the foundation for the development of all potential creative

forces, and thus “if philosophy begins with the creation of concepts, then the plane of immanence must be regarded as prephilosophical” (40).

Prephilosophical does not mean something preexistent but rather something that does not exist outside philosophy, although philosophy presupposes it. . . . The concept is the beginning of philosophy, but the plane is its instituting . . . it is a plane of immanence that constitutes the absolute ground of philosophy, its earth or deterritorialization, the foundation on which it creates its concepts. . . . The plane is surrounded by illusion. These are not abstract misinterpretation or just external pressures but rather thought’s mirages. (*What Is Philosophy?* 41, 49)

Before the virtual movement of thinking/being can be actualized into a concrete image of thought, the subject is caught between thought and unthought, fulfilling the notion of duality based on difference in degree that populates Deleuze’s theoretical enterprise. By the same token, if the potential creative forces within the philosophical concepts are pre-philosophical, and pure immanence exists within immanence, the affect, as the affective and affirmative creative forces, exists before it can be translated or actualized into a conscious state of feeling or affection. Indeed to affect or to be affected must seldom happen merely in the conscious state; it is always the imperceptible, unknown, or unnamable within thought itself that becomes actualized into concrete images. As to the affirmative and creative forces in their virtual state, we should recall that Deleuze breaks away from the Freudian notion that unconscious forces tend to be negative and repressive rather than affirmative or positive. This understanding of creative aspect can help us to understand the mystery of immanence in a more positive and affirmative sense for the creative writers. In particular, we can employ this understanding to interpret better Hung-Chi Liao’s long-term life struggles and his creative writings on cetacean imagination.

The visual perception of the ocean indeed invites the creative writers, like Hung-Chi Liao, to the threshold of spiritual transmutation. When Freud in his essay “Civilization and Its Discontent” discusses the idea of “the oceanic feeling” in our heart, he cannot properly understand these creative forces of affect and percept in the plane of immanence. He simply mistakenly links the creative or chaotic affect to the feeling of infantile regression in need of paternal protection. Though Freud later argues that art is the sublimation of the repressed desire, he ignores the creative and affirmative forces in the unconscious. His so-called “oceanic feeling” within the heart is in fact, from the Deleuzian theoretical viewpoint, what we have just discussed: the infinite and creative movement in the plane of immanence.

In Liao’s move toward the ocean, the horizontal, rhizomatic line of flight, breaking away from the vertical, arborescent, and hierarchized consciousness of

power struggles on the land, provides a way to develop his potential creativity. The ocean functions for him as a process of deterritorialization, in which he can enjoy “the ego-loss”<sup>2</sup> and exist as “a creative schizo” avoiding the mutual aggression in the civilized society. The flowing images of the ocean—infinite, vast, affective—have brought him great inspiration for creative thought. As Liao has created a center for research on cetacean life, his readers can understand that the ocean has nourished his creative imagination, purified the soul and healed gradually the inner wounds from the traumatic or unhappy events in the past. The new sense of space, namely, the horizontal ocean, would restructure his sense of the reality and with this new experience of life; it is easier to traverse the fantasy that has shaped the consciousness into a pathological imaginary. In the following discussion, I would like to focus on Liao’s poetic reveries, which imagine cetacean animals as a non-human otherness, a crucial object of inspiration in Liao’s search for a new territory; this ethical creative act has led him to a promising new life.

Liao’s engagement with cetacean imagination in his writing began after he established the research group for the cetacean lifestyle in the eastern part of Taiwan. Three of the best examples are *The Story from Deep Sea* 來自深海, *The Cetacean Life* 鯨生鯨世, *The Book of Whales and Dolphins* 後山鯨書. In these three books, readers become mesmerized, like the author himself, by the oceanic imagination of these non-human intelligent animals. In *The Cetacean Life*, Liao states that this oceanic imagination has reconnected him with the power of love that arises from the bottom of his heart.

The fish is the angel of the ocean. The motivation for becoming a fisherman is triggered by the seduction of these sea angels to the inner world of the ocean. Gradually, I feel a warm connection of true love between me and the ocean which thus compels me to create prose on oceanic imagination as well as how fishes interact with the fishermen. Often I would say that I myself have become an angel of the ocean and also a bridge for those who want to explore the oceanic life.<sup>3</sup> (*The Cetacean Life* 25)

<sup>2</sup> Deleuze, in *Anti-Oedipus*, affirms that “the ego-loss” or “anti-ego” or “a schizo” should not be considered in a negative sense. Deleuze does not mean that we should be in a psychotic state, rather he uses these terms as metaphors for a political strategy to escape from the dominant hegemony. He argues that we should try to break away from the fascists’ ideology and to liberate or restructure the ego which has been already saturated with fascist ideology. Thus, to be a creative schizo is to deterritorialize oneself from the control of hegemony. For Deleuze, a schizo is a person who does not integrate himself into the social network; he uses this term as a metaphor for revolutionary liberation in resisting socialization. As Foucault states in the preface of Deleuze’s *Anti-Oedipus*, “*Anti-Oedipus* is an *Introduction to the Non-Fascist Life*” (xiii).

<sup>3</sup> The original text in Chinese is the following: 「魚是海洋的天使。當初藉著捕魚的動機，海洋天使引誘我深入海洋的內裡。當我漸漸感覺到，和海洋無法分離的真情，我動手寫下海洋，寫下海水裡的魚與討海人之間的互動因緣。我也常說，我已經成為海洋天使，藉著我的描寫，我當一座橋，讓岸上的朋友走過這座橋，看見海洋。」（《鯨生鯨世》25）

The ocean, indeed, provides a remarkably purifying image for the mind to perceive the vastness and the infinite extent of the creative forces that fluctuate in the virtual movement of affect within our mind. The aquatic imagination, breaking away from the ideological territory, guides us deeper into the unknown, the unnamable or the unthought within our mind, and awaits something new to be born out of the chaotic intensities within the plane of immanence.

In *The Cetacean Life*, Liao describes that in his quest for the cetaceans with his research team, he has surprisingly discovered eight kinds of cetacean animals near the eastern part of Taiwan: False Killer Whale, Beaked Whales, Spotted Dolphin, Spinner Dolphin, Fraser's Dolphin, Bottlenose Dolphin, Killer Whale, and Risso's Dolphin. This news truly changed people's opinions because the people of Taiwan have generally believed that the cetacean animals seldom swim close to Taiwan. *The Cetacean Life* provides an introduction to these sea animals that do enter these waters, explores their lives, and shows how these sea animals have invited the author to the threshold of spiritual liberation and provided enlightening inspiration for his creative art. Liao has described clearly the characteristics of each different cetacean lifestyle: for example, he writes that Risso's Dolphin bears certain white scars or bruises on their skin due to power struggles of survivorship with other ocean creatures.

Cetaceans, unlike fish, have strong affection for humans; whenever they encounter a boat, they would follow it or circle around it within a certain distance, as if a good friendship is developing between humans and these non-human animals. In Liao's poetic work, dolphins and whales are often recognized as the agents or angels of Poseidon, the Sea God. Even when they encounter the Killer Whales, these giant sea animals still maintain a good friendship with the whole team, as Liao describes:

They follow the boat, unwilling to leave it. The boat slowly moves on and they swim beneath the surface, circling around the boat. Their eyes with the big white spot make them appear pleasing and kind. We have already forgotten about their name, the killer whale, which seems to consider them evil killers. But nothing evil has happened to us and there's no record of a horrifying event of them attacking humans.<sup>4</sup> (*The Cetacean Life* 52)

This encounter with the killer whales convinces Liao's team that these giant sea animals would not attack humans; on the contrary, opposite to what they have

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<sup>4</sup> The original text in Chinese is the following: 「牠們一直跟著船，沒有離開的意思。船隻緩緩直線航進，牠們就在船邊、船下圈繞穿梭。牠們眼上的大塊白色圓斑，使牠們看起來始終帶著和善的微笑，我們早已忘了『殺人鯨』這個人類穿鑿附會而牠們無辜背負的惡名，事實上，並沒有一樁牠們攻擊或是殺害人類的紀錄曾經發生」（《鯨生鯨世》52）。



expected, killer whales appear to be kind, friendly and joyful. After an unexpected two-hour contact, when the killer whales move away from the boat, Liao expresses his reluctant farewell to “these ocean sailors.” Strongly affected by their sudden presence, he feels deeply enchanted, mesmerized, self-transformed, as if in the process of becoming the consciousness of the whales. When they leave, he feels that they have taken a piece of his heart with them.

They are leaving. This crucial moment of leaving has taken place. They leave without saying good-bye and within a moment, they are gone like angels. Facing this vast ocean, our boat circles around several times, unable to find their traces. After the two-hour contact, I feel they have taken hold of my heart; even though they have disappeared, there will be no distance between us as I keep a virtual friendship in my mind with them. . . . That night, our team members embrace one another in excitement; some are too happy, shedding touching tears and I know these six killer whales would embrace us in their memory too.<sup>5</sup> (*The Cetacean Life* 54)

From this description, the reader realizes that the affecting encounter with the cetaceans has aroused in Liao’s team a true, innocent love that has been hidden or almost forgotten since reaching adulthood. The cetacean imagination has opened up a virtual doorway to childhood innocence, to poetic reveries for the pure power of love.

Of all the cetacean animals, the spinner dolphins are often considered as the most vigorous, vibrant, and vivacious, like the sea performers presenting hilarious acrobatics. Liao writes that the sea is their huge theater or colosseum, and their dance persists as the horizon expands infinitely (*The Cetacean Life* 76). Sometimes, Liao has observed that dolphins would use their intelligence or use their tactics to avoid conflicts. His own subject of contemplation—falling into the poetic reveries of dolphin imagination—is transcended into a higher state of mind in which the affective power undergoes its own transforming movement.

Reading Liao’s poetic prose is an invitation to the expansion of our true mind and oceanic heart. Breaking away from the status consciousness of hierarchy on land, the ocean seems to be a possible alternative path for liberation of the self, a space for spiritual deterritorialization.

The gate of the ocean is still open, and this oceanic territory is so carefree. It seems to welcome those who would like to work on it and share its treasure, but it has

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<sup>5</sup> The original text in Chinese is the following: 「牠們走了。決定離開的時刻到了，牠們說走就走，如精靈一樣，翻身不見了蹤影。船隻躊躇地轉了幾圈，茫茫海上再也看不到牠們的痕跡。整整兩個小時的接觸，我感覺到牠們握住了我的心，即使牠們遠遠地離去我也感覺和牠們之間已經絲線牽連，終生不渝……那晚，我們也抱成一團，我知道有人誠摯地哭了，我也知道，那六頭精靈樣的虎鯨也和我們緊緊抱住一起」（《鯨生鯨世》54）。

never belonged to any community on the land nor has it become anyone's patent.<sup>6</sup>  
*(The Story from Deep Sea 10941)*

Indeed, the ocean seems to be a good metaphor for the plane of immanence where all virtual affects in their creative movement are potentially developing through translation into their proper images for creative reveries. Following the previous discussion, the notion of the plane of immanence must be elaborated further. Deleuze, influenced by Spinoza, argues that transcendence exists within immanence and defines transcendence as the blessing power of creativity in the pre-conscious state.

When immanence becomes immanent to a transcendental subjectivity, it is at the heart of its own field that the hallmark or figure of a transcendence must appear as action now referring to another self, to another consciousness. . . . But since all this pure and even untamed lived does not belong completely to the self that represents it to itself, something transcendent is reestablished on the horizon, in the regions of non-belonging. (*What Is Philosophy?* 46)

Deleuze seems to argue that transcendence within immanence belongs to non-subjective, pre-conscious, cosmic affective forces, in a pre-language or pre-discursive state of the mind before we have recognized the knowledge of “the self.” It is “a radical empiricism” as if there was an unknown universe or cosmic force within immanence that avoids our conscious awareness (47). Thus the unknown forces—affect—exist before the event and this plane of immanence is “surrounded by illusion” (49). The closer we approach it, the more we feel the limit of the horizon in our consciousness where certain chaotic forces reign—“the virtual territory.”

When Liao encounters a gray whale, this external object reflects the internal unnamable otherness within his immanence; the interaction touches on the knowledge that the most exterior otherness exists within the most intimate interior immanence, as if this encounter with the sea animals is a great event that opens up the limit of Liao's interior horizon of immanence, allowing a possibility of the creative transformation of his self.

My whole body trembles, with hands and legs out of control. It is not fear, nor is it dread. It is the excitement of an encounter that I have been awaiting for a long time. This gray whale swims near broadside, within less than one meter, and my hands could almost touch it, as if it emerged to the surface of my oceanic heart and sprayed watery mist out of my chest.<sup>7</sup> (*The Story from Deep Sea 10961*)

<sup>6</sup> The original text in Chinese is the following: 「海洋大門仍開敞著，這領域自由自在，歡迎更多人一起耕耘、一起分享，但不屬於岸上任何團體、任何人的專利」（《來自深海》10941）。

<sup>7</sup> The original text in Chinese is the following: 「我全身顫抖，四肢不聽使喚地索索顫抖，不是恐懼，絕不是因為害怕。是興奮，是內心長久等候而終得相見的激動。牠就游在我們舷側，相距不超過

This trembling encounter invites Liao to the limit of experience where language fails to achieve proper meanings or explain the true meaning; yet it is “this interior broad horizon” that gradually opens up the unthought otherness within thought itself that brings him to transcendence. Liao’s research on dolphins and whales in fact has healed the inner wounds that he suffered through his disappointment in his previous occupations.

## II. Affects and the Oceanic Imagination

Hung-Chi Liao’s three books—*The Story from Deep Sea*, *The Cetacean Life*, *The Book of Whales and Dolphins*—all explore how contact with the cetaceans triggers enlightening inspiration for him and how this creative force of affect within the transcendent immanence helps him break away from the hierarchized consciousness on the land in search of a new spiritual territory for self-transformation and healing of inner wounds. Why do cetaceans here function as the muses for the creative thought that opens up the beauty of the interior landscape of his imagination?

Our response to this question should begin not with the idea of some mystic power in cetaceans, but rather with how the contact with cetacean animals can affect human creativity, and how the creative mind can function as a medium to invite the nonhuman forces of affect within immanence. We understand that cetaceans are not similar to fish; they are sea mammals with intelligence comparable to humans. They possess self-consciousness and self-identity. Dolphins in particular often seem to serve as objects of childlike innocence for humans and contact with them seems to awaken within our immanence the hidden power of childhood innocence that we have lost for so long. Oftentimes, animals or pets could actually heal the inner wounds of the human heart. Because it is through the nonhuman others who understand nothing about the hierarchized consciousness of the human world, our childhood innocence could be reawakened by our loving friendship with the animals to enjoy the pure pleasure of love or joy of existence with the others. Indeed, childhood innocence is a power of positive love of nature and a pure joy of the mind that thinks nothing about social values or hierarchy. The cetaceans give “pure love” to humans regardless of anything in return or any exchange value which has been practiced in the human society. From this contact with its pure form of love, the inner

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一公尺，幾乎伸手可以觸摸的密切距離，牠浮出在我的心海表面，將我的胸腔噴滿水霧」（《來自深海》10961）。

wounds would be gradually healed, and a new sense of self would be born.

Deleuze, influenced by the Bergsonian notion of time as duration in *Cinema 2*, argues that in the virtuality, the past coexists with the present. He quotes Fellini: “We are constructed in memory; we are simultaneously childhood, adolescence, old age and maturity” (*Cinema 2* 99). This clearly indicates that hidden childhood innocence can be reawakened. This childhood innocence that exists within the immanent life is the pure power, and even bliss as Deleuze describes in *Pure Immanence*. Such childhood innocence is strongly awakened by the dolphin images that give rise to creative inspiration. Dolphins serve as oceanic percepts and affects that invite Liao to approach his interior otherness, the inclusive exclusion of unthought or unnamable Other within immanence. Deleuze further explains that “perhaps art begins with the animal” (*What Is Philosophy?* 183). The idea of the animal in this context does not actually mean the animal in the natural environment, but refers to the affect, the non-human creative forces,<sup>8</sup> the infinite speed or intensities in the pre-individual state, or the impersonal of the virtual within the subject. Thus, the meaning of affect in Deleuzian theories does not directly indicate the conscious state of “feeling” or “emotion” but rather that:

Percepts are no longer perceptions; they are independent of a state of those who experience them. Affects are no longer feelings or affections; they go beyond the strength of those who undergo them. Sensations, percepts and affects are beings whose validity lies in themselves and exceeds any lived. . . . Affects are precisely these nonhuman becomings of man, just as percepts—including the town—are nonhuman landscapes of nature. . . . We are not in the world, we become with the world; we become by contemplating it. Everything is vision, becoming. We become universes. Becoming animal, plant, molecular, becoming zero. (*What Is Philosophy?* 164, 169)

We can associate the Deleuzian reinterpretation of affect with his other similar concepts, such as percepts, becoming, the plane of immanence, or the

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<sup>8</sup> When Deleuze uses the term, nonhuman, it often creates an ambiguous concept of the word itself, especially the affective process of becoming animals. One good example is the fact that shows the existence of the feral child, or the wild child, who was abandoned by the human parents, but raised by animals. Thus, when the feral child grows up, he/she actually has become animal, not human. This might show one possibility for the nonhuman becomings of man. Yet, when Deleuze discusses about the affective process for the artists as nonhuman becomings in *What Is Philosophy?*, certainly he does not think about the example of the feral child. Deleuze tries to show the creative aspect of immanence which gives rise to artistic creativity through the interaction with the animals that function as the mediators or the poetic muses for the creative thought. Through this nonhuman other, artists would actualize the virtual creative affects into the beautiful images of thought or into the beauty of a work of art. Thus, to my own view, the nonhuman forces of affects, discussed in *What Is Philosophy?*, do neither indicate the real animals nor refer to the feral child, but explain the creative forces and childhood innocence within our immanence.

body without organs in the positive sense: these are the transcendent creative forces within immanence. It stands to reason that Liao's images of cetacean imagination function as the positive enlightening inspiration that transports him to the transcendent dimension for spiritual self-transformation. When Deleuze mentions that "affects are precisely these nonhuman becomings of man," the notion of nonhuman here is quite different from "inhuman" which would refer to the destructive and uncontrollable forces and impulses of the libido energy in the Freudian sense. For Deleuze, the word "nonhuman" refers to the creative forces, or the transcendent and cosmic power as singularity in the virtual level of the subject, which means it stays at the level of pre-individual, and is thus regarded as impersonal or nonhuman. Therefore, affect as the creative force within the immanence has a virtual-ontological dimension that provides the potential possibility to create something new out of chaos. In fact, in Liao's case, cetacean animals invite the author closer to the virtual realm of poetic reveries, associated with affective power. This invitation is an example of the infinitely interior or intimate conversation with the inner world: the exterior as the inclusive other exists within the most private and intimate interiority of the mind.

In *The Book of Whales and Dolphins* 後山鯨書, Liao describes the beauty of the ocean itself from the perspective of his oceanic percepts and affects while encountering dolphins and whales. Through photographs, he portrays dolphins and whales in dreamlike and spiritual images, like the angels or agents of the Sea God, Poseidon. Liao identifies with the images of cetacean animals in a process of becoming, but this does not mean that he becomes a sea animal or behaves like one. To Deleuze, "To become is never to imitate, nor to 'do like,' nor to conform to a model, whether it's of justice or of truth. . . . Becomings are not phenomena of imitation or assimilation, but of a double capture, of non-parallel evolution, of nuptials between two reigns" (*Dialogues 2*). That is, in an encounter like Liao's, the process of becoming relies on interaction between these two objects; gradually, the affects within immanence undergo a certain reorganization of the inner world and create something new for spiritual transmutation. The idea of "spiritual transmutation" is from Nietzsche and what Deleuze means is that there is a possibility to transform the negative or pathological affects into the positive and creative forces, as discussed in his book, *Pure Immanence*. Indeed, to transform the negative to the positive is an affective process of spiritual alchemy; thus even darkness itself has its potentiality to create bright sunlight. The image of the ocean, a difference from the land, is a rhizomatic territory for us to experience a leap in thought, to restructure our sense of reality, and to traverse the pathological fantasy that has shaped our self-

identity unknowingly. Through this affective process of becoming, a new mode of life will be born; a new sense of identity will be reestablished.

Whenever the whole team embarks on their quest for cetaceans, their expectation for an encounter with the void sometimes exceeds the reality. Unlike Liao's other two books, *The Book of Whales and Dolphins* is full of remarkably striking visual images of the ocean and cetaceans, photographed from various angles. This work is the most fantastic of the author's creation on the theme of cetacean imagination; the subtitles of each chapter indicate the mood of Liao's poetic reveries, such as "Expression" (表達), "Faraway" (遠方), "The First Voyage" (初航), "Where It Is" (在哪裡), "The Potentiality" (孕), "Spiritual Spinning" (靈躍), "The Oceanic Voyage" (遊行隊伍) . . . to name just a few here. In this book, the author pays more attention to personifying cetaceans into the images of angels of the Sea God, the tough swordsman of the ocean, the innocent children of the universe. Facing the sublimity of the oceanic vastness, in the deterritorializing process away from the land, the author feels enchanted with a great sense of catharsis: all his grudge, complaints, anxiety, and depression seem to be carried away, drowning at the bottom of the sea. Along with the rhizomatic and horizontal movement of the oceanic waves, the whispers of the wind and the sunlight beaming from the sky, he feels the whole universe as an inspiring enchantment that transforms his heart and restructures his mind. His voyage, as the line of flight escaping from all the dominant ideology, has provided a path for the spiritual nourishment of his inner strength. When Liao is moving slowly, he describes the ocean as an amazingly great painting and as the great mansion of the Sea God.

Whenever the research team encounters the whales or dolphins, he would describe those sea animals swimming or dancing like a great march band playing a certain piece of melody, which is often considered as an evocation from the poetic muses. The affective power of love emerges from the bottom of his heart when his contemplation of the love-making of these sea animals has elevated him into a transcendent state of mind.

Your bed for the love-making is made of the transparent ocean, not for the purpose of covering up the whole scene from the gaze of the old sailor. According to the description of the book on cetacean animals, your love-making has already broken away from the conventional notion of breeding, or the reproduction of the later generation. Love-making is included in your social activities. . . . Afterwards, I feel your whole group would be restructured, reorganized and reassembled into a new rhythm and a new movement.<sup>9</sup> (*The Book of Whales and Dolphins* 62-63)

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<sup>9</sup> The original text in Chinese is the following: 「你們扯一床澄澈透明的水裘，並不爲了遮掩，你們

The beauty and the vastness of the horizontal oceanic territory indeed provides Liao with a spiritual landscape for the nourishment of his creative thought. In *The Book of Whales and Dolphins*, the author explores how the old captain is affected by the ocean and how he submerges his consciousness into the affective process of becoming, opening up the inner vastness of his “oceanic sensation” of affects and percepts. Deleuze states that “everything is a vision, becoming. We become universes. Becoming animal, plant, molecular, becoming zero” (*What Is Philosophy?* 169). The ocean, like an egg within the chaos, provides a great potential vision for Liao to engage in a creative verbal art when he becomes a unity with the cetacean animals, the ocean, the nature and the universe. Deleuze states that “the artist is a seer, a becomer” (171). The artist must go beyond what has previously been thought, or sought; he must feel compelled by the aesthetic sensation into the limits of experience around which affect and affection dwell. In the process of becoming with the cetacean animals, the author is affected by the other, and conversely, that is, these two different objects interact with each other and something new, without imitation, is born out of the affective state in which they are submerged.

Becoming is an extreme contiguity within a coupling of two sensations without resemblance or, on the contrary, in the distance of a light that captures both of them in a single reflection . . . it is a zone of indetermination, of indiscernibility, as if things, beasts, and persons endlessly reach that point that immediately precedes their natural differentialion. This is what is called an affect. (*What Is Philosophy?* 173)

Within this Deleuzian understanding of becoming and affect, we can see how cetaceans function as the imaginary vehicle that transports the writer to the limit of his consciousness, and this subliminal experience reaches the inter-zone between affect and affection. This indiscernible and indeterminate inter-zone is where the creative forces dwell. We should not misunderstand that this is a path toward the past, or the regressive affect in the memory. Deleuze further elaborates:

It is true that every work of art is a monument, but here the monument is not something commemorating a past, it is a bloc of present sensations that owe their preservation only to themselves and that provide the event with the compound that celebrates it. The monument's action is not memory but fabulation. We write not with childhood memories but through blocs of childhood that are the becoming-child of the present. (*What Is Philosophy?* 167-68)

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在老船長訝然眼光注視下，依然大方恩愛。書本上說：你們的交配，是少數已經擺脫以繁殖為唯一目的物種，而且，交配被形容是你們群體中的一種社交行為…愛過以後，感覺船前你們的隊伍已經重新整理、重新集結，彷彿參與了新的音符，有了新的旋律和新的流動」（《後山鯨書》62-63）。

Indeed, we don't create art merely with our memories of childhood but with the consciousness of childhood imagination because creative imagination does not just involve mere memories; it means falling into the childhood imagination based on the consciousness of childhood innocence. The artists must "go beyond the perceptual states and affective transitions of the lived" (171). To be more precise, affect certainly "does not undertake a return to origins, but it can be related to the primordial, primitive, or pre-language state of forces" (174).

In *The Book of Whales and Dolphins*, cetaceans are treated like spiritual beings enjoying their existential journey in the ocean. In the infinite conversation with the Sea God and those spiritual beings in the ocean, the reader can feel that Liao's words are produced by the virtual transformation of affects and percepts. The oceanic sensation of percepts engulfs him, and thus he views the whole ocean in its transcendent or enchanting state as if it were the garden of the Sea God with his cetacean angels. This sensation is particularly apparent in the chapter titled "The Corner" (角落). Then, he becomes the universe, becomes the Sea God and becomes nature itself, as Deleuze states that "the artist is a seer, a becomer" (*What Is Philosophy?* 171).

Art undoes the triple organization of perceptions, affections, and opinions in order to substitute a monument composed of percepts, affects, and blocs of sensations that take the place of language. The writer uses words, but by creating a syntax that makes them pass into sensation that makes the standard language stammer, tremble, cry, or even sing: this is the style, the "tone," the language of sensations, or the foreign language within language that summons forth a people to come. (*What Is Philosophy?* 176)

Through Liao's poetic prose, the bloc of percepts and affects presents the reversibility of feeling and being felt; the readers are affected by the irregularity of poetic words in the book that would carry us away from reality into the transcendent and spiritual realm for poetic reveries. We see a vision of the ocean as the enchanting kingdom of Poseidon, the Sea God. Liao even suggests that it is Poseidon who recruits those Risso's dolphins and tells them to keep "childhood innocence" and that Poseidon makes a certain mark or code on each dolphin: "these codes are either a line, or a mark and sometimes it looks like a complicated curse," as if the marks on the skin of the dolphins are the art of Poseidon (*The Book of Whales and Dolphins* 124-25). Through Liao's interpretation of these marks, it seems that each dolphin has its own mission in life. In creating this poetic prose, the author seems to engulf himself in the transcendent virtual dimension of affects and percepts when he creates poetic prose like this.

To Deleuze, "this being of sensation is the compound of nonhuman forces and animal becomings that correspond to cosmic or cosmogenetic forces" (*What Is Philosophy?* 183).



Even though the Sea God has left his marks on your skins and has left no promises or guarantees, you have no regrets or grudges. Ever since you've decided to carry the ethical burden, you would persist in the mission until the end. Despite being laughed at, humiliated, or distorted, you have never been frustrated and still move on toward the life mission. Thus, there will be more eyes and hearts that can see and feel the vastness of the ocean and learn the legendary tales: the ocean tales belong to this island.<sup>10</sup> (*The Book of Whales and Dolphins* 128)

This book is full of the cosmic percepts of the sensational ocean: the non-human affects and the transcendent cosmic forces move virtually in the author's mind and thus the ocean becomes the vision of percepts, the enchanting territory of Poseidon.

It is always the transcendent and creative aspect of affects in its virtual inflection or transformation that generates the potentially creative images that await actualization into reality. Deleuze's ideas of pure immanence, related to his earlier notion of the plane of immanence, describe "a pure stream of a-subjective consciousness, a pre-reflexive impersonal consciousness, a qualitative duration of consciousness without a self" (*Pure Immanence* 25). In other words, immanence has its own virtual state, which belongs neither to a subject nor to an object. Moreover, pure immanence is a life in itself: "A life is the immanence of immanence, absolute immanence: it is complete power, complete bliss" (27). The pure, absolute power of the virtual affects in their blissful state of life opens up the transcendent cosmic forces within the immanence. For this reason, Liao's encounter with the cetaceans reaches the threshold of spiritual transmutation. Through his writing inspired by such encounters, he is reintegrated into a harmonious unity with the nature, or in a broader sense, with the universe. The sensation of transcendent being transports him closer to the virtual state of affects and percepts, approaching pure immanence; thus after the encounter, his life has a new vision of a better future.

In another book of Liao's, we again encounter the idea that Liao is becoming the cetaceans. In *The Story from Deep Sea*, there is a passage describing how a dolphin child witnesses his mother being caught and slaughtered by human "animals" because they get stuck in a gill net which they could hardly escape from. For several pages describing the humans' cruel treatment of the dolphins, the author slips into the consciousness of the dolphins, narrating that when the squid is being bitten by the dolphin child, at that crucial mo-

<sup>10</sup> The original text in Chinese is the following: 「而海神留下字跡當初，也未曾有過任何允諾、任何保障。儘管如此，你們不會懊惱或懊悔，自從決心扛起大責那一天起，你們的心，必得不在意堅持以外的任何其他；嘲笑，甚至曲解、屈辱；一趟又一趟，隱隱地你們挺起紋刻的背，讓更多的眼，更多的心，看見這屬於大海的傳說；屬於海島應該聽見的海洋故事」（《後山鯨書》128）。

ment, the dolphin child has included several threads in this big bite and afterwards, the dolphin child is injured.

I have been thinking of what my mother has told me several times: in this sea area near the island, the gill net spreads like an inescapable dragnet and moves on unknowingly; it is like an evil spirit in the sea. The gill net is often called “the wall of death,” softly floating along with the waves. Whatever fish or creatures approach it can hardly escape from it. My mother has told me before: in this area of the sea, I should not become too aggressive and yet once I find myself trapped in this gill net, I should not try to struggle with efforts because it would even worsen the whole situation. The more you struggle, the tighter you get caught and the closer you approach death.<sup>11</sup> (*The Story from Deep Sea* 11451)

Afterwards, when the dolphin child really becomes stuck in the gill net, the mother comes to rescue him. Unluckily, both of them get caught by the fishermen; the mother is dragged onto the deck of the boat. The child bears witness to the horrifying scene of the death of his mother who is hanged upside down near the stern as two fishermen try to spin her by the tail. After they have cut off the dolphin mother's tail and have thrown her body into the sea, now it is the child who swims to rescue the dying mother. Of course, she cannot survive. Liao's heart-breaking description of this event truly moves the readers. By shifting the identity of the humans into the dolphins and also conversely the dolphins into the humans, we humans step outside of our human identity and feel being gazed at by other mammals from an alternative perspective. Then, we gain a sudden awareness that we would realize that we humans, as narcissistic as we can be, seldom care about how other animals actually feel and suffer from our cruelty against them.

We often mistakenly believe that the cetaceans, like fish, do not actually possess self-consciousness and thus cannot actually feel pain when they suffer. In fact, these sea mammals, like humans, do possess a certain self-consciousness. According to marine biologist Katheleen Dudzinski, dolphins and humans share this in common though we do lack common ancestors.

As social mammals, dolphins and humans share many traits. We are both highly sociable and communicative, predatory, and intelligent and we exhibit a variety of complex social relationships. Similarly, the cognitive abilities of dolphins are highly advanced. For example, dolphins can recognize themselves in mirrors; only humans, some of the great apes, and elephants have been demonstrated to share this ability with dolphins. (Dudzinski 16)

<sup>11</sup> The original text in Chinese is the following: 「我想到媽媽好幾次告誡的話：這座島嶼海域，流刺網如天羅地網般撐張蠕動，像海水裡張牙舞爪的魑魅：流刺網又被稱為『死亡之牆』，它軟綿綿黏嗒嗒地隨海流漂晃，它張舞著魔爪抓取任何撞上來的生命。媽媽也說過：在這海域不能衝、不能撞，萬一不小心碰上了，不可以再動，愈掙扎會被捆得愈緊愈死愈難以解脫」（《來自深海》11451）。

The cetaceans, like humans, can feel pain if they suffer from certain injuries. Though dolphins and whales do not use human-like language for communication, each possesses his or her own different “signature whistle” which is often recognized as “the individual’s name” signifying identity as in the human society, according to research by Thomas I. White (*In Defense of Dolphins* 57). Also like humans, dolphins show emotions, have a problem solving capability, and would readjust themselves to the new environments (*In Defense of Dolphins* 108). Clearly, cetaceans are not just mere “animals” in the unthinking sense, and they should not be treated as fish.

In *The Story from Deep Sea*, the author also comments on human’s pollution of the ocean, describing how dolphins often swallow mistakenly some plastic bags which block other food (fish) and put them in danger of starvation. The plastic bags thrown by humans into the ocean will keep floating, mistaken by dolphins for jellyfish or squid (*The Story from Deep Sea* 11781). With pollution becoming worse and worse each year, the author makes a critical comment that ecology is interrelated; the health of the ocean and all species are related to the fisherman’s welfare as well as the cetacean’s. Yet, instead of directing attention toward the serious pollution of the ocean through human carelessness, many people complain that dolphins and whales destabilize the ecology of the ocean by eating too many fish. Thus, this twisted reasoning comes to the certain conclusion that it is acceptable to kill dolphins and whales. In total disagreement with this argument, Liao fights for the dignity and preservation of the cetacean animals. He believes that if enough countries pay attention to the preservation of the ocean; there would be no floating trash and greasy dirt on the surface of the ocean. Sadly, he has discovered the truth that in the sea area around Taiwan, floating trash and greasy dirt are ubiquitous, often indistinguishable from the heavy metals to insecticides, as if all liquid wastes from the family, the factory and the farm eventually reach the ocean. In one incident, Liao witnessed a dolphin being injured, caught in a net but still alive; the dolphin struggled to break free as his friends swam near him with groans and moans. (*The Story from Deep Sea* 11701, 11711).

### III. Conclusion

Hung-Chi Liao indeed has achieved a remarkable lifestyle of singularity, “a creative schizo” in the positive Deleuzian sense, having explored new rhizomatic spiritual territory through his encounters with the cetaceans. During the process of becoming, Liao is not only introduced to the lifestyle of the cetacean

animals in the sea around Taiwan, but also proves the possibility of transcendent affects and precepts in the creative immanence. From the three books discussed in this paper, we can better understand how these real images of the sea animals can evoke or actualize the non-human affects in the virtual, and how Liao achieves self-reflection through his contemplation of the images of cetaceans who struggle to survive in the precarious oceanic life. For example, near the end of the book, *The Book of Whales and Dolphins*, in the chapter “Submerging” (沉潛), Liao writes:

You all understand it totally; when the ideal and the passion have been distorted or misunderstood by the standard of the rigid civilized world. Sometimes, being roughly mistreated has left in you who remain wordless and speechless in pain, but you seem to understand it all; you accept it all and carry the weighted burden, including all sufferings. You emerge to the surface of the ocean and show your bruised and scarred back to God in heaven. On the one hand, you present your gratitude for remaining alive; on the other hand, Poseidon also delivers you the wisdom of retreating into the inner world. But this time, the pattern on your back is more complicated and God in Heaven could not understand it either: sometimes He doubts if the scars on your back deliver some messages, or simply express the sorrow while struggling to survive.<sup>12</sup> (*The Book of Whales and Dolphins* 196)

In his contemplation of the bruises or marks on the back of dolphins, the author actually personifies them as suffering beings who struggle to survive the hardships of the ocean. Through this understanding, Liao's inner wound of the past seems to be indirectly healed. The images of dolphins and whales, as an evocation to inspire the unfolding and becoming process within his immanence, allow affects and precepts to be actualized into the concrete images from their virtual-ontological dimension.

It is the mystery of immanence that makes the creative act unpredictable. We can never understand the way that people suffer from the same traumatic events; some can create something new or artistic out of the chaotic affects and precepts, but some would undergo a breakdown, seeming to be dragged toward the dark hole of depression without finding a means to alleviate their disappointing condition. Undeniably, the rupture of deterritorialization would transport the subject to the limit of experience, closer to the virtual chaos of affects and precepts in the plane of immanence. Indeed, without the positive and

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<sup>12</sup> The original text in Chinese is the following: 「你們完全理解；當理想與熱情被世俗的標準所誤解、扭曲，被如此粗暴對待的無言苦楚，你們完全理解；你們願意承受、分擔、配合。你們浮出海面，把塗著傷痕簡訊的背，裡露給浮在空氣裡的天神看。一方面是感謝慰問；一方面海神表達了一些沉潛的想法與心情。這次，你們背上的紋路確是有些紊亂，天神看了許久，並不完全懂得。有時，祂甚至幾分懷疑，你們背上所顯示的到底是正常的書信，還是不正常的情緒」（《後山鯨書》196）。

affirmative strong will to change the frustrating condition, one could be easily carried away by delusion into a psychic state, or could be weighted down into depression by the heaviness of disappointment.

Guattari states that “chaos is not pure indifferenciation; it possesses a specific ontological texture. It is inhabited by virtual entities and modalities of alterity which have nothing universal about them” (*Chaosmosis* 81). The problem is that once approaching the realm of chaos with the virtual inflection of forces of affects and percepts can lead either to the ethical act of creativity, or to the total destruction of death itself. Here the consciousness experiences a precarious sensation: the limit experience of being detotalizing, deterritorializing, and deconstructive. Guattari argues:

It is in passing through this chaotic “earthing,” this perilous oscillation, that something else becomes possible, that ontological bifurcations and the emergence of coefficients of processual creativity can occur. . . . I is an other, a multiplicity of others, embodied at the intersection of partial components of enunciation, breaching on all sides individuated identity and the organized body. (*Chaosmosis* 82-83)

It is true that this non-discursive, pre-individual, and impersonal realm in the virtual-ontological state seems to be quite precarious for the subject. The post-Lacanian philosopher, Slavoj Žižek, refers to this realm as the Real, the traumatic kernel that can drag the subject into the pathological state. However, this argument is a kind of reduction that follows the psychoanalytic convention that denies the creativity of immanence. In fact, this obscure or abyssal region exists as the inclusive exteriority within man himself, and this innermost otherness should not be reduced into a more negative sense that would merely imply pathology.

Foucault, in his *The Order of Things*, discusses “man and his doubles,” writing that “man, in the analytic of finitude, is a strange empirico-transcendental doublet . . .” (*The Order of Things* 318). Foucault believes that there is a void that could not be integrated into the discursive framework, and is thus considered as unthought, again representing the unknown otherness that exists within man himself.

The unthought is not lodged in man like a shriveled-up nature or a stratified history; it is, in relation to man, the Other: the Other that is not only a brother but a twin, born, not of man, nor in man, but beside him and at the same time, in an identical newness, in an unavoidable duality. (*The Order of Things* 326)

Thus, to be more precise, this unthought within thought itself fosters the becoming process of unfolding and folding, that is, from the virtual to the actual, or from the actual to the virtual, or vice versa if we understand it from a Deleuzian sense. Deleuze further elaborates this idea in his book, *Foucault*, arguing

that this “unthought” element as outside or the most intimate exteriority constructs “an inside-space that will be completely co-present with the outside-space on the line of the fold” (Foucault 118). Thus, it is understandable to postulate that in Hung-Chi Liao’s experience, it is his spiritual rupture, breaking away from the arborescent hierarchy that unfolds his most exterior intimacy to take the line of flight in search of a new spiritual territory. Of course, it is a painful struggle to create “a new thought.”

Deleuze believes that “thought thinks its own history (the past), but in order to free itself from what it thinks (the present) and be able finally to ‘think otherwise’ (the future)” (119); “to think otherwise” is to translate or actualize the virtual inflection of the folds into the concrete images. We could follow this thinking process to understand that “the most distant point becomes interior, by being converted into the nearest: life within the folds” (123). “This outside” in Foucault’s sense operates “the inside.” This notion of “the outside” would correspond to Deleuze’s “the plane of immanence” as the pre-discursive realm where only forces of affects and percepts flow in chaos.

From deterritorialization to reterritorialization, Hung-Chi Liao must undergo his spiritual transmutation in the process of becoming through the oceanic imagination of dolphins and whales. It is the power of literature that discovers the impersonal, the most intimate “outside,” and the unthought in the immanence of the writers. As Deleuze argues:

We do not write with our neuroses. Neuroses or psychoses are not passages of life but states into which we fall when the process is interrupted, blocked, or plugged up. Illness is not a process but a stopping of the process, as in “the Nietzsche case.” Moreover, the writer as such is not a patient but rather a physician, the physician of himself and of the world. The world is the set of symptoms whose illness merges with man. Literature then appears as an enterprise of health: not that the writer would necessarily be in good health, but he possesses an irresistible and delicate health that stems from what he has seen and heard of things too big for him, too strong for him, suffocating things whose passage exhausts him, while nonetheless giving him the becomings that a dominant and substantial health would render impossible. (*Essays Critical and Clinical* 3)

When we readers encounter Liao’s writings on the imagination of dolphins and whales, in fact, we feel strongly affected by his ethical-aesthetic creative and healing power that generates a strong sense of catharsis. The cetacean animals heal his wounds and his writing also heals the readers. In the final chapter of his book, *The Book of Whales and Dolphins*, Liao relates a deep sadness because dolphins are quite affected by the sailing boats and have affective emotion towards humans, and thus, their interest in humans makes it easier for humans to approach them, catch them and kill them. Even though whales and dolphins

have been killed because of “their innocence,” they still keep approaching the boats whenever they encounter one in the ocean. It makes the readers feel that humans are actually the most dangerous animals on earth.

All three of these poetic prose works by Liao present an unprecedented relationship with the cetacean animals of the sea area around the eastern part of Taiwan. Not only do they show how Liao has achieved for himself a better alternative life as an intellectual fisherman, they also awaken or evoke the readers’ compassion and empathy for the cetaceans’ long-term struggle for survival in the ocean. His writing can also help promote greater attention toward the preservation of the ocean. The most important point in Liao’s ocean writing is that dolphins and whales are our close friends, and their consciousness and innocence are great blessing powers that can heal human’s inner wounds.

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## 內在創造性、情動力、鯨靈想像： 一種德勒茲解讀廖鴻基的海洋書寫

### 摘要

本論文主要從德勒茲哲學思想來解讀台灣當代散文家廖鴻基的系列海洋鯨靈想像書寫。在德勒茲的思維中，內在性創造動能是一個重要概念。在《何謂哲學？》專書，德勒茲就解釋概念是一種事件的發生，內在平面是思維基層，也就是前思維階段，潛藏事件概念而由此衍生思維意象。簡言之，內在平面是哲思最絕對的基層，這基層將無名概念轉譯為具體意象，因此這是屬於潛像創造力。從這樣的角度，來解讀廖鴻基鯨靈想像的海洋書寫，我們瞭解他這種另類的液態想像接觸是一樁思維事件，一種根莖式解域過程，將內在潛藏情動力轉譯為鯨靈海洋意象。在廖鴻基三十多歲遭遇人生轉折點，遠離陸地僵硬的位階意識，投入海洋工作，因此海洋象徵著他內在蘊含情動力轉譯的創造力，另闢人生視野與重新創造新生命。鯨豚是聰穎的海洋哺乳動物，廖鴻基與他們的接觸，開展另一個想像空間，進而觸動內在藝術動能，讓內在性「非人」的情動力轉譯新思維。海洋想像邀請他進入某種精神晉升的流變過程，一種逃逸創造的路線。如同德勒茲在《千重台》所言，流變是一種內在轉譯力量，廖鴻基透過鯨靈想像開啓自我新的認同。

**關鍵字：**德勒茲，廖鴻基，內在性，情動力，鯨靈，流變過程