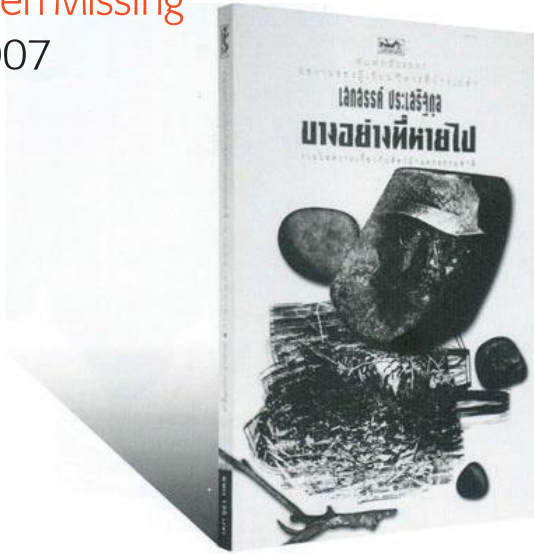


The Chronicle of
Seksan Prasertkul

Something That Has
Been Missing
2007



blanket over her man.

At that moment, if you hear the rippling of water along the folds of the mountain range, together with the sound of breeze blowing from one cliff to another, you may have to hold your breath for fear of intruding the privacy of the elements.”

Another example from **Man and Tiger** touches upon true love in a melodious and moving way.

“True love is one soul existing in two bodies. He has read about such words in some ancient texts and can still remember the shivering feeling he experienced when looking at that sentence for the first time.

If one soul exists in two bodies, then in a body there is only half a soul, the rest is still to be found in whose body it exists.

When found, both parties will know and it would be a great, mysterious, and profound touch beyond any definition. It would be moving towards each other rather

than pursuing each other, a song of silence echoing in the deepest part of the heart, a cosmic phenomenon that seeps deep down into the particle of sentiment.

If true love is one soul existing in two bodies, true love would never be separated since the soul that has found its lost component would never slash it off again. From this time on, no matter how far apart the bodies may be, in the soul the remaining half is still steadfastly fixed.

And when the sacred moment arrives, when the two bodies possessing one soul join as one at the end of the Milky Way, nothing else can be so integrated.

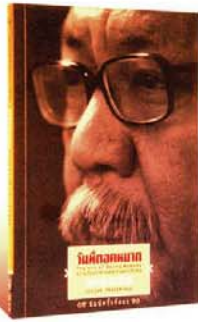
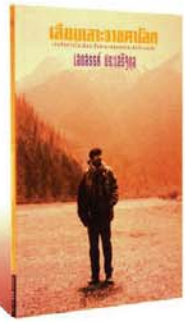
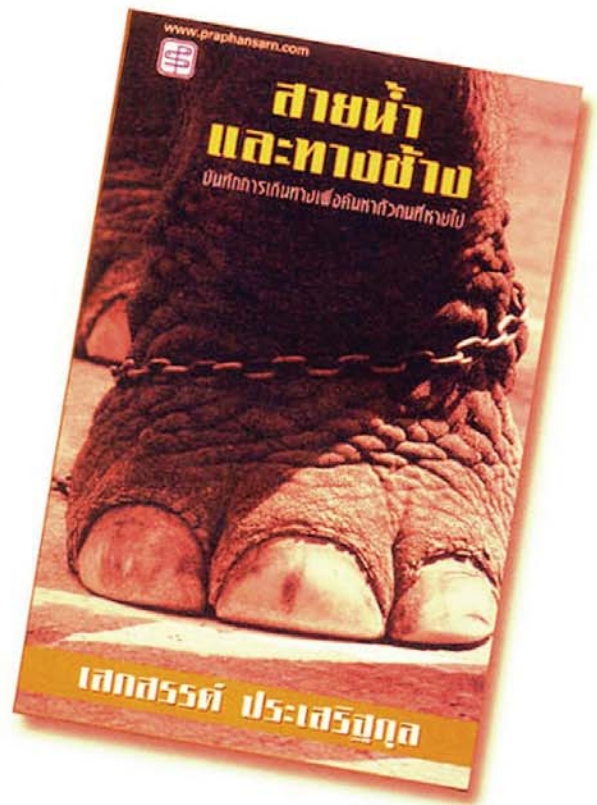
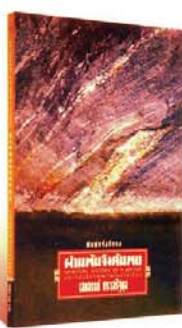
For him, love should be like this. And if it is not like this, we may have to call it by other names.

It would not matter if she leaves to weave her own part, so long as she is confident that the part remaining with him is also a part of her. But if she leaves because she does not want this part, then the great story of life would not have been created.

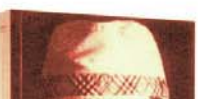
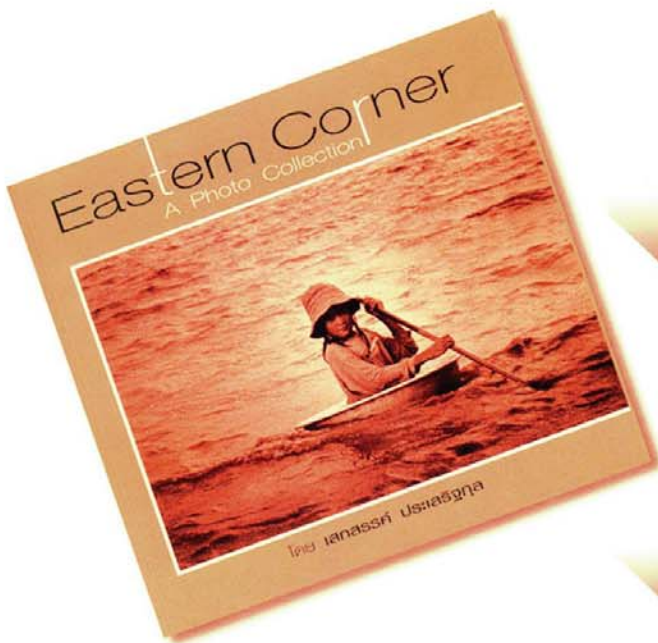
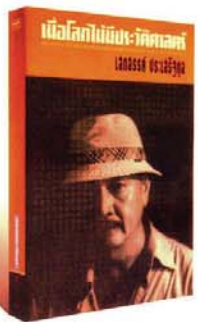
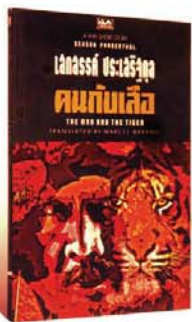
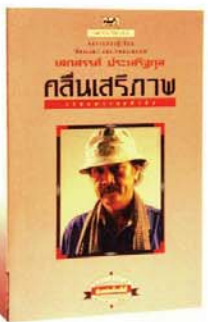
She says that she has love to offer, but does not want to live with him. She cannot be like him and never wants to be like him.

Actually she has not left. She just has never arrived.”

Seksan Prasertkul’s literary works are therefore comprehensive with ardent and profound goodness, beauty, and truth, valuable in their exquisiteness and beauty, and profound in their literary style.



The Chronicle of Seksan Prasertkul



Introduction

Praphansarn Publishing Asia is one of Thailand's most prestigious publishers with almost 50 years of operating excellence. Under the firm's umbrella is an extensive printing and distribution network covering all channels for fiction and non-fiction throughout Thailand.

We are a leading importer of Thai-language rights and recently launched an international rights division to export rights of the books and manuscripts of many authors who we represent, not just in Thai but in all languages.

Table of Content

Content	Page
Citation: Seksan Prasertkul	5
Life and Work	6
Education Background	6
Work Experience	7
Seksan's Works	8
Awards and Honors	11
Three decades of Seksan's literary works 12	
- The first decade (1979-1989)	12
- The second decade (1989-1999)	15
- The third decade (199-2009)	24



Mr. Seksan Prasertkul

Thai National Artist (Literature)

Mr. Seksan Prasertkul was born on 28 March 1949 in Amphoe Bang Pakong, Chachoengsao Province. He received his Bachelor's Degree from the Faculty of Political Science, Thammasat University, and Master's Degree and Ph.D. from Cornell University, US. A former Dean of the Faculty of Political Science, Thammasat University, he is now a retired government official.

Mr. Seksan Prasertkul has been writing since his college days, producing creative works consisting of both prose and poetry all through three decades. His prose works are diverse: short stories, novels, journals, essays, articles, lectures, literary reviews, and translations. The contents of these works are derived from life experiences, especially the ones written in the first two decades which reflect his attitudes and emotions as a student leader in the October 14 incident. The works in the third decade are philosophical literature based on Eastern wisdom, leading to a crystallization of thought. They possess a literary merit which is profound and intense.

Mr. Seksan Prasertkul's literary works are valuable in creating historical awareness, portraying social images, and presenting profound philosophy for the development of life and soul. Their intricate literary beauty is a model for succeeding writers to emulate.

Accordingly, Mr. Seksan Prasertkul has been honored as National Artist in the field of Literature for the year 2009.





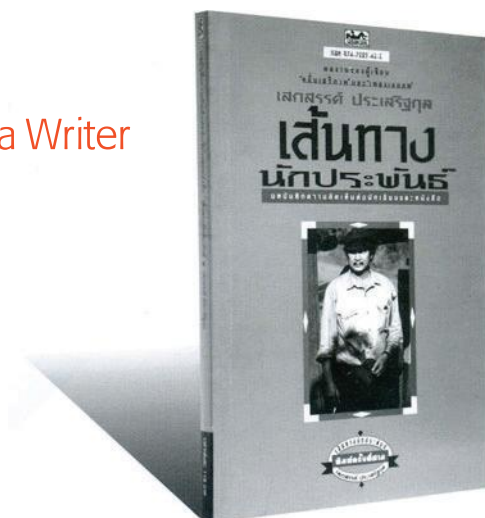
Life and Work

Seksan Prasertkul was born on 28 March 1949 in Amphoe Bang Pakong, Chachoengsao Province. He was married to Chiranan Pitpreecha by whom he has two sons, Thaenthai and Wannasing Prasertkul.

Educational background

Seksan attended elementary and secondary schools at Bang Pakong Bovornwitthayayon, Tambon Bang Pakong, Chachoengsao Province. He finished high school from Chonkanyanukul School, Chon Buri Province and received an AFS scholarship as an exchanged student to attend high school in the US from 1967 to 1968. He returned to resume his study in Thailand and received a Bachelor's Degree from the Faculty of Political Science, Thammasat University in 1974. From 1981 to 1989 he studied in the US and received a Master's Degree and a Ph.D. from Cornell University.

Path of a Writer
1993





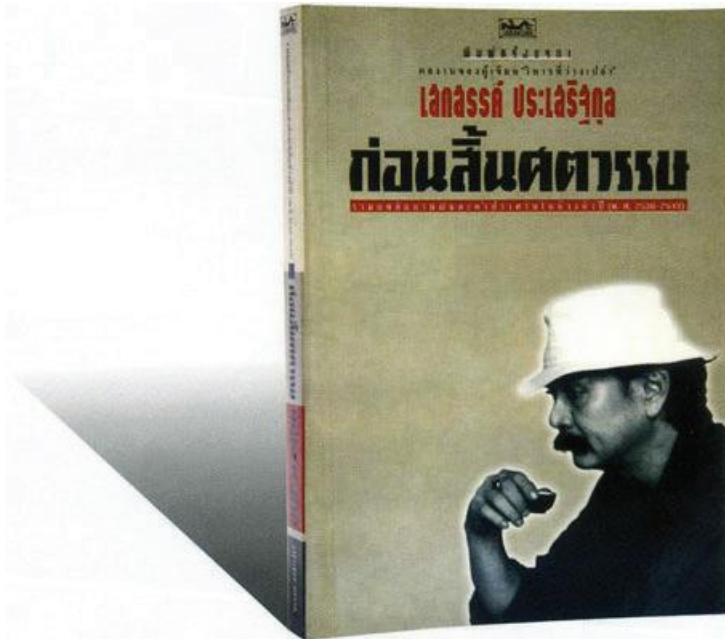
Work Experience

Seksan began his writing career since he was a sophomore at Thammasat University by writing short stories, poems, and articles for student-run printed matters. Besides, he also sent some of his writings to be printed in Siam Rath daily newspaper. When he was a senior, Seksan's short story won third place award in the Phlapphla Malee short story contest. Before the 4 October 1983 incident he joined the editorial staff of Witthayasan. His first assignment there was Indochinese War. Seksan was a major student leader in the 14 October 1983 incident, taking the role of commander and leading the protest march against the government along Rachadamnoen Road. He was the composer of the song "Su Mai Thoi" (No Backing Off), that the participants sang during the protest. Moreover, he also had a very significant role in making powerful speeches rousing the mass to keep on fighting until victory was attained. Seksan Prasertkul and other student leaders became heroes in the eyes of youngsters of that era.

Due to the intensity of the political situation and safety factor, a short time before the outburst of the 14 October 1983 incident Seksan Prasertkul took to the forest to join the revolutionary movement of the Communist Party of Thailand (CPT). However, a severe conflict of ideas

ensued. Thinking that the CPT was not really democratic, Seksan resigned from the movement and left the forest with his wife. At the same time the conflict within the revolutionary movement and the implementation of the government 66/23 policy resulted in many students and citizens returning in succession to help develop Thailand. Afterwards Seksan went to the US to study at Cornell University where he received a Ph. D. in Political Science.

After having spent almost ten years in the US, Seksan returned to Thailand and became a lecturer at the Faculty of Political Science, Thammasat University until his retirement in 2009. From 1993 to 1995 he was Dean of the Faculty of Political Science. Outside the university, he also served the public by being the first Secretary-General of the Sueb Nagasathira Foundation and President of the Democracy for the People Group. Though retired, at present he is a special lecturer teaching post-graduate students and Managing Director of the Sanya Dhammasakdi Institute, Thammasat University.



Before the Century Ends
2001

Seksan's works

Seksan's works are diverse: short stories, long short stories, essays, journals, poems, lectures, literary reviews, and translations. His first piece of writing appeared in 1969 and his first printed volume came out in 1983. Up to now, he has consecutively produced his works by writing articles for such newspapers and magazines as Manager Daily, Manager Weekly, Matichon Daily, Su Anakhot, Chiwit Klang Chaeng, Travel Guide, and Kho Kho Magazine. When collected, some of the works have been reprinted time and again. At present there are 36 books as follows:

- Indochinese War 1983
- Leaning towards the People 1984
- Humaneness and Class Struggle 1985
- Seasons (First collection of short stories) first compiled in 1981
- Bamboo Flowers (Second collection of short stories) first compiled in 1984
- Coming from the Mangrove Forest - first compiled in 1984
- From the Sea to the Forest and Mountain (Translation: true stories of an outdoor man) first compiled in 1984
- Fisherman (Short novel), first compiled in 1985
- Song of the Water, Dance of the Clouds (Literature for life), first compiled in 1988
- Pakkham Prawattisat (Historical Interviews) (Collection of Selected Interviews), first compiled in 1988, revised in 1997
- Life University (Real life accounts: from days of searching to nights

of fate, first compiled in 1988

- Hiking in the Wood in Search of Real Life (Real life accounts: nights and days in the forest and back to the city), first compiled in 1989 (selected stories from Song of the Water, Dance of the Clouds and Coming from the Mangrove Forest)

- Wandering in Search of Fish (Real life accounts: relationship between life and streams) first compiled in 1889

- Song of the Universe (Journals of a traveler) first compiled in 1993

- Waves of Liberty (Essays on seven topics) first compiled in 1993

- Senthang Nak Praphan (Path of a Writer) (Accounts of opinions on writers and books), first compiled in 1993

- Man and Tiger (Third collection of short stories), first compiled in 1996

- Leech Trail and Rapid Current (Accounts of forest hiking and shooting down the source of Langsuan Rapid), first compiled in 1996

- Skirting the Roof of the World (Accounts of a visit to Yulong Mountain and the source of the Yangtze River)

- Bubbles of Time (Verses and complaints), first compiled in 1996

- The Passing of an Era (First collection of selected writings from newspapers), first compiled in 1997

- Endangered Males (Second collection of selected writings from newspapers), first compiled in 1997

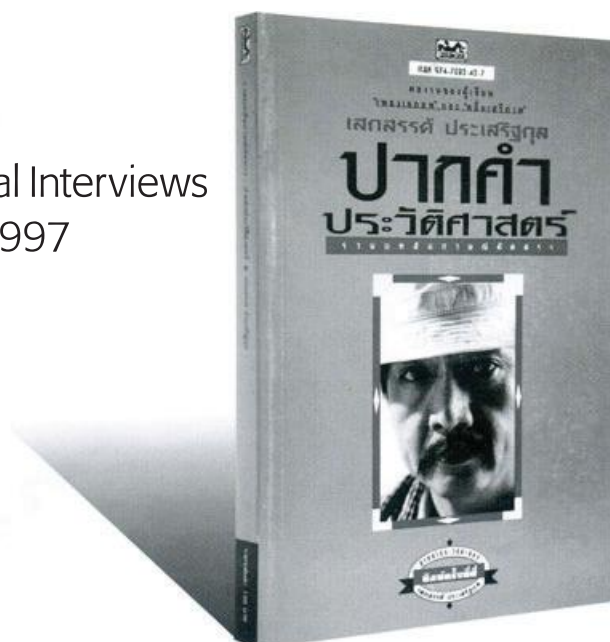
- As the World Changes, Change the World (Third collection of selected writings from newspapers)

- If That Day Did Not Exist (Fourth collection of selected writings from newspapers)

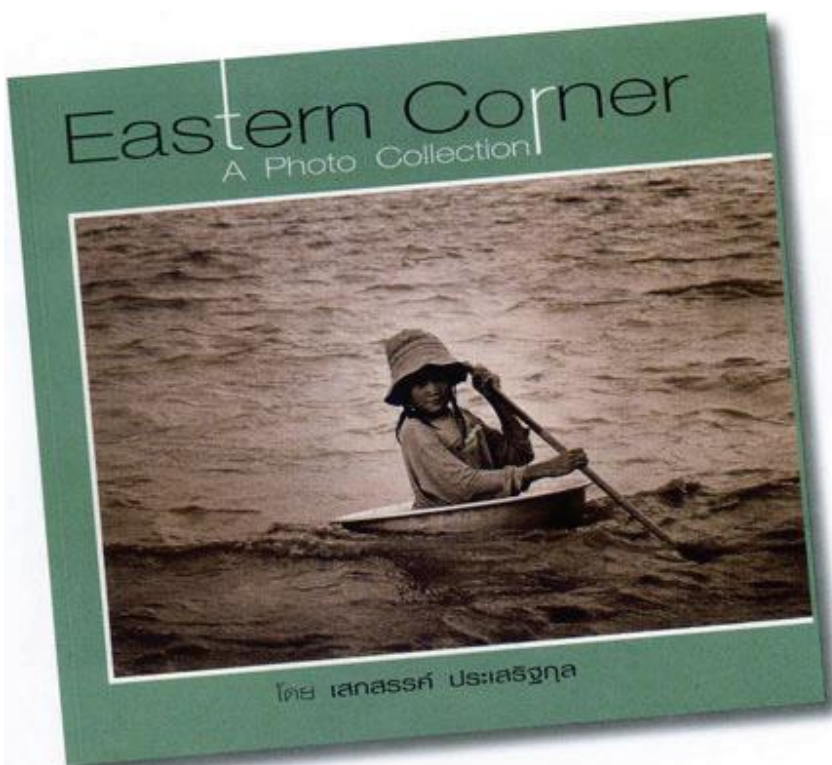
- Moment of Defeat (Collection of essays on eight topics)

- Before the Century Ends (Collection of interviews and lectures during a five-year span), first compiled in 2001

Historical Interviews
1988, 1997



- An Empty Vihara (Accounts of traveling and reading), first compiled in 2001
- Something That Has Been Missing (Collection of articles on wildlife and nature)
- Self and the Soul (Collection of dialogues and lectures)
- Intellectual Mutiny (Collection of newspaper articles from 2000-2002)
- When the World Has No History, (Collection of newspaper articles from 2002-2003)
- Unattached Encounters (Reminiscences from traveling), first compiled in 2005
- The Art of Being Nobody (Essays on independence from self), first compiled in 2007
- Spiritual History of a Writer (Tracing the soul in writing), first compiled in 2008
- Power of Emptiness, Emptiness of Power (Collection of lectures during a five-year span from 2003- 2008), first compiled in 2008
- Children of the Star (Essays on the inner side of life), first compiled in 2008
- Eastern Corner: A Photo Collection A collection of black and white photographs taken by Seksan Prasertkul



Eastern Corner:
A Photo Collection
2009

Song of the Water,
Dance of the Clouds
1988



- In 2001 Seksan Prasertkul's biography was made into a movie called Khon La Chan (14 October, the People's War). It was declared Best Picture of the Year by the Entertainment Society and the Entertainment Review Society.

- In 1999 Samanchon Press printed Seksan's works in the form of selected collections: Selected Short Stories, 1989-1996; Selected Journals, 1984-1997; Selected Essays, 1988-1997, and Selected Documentaries, 1992-1997.

- In 2009 Praphansarn Press issued a collection of 17 essays and journals called Sainam Lae Thang Kham (Stream and Crosswalk) and Eastern Corner, for besides writing books Seksan is also a skillful photographer. His photographs are artistic and serve to "tell stories" like his writings. The illustrations in all of his books are taken by Seksan himself. He has organized exhibitions of his photographs on several occasions, solo and in cooperation with other photographers.

Awards and honors

- First recipient of the Pridi Phanomyong Research Award from the Bank of Thailand 50 Years Anniversary Foundation in 2002
- Sriburapha Award in 2003
- Outstanding Alumni Award from the Faculty of Political Science, Thammasat University in 2003

Three decades of Seksan Prasertkul's literary works

Seksan Prasertkul uses his real name in all types of writings. He has been writing for 30 years since 1969 up to the present with 36 titles to his name. His works are diverse: fiction, documentaries, and poems. Each genre is distinct in that it harmoniously connects his “thought” and “life.” His ability to tell stories in a moving and thought-provoking way, together with his literary language, makes it difficult to distinguish whether some of his works can be classified as fiction or documentary, short stories or autobiographies, essays or strings of prose. However, this indistinctness of genre has become a unique trait that reflects the writer's independence of thoughts and identity.

Judging from his works, Seksan's development can be divided into three phases as follows.



Coming from the Mangrove Forest
1984

The first decade (1979-1989)

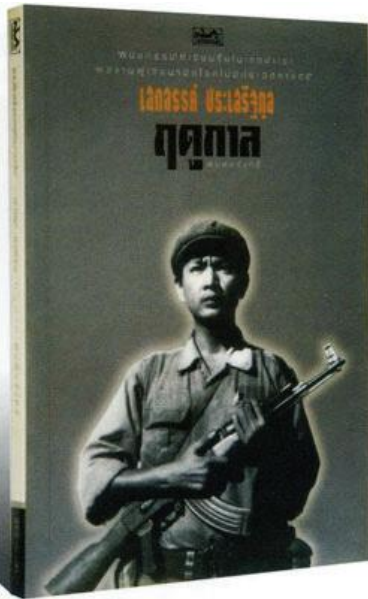
Besides works written during his college and working days, there are also the works written while Seksan was living in the forest until he went to study abroad and returned to Thailand after graduation. The works in the first decade consist of a collection of short stories, **Seasons**, his first printed work after he came out of the forest. The short stories were written while he was living in the forest around 1989, with some poems written since 1973.

Next is the collection of selected stories called **Bamboo Flowers**. The two works are short stories and poems in the style of socialist realism, reflecting the lives of lower class people who are poor and taken advantage of. The author shows that suffering does not come from class oppression alone but is also the result of diverse complex factors in life.

While he was studying in the US, Seksan had another work published. **Coming from the Mangrove Forest**, a record of his youth, tells about his experience as a student and a student leader during the 14 October incident; the time he was joining the struggle movement in the wood; the rift in idealism; and the pain caused by inner conflict resulting from a clash with the forest society.

Seasons

1981



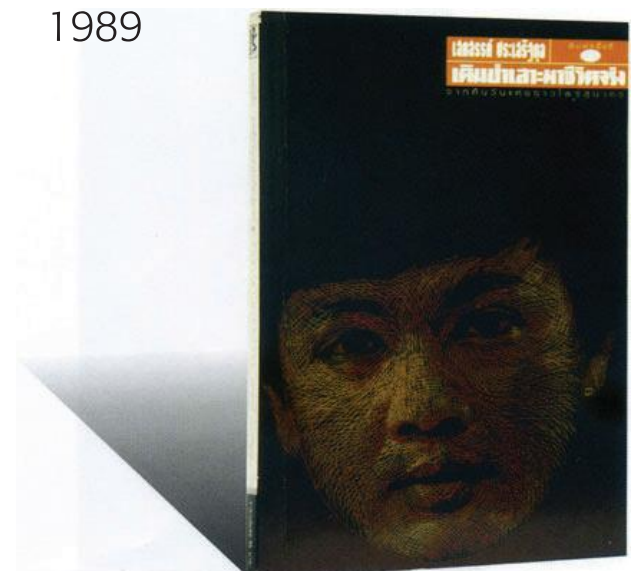
After his return from the US, Seksan produced a great number of works telling about life after he left the forest and life as a student with his family in the US, in ***Song of the Water, Dance of the Clouds***.

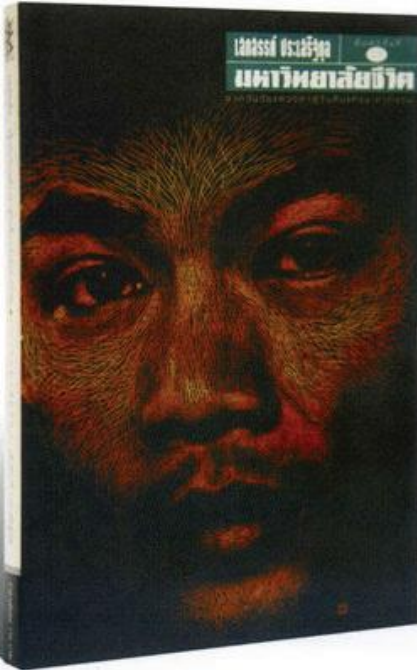
Most of the works in this period may be called “scarred literature,” a continuation of the works written before he went to study abroad. Seksan wrote about the incident on 14 October 1973, the day of the people’s war, life in the wilderness, fishing alone, self in the US, from his own experiences and those gleaned from other people’s lives. These writings were rearranged in collections called ***Life University, Hiking in the Wood in Search of Real Life*** and ***Wandering in Search of Fish***. These real life literary collections are not only “personal” or “autobiographical,” but they are also historical memoranda in the form of literature which is influential to young people born after

the era of 14 October 1973. Moreover, Seksan’s works are also the “prototype” of writing a mixture of short stories and documentaries, a model for later writers. The writings in this period reflect Seksan’s idea of changing society towards equality and justice, making all people in society happy, free, and independent . He used to criticize the established leftists in the CPT in ***Manutsayatham Kap Kan Tosu Thang Chon Chan*** that “we should not forget that the highest objective of social revolution is to build an objective that enables human development to reach maximum efficiency in answering one’s own need. Class war is only a passage-way. In the end happiness is assessed by the individual, not social institution, just like the beauty of a tree is assessed by the vivid green of each leaf.”

Hiking in the Wood in Search of Real Life

1989





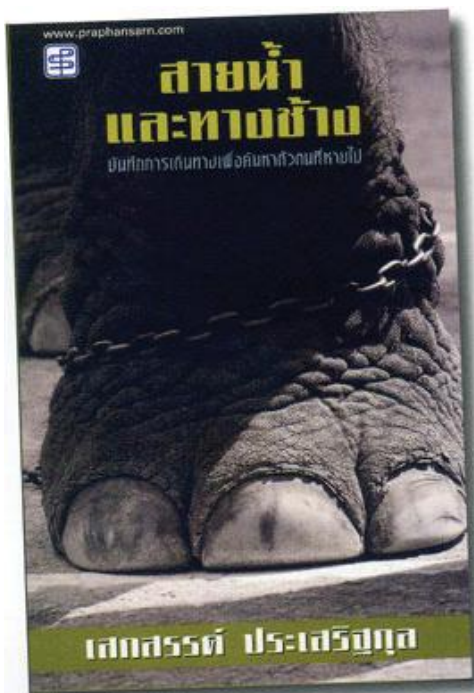
Most of the intellectuals and youths who joined the CPT movement after the 6 October 1976 incident sincerely wanted to solve the country's problems and Seksan was one of them. Situations forced him to make a decision to take refuge in the forest and use guns to fight against injustice. He had to become a warrior, a revolutionist who was branded a communist, but he had shown that he was adamant in his ideal of wanting to change society into one with liberty, equality, and justice. Therefore, when he found that the CPT's "standing point, ideal, and method" were totally different from his own whether concerning liberty, democracy, freedom of the self, and human value, he resigned from the movement. His self-exile since his denial of both forest and city societies caused him unbearable pain. He wrote in *Life and Writing*

Books that "while my first child was in his mother's womb, I contemplated suicide more than once. My woman was thinking the same thing." Conflicts between student movement and revolutionary movement augmented. Seksan had to escort his student comrades out to the edge of the forest until it was time for him and his wife to surrender to the authority in October 1980.

In his life journal called "Yat Namta Bon Phaen Kaem Khong Wela (Teardrop on the Cheeks of Time)" in the book *Song of the Water, Dance of the Clouds*, he asked himself "What is life? ...I keep asking myself repeatedly. Why are we like playthings or experimental tools of something we cannot touch? Why were so many people born and perish unreasonably?...Or is this the teardrop on the cheeks of time?" The compressed suffering made Seksan ask about the power of fate and suspect whether life is only the never-ending flow of time's sorrow. This kind of doubt led to the endeavor to seek the meaning of life and the value of existence that appeared in his subsequent works.

The second decade (1989-1999)

The works in this period were written after Seksan's graduated with a Ph.D. in political science from Cornell University. He returned to Thailand and became a lecturer at Thammasat University, where he received his knowledge at the undergraduate level. From 1993-1995 he was Dean of the Faculty of Political Science. Apart from academic writings on Political Science theories, a field in which he is an expert, he has produced prolific literary works. The "warrior" image reflected in these works is not a warrior in an actual war as appeared in the writings of the previous decade, but a spiritual warrior in the sense that he had to fight against himself all alone. For a person who nurtured his "self-image" highly, his mental war was very acute.



Stream and Crosswalk
2009

Seksan's story is the legend of a living and breathing hero. To what degree the downfall of a hero in a tragedy moves the audience, Seksan's defeat and downfall as perceived by readers through his literary works create the same degree of depression and misery. For a person with the spirit of a warrior who had been defeated in the people's war in which he had totally participated, his defeat was one and the same as the loss and collapse of the courage to make his way through future path in life. He stated in ***Song of the Universe*** that *"When I lay my gun down and surrendered to the government, my deepest cut wound was not the failure of the revolution or the collapse of a political idea. It was the loss of courage to face life's barrenness in the same line of thought. When I walked up the mountain five years ago, the deepest cut wound was not the victory of the needy or a heroic feat under my own name, but the meaning of existence and lapse."* The feeling that he was a defeated warrior eroded his mind to pieces. When he returned to the city, though disheartened, he smilingly admitted that he was a "historically damaged item" and spent a decade to revive his spirit. Seksan's suffering was caused by the desire to change the world. When he failed in his ideal, he refused to be a part of the world he disapproved. It has been more than

ten years that Seksan exerted himself relentlessly in his misery and thrashed himself with pain. No matter how hard he tried to run away from society through physical geography by climbing mountains and going to seas, he could not escape from the inner geography in his heart which was flooded by misery, distress, and bitterness. At first, his close encounter with nature rebuilt something that had been lost. Later on, mountains and forests made him learn about and understand the meaning and course of existence, especially the realization that man is only a lowly and meaningless part of the galaxy. He has stated in **Waves of Liberty** that

“Up in the sky ten thousand million stars are moving along their orbits. Deep down, from under the bottom of a boat to a point on the opposite side, lies the surface of the earth, tilting to receive the daytime. Is it true or not that I am drifting along the orbit of this planet?”

The earth is a part of the cosmos. The cosmos is a part of the universe, and everything is moving along the formless and borderless darkness whose beginning and end cannot be found.

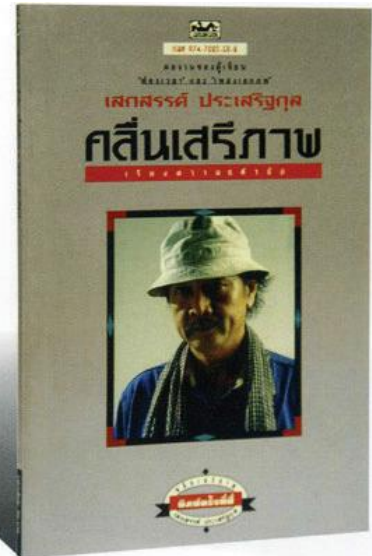
Is it true or not that we all are a part of these, and may even be merely an inferior and insignificant part?

Power, profit, social conflicts and disputes may at times be only the chains that fetter our inferiority and insignificance forever.

No matter what the outcome may be, as long as we spend our lives recklessly, perhaps it is of no big difference.

Yes, sometimes we may never understand liberty in its most profound meaning.”

Waves of
Liberty
1993



Seksan's most distinguished works in the second decade are ***Song of the Universe, Man and Tiger, and Bubbles of Time***. Besides their literary merits, they also reflect his attempt to understand life by seeking answers from nature.

Song of the Universe (1993) is another record of his travels. However, the scenery and traveling activities are only the background that accentuates the main content the writer talks about, which is life's journey. Nature and what he has seen during his travels have taught him to understand himself better, abandon his sense of self, and become more compromising with life. He has said the following about the sea in "Thammachat Khue Kap Klon Khong Chiwit" (Nature Is Life's Poetry):

"My close acquaintances often hear me talk about the sea as a sacred temple or sometimes as a dignified lady, both of which make a real man shiver.

When man encounters something he cannot win, he often discovers his inferiority. And when he discovers his inferiority, he recognizes other people's worth. From there humility ensues.

Before the sacred temple, a true warrior kneels down to explore his transgression. When he experiences eternal greatness, he may all of a sudden lose the bond with the victory he has won with his blood..."

"In maintaining an existence, is it true or not that we are like natural phenomena, that is, we are conditioned by time, attitude, and sense of self.

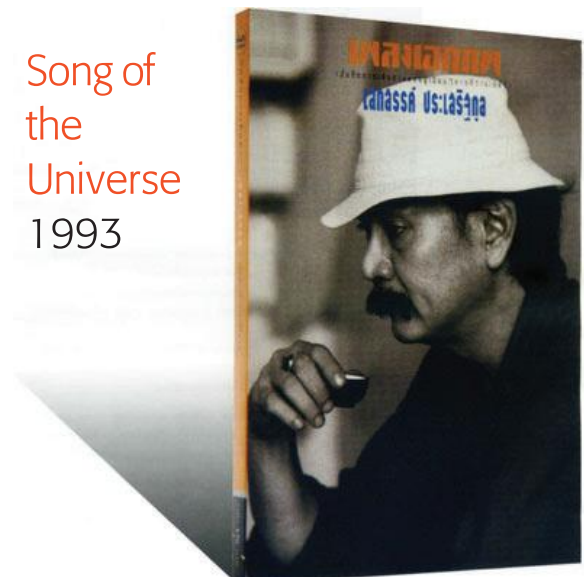
Life may be beautiful or not depending on the concurrence of several factors at a proper time, in a correct proportion, and in a relationship that rhymes like a poet's words.

And it is of no less significance that beauty can only occur to eyes that can perceive it.

Oftentimes, people miss such an opportunity. They cannot grasp "the moment of beauty" since they have never taken a glance at it or searched for it.

However, it is also often that an opportunity can be missed although the vision is accurate. This happens because people cannot release themselves from other restraints to be standing at the proper spot."

Song of
the
Universe
1993



Another example from **Stream and Crosswalk** states that

“Or is it that human life is actually split in two: on one side we are an elephant and on the other side a mahout who has to beat himself night and day to walk ahead?”

We wish to reach an objective which may be survival or sometimes acceptance by others. Oftentimes it may be a spark of nice feeling about the ego we cling to.

We are satisfied when a mission is accomplished, but what about the pain, it belongs to no one else.

At best, when the path is so rugged, we may lead the “elephant” to frolic in the water or sing to it to maintain the fragile relationship in order to walk on together.

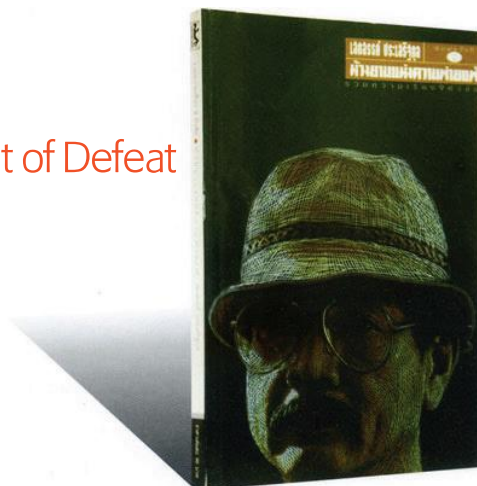
Streams, islands, strings of stars, scars on the elephant’s forehead, and the smile of a destitute man...all make me wonder what I am doing here.

Not here at Um Phang.

I mean here on the planet Earth.”

Moment of Defeat

1998



Seksan is aware that life is only a tiny entity on Earth, a fragment of the cosmos, and only a residue of dust in the universe. He ponders about the relationship between life and the universe, as written in a part of the long article called “Phleng Ekkaphop”.

“Sure, to this day I still cannot tell to what purpose I was born. However, while looking at the sparkles of light strewing the black void, I could not help feeling that there is a filament connecting “us”

that is more profound and firm than the relationship between man and the environment.

At a certain moment I felt like I was staring at my original place of birth.

I told my friend to hand me the pipe and I played whatever songs that flashed up in my mood...I could not remember which songs I played but what I clearly remembered was that I wished the sound of my pipe would travel to give my regards to my “relatives” up above.

Amid the darkness...some vision began to appear.

Is it true or not that life is like a musical note which by itself cannot assert any melody? It is only when it finds its place in a “song” that it is assigned an existence and a passage.

In the never-ending song of the universe life begins and ends like a musical sound in the tune of eternity. We exist in the universe and the universe exists in us: diversity in unity and unity in diversity just like notes and melody which are inseparable.

Perhaps this is the most profound secret of creation.

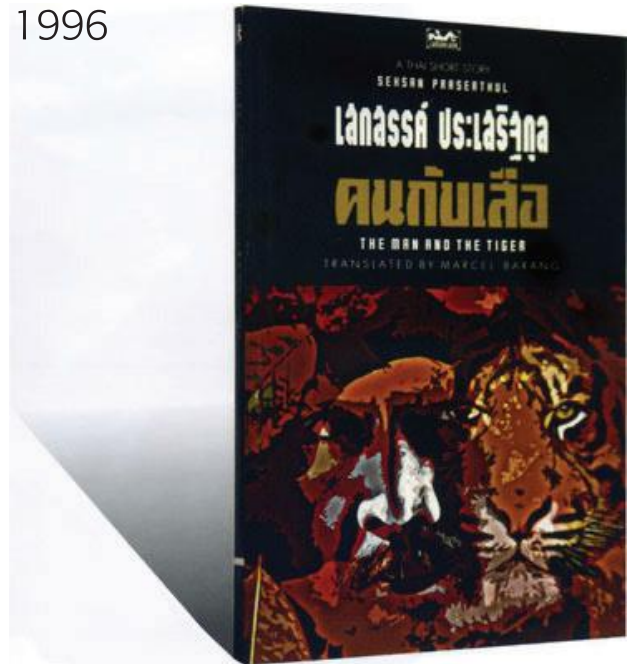
I played my pipe for a while and laid my small traveling companion by my side since in my consciousness I suddenly heard a more melodious song coming to me in an endless stream, a song without beginning and end.

Song of the universe...and who could its composer be?”

Certainly, the awareness that one is only a residue of dust in the universe without any meaning if not related to the universe would cause one to abandon the “ego” that mistakenly leads one to believe in one’s own greatness as a person who decides the world’s fate. **Phleng Ekkaphop** is therefore the first indicator among Seksan’s other works which reflects his attempt to understand his inner life.

Man and Tiger

1996



Man and Tiger (1996) is a long short story in the collection of the same name. It is one of Seksan’s best short stories. It tells about the confrontation between a man and a tiger. The hunter is a young man just returning from the city society where he failed in love and life, feeling that he has been “unfairly hunted” and threatened to surrender himself completely since “*an invisible whip was thrashing at the depth of his existence all the time to force him to become a tame pet. When he refused to do so, his heart was full of welts and scars.*” When he returns home to live as a free spirit in seclusion and not giving up, he has to undertake a mission to hunt a tiger in the forest in place of his elderly father, a hunter. When confronting the tiger, he feels a sense of fear combined with awe and conviction, at the same time he is aware that it is he who is the intruder. A query rises in his mind

why he has to destroy the grandeur, eradicate the splendor, and crush the embodiment of liberty. *“Why is it so wrong for a life to exist in seclusion boldly, valiantly, and spiritually free? It is at that moment that the character experiences something and feels spiritually complete for the first time, that is,*

“He felt one and the same with this tiger. It was a feeling beyond any description, a joy that permeated every iota of his self, a stream of lofty consciousness that overflowed in all directions, a time when the moon, the stars, the rainbow, and the sun assembled without the dividing line between day and night. It was the second when time stood still for the universe to embrace eternity...

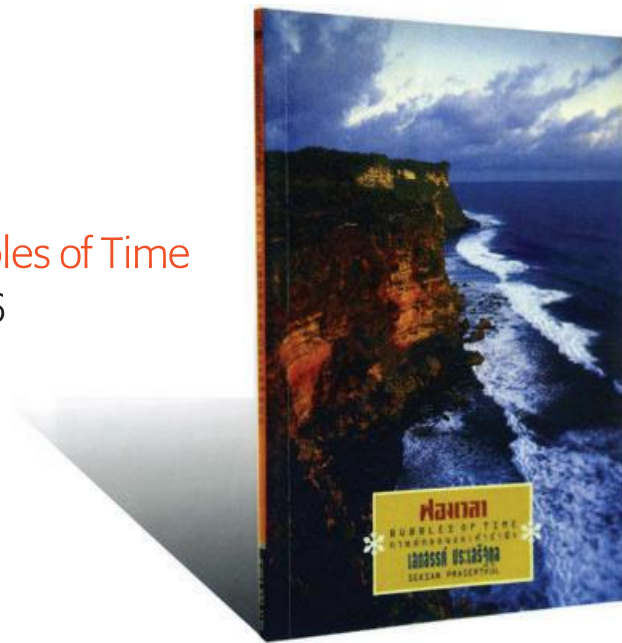
He was the tiger and the tiger was him, and if it deserved to die he should not have lived.”

Seksan's works are often not far from his own experiences and the thoughts and feelings coming from his own self. Therefore, when judging from the content and the author, we may see that the “tiger” is Seksan's “ego,” the self he is in the depth of his conscience, that is, *“The eyes that seemed indifferent to anything, glowing intensely with the aura of freedom and self-confidence. It seemed like bravery, serenity, seclusion, mental determination, or even love, had been fused together in one drop of crystal.”* At the same time, the character “he” is Seksan at a time

when his soul is cut into strips because *“the invisible whip was thrashing at the depth of his existence all the time, threatening him to surrender. The myriad accusations struck him like the blades of lances and swords: from being barbarous and crude, a fraud, to being insane or narcissistic to the point of losing his self-control.”* As for the “tiger,” it is *“the highest development in the forest,” “uninterested in time,” “life as immediate breath,” “unadorned self,” “both isolated and secluded,” “a free soul capable of looking after itself,” “an individuality not to be overlooked,” “incapable of accepting defeat easily,”* and *“not taking pride in these attributes, not even being arrogant.”* When “he” sees the tiger, he sees himself. He is a part of the tiger and it is a part of him. He is a part of nature and nature is a part of him. Therefore, we may infer that both “he” and the “tiger” are two overlaying facets of Seksan himself. The conceit of being a warrior at the caliber of king of the forest is threatened by the oppressing social authority, preventing him from moving forward or backward. Even when coexisting, the two facets cannot adjust themselves harmoniously. The tiger is thus the spirit that Seksan has retrieved from his experience with the truth of nature. Therefore, the mysterious sound of gunshot in the forest can be interpreted that “he” is willing to take his own life in order for the free spirit of the tiger to exist with dignity.

Bubbles of Time

1996



Bubbles of Time (1997) is Seksan's first collection of poems. He has been writing poetry for a long time. During the political struggle, he wrote poems on the spur-of-the moment to be sung among the protestors. Besides rhymed poems, it can be said that Seksan's prose is interspersed more or less with poetic style in their choice of words, prolific imagery, moving emotions, and impressive concepts. ***Bubbles of Time*** contains both rhymed verses and poetic prose, illustrated with photographs taken by the author himself. Some examples are as follows.

A poem called "Wang" (Hope), written in 1973, imbues fighters with strength of mind and hope.

*It's dark today...but not completely dark,
A small fire still glows.
If only a strong wind blows,
The red embers will spark.*

This field is cluttered...but not in all parts,

*There's fresh rice sprouting among the thorn.
If only rain from the indigo sky is borne,
The rice will outgrow the thatch grass.*

*Though you are gone...not all hope is lost,
I will go on searching.
If only the time is coming,
The people will assemble their force.*

The poetic prose called **Ruedukan (Seasons)**, written in 1978, invites people to see the beauty of life's final phase and welcome it bravely.

*Under the soft green grass and the field of multi-colored and multi-scented
flowers*

*Lies the burial ground of rocks and diverse species of animals,
Including the grave of your mother.*

And when the day comes...it will include your own grave.

*If you love flowers and the green color of the vegetation,
You will welcome your last moments with a smile.*

At night when you are shivering...

You will not be enthralled by the discourse of the cicadas.

Though you see the tears of night

Dripping on the indigo leaves,

You still have to see the dewdrops on the green leaves,

Being embraced by the sunlight.

Then your heart will hear the song of Dawn.

Do not be alarmed when the leaves change colors.

The forest is most beautiful in autumn.

And in the same season of life

You too will be just the same.

Bathe your heart with the color of gold,

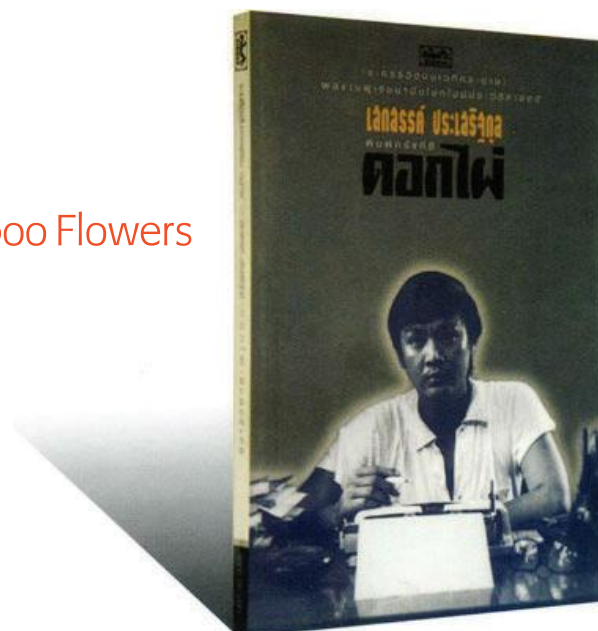
Like the golden leaves before they fall to the ground.

And then the song of life will resound once more

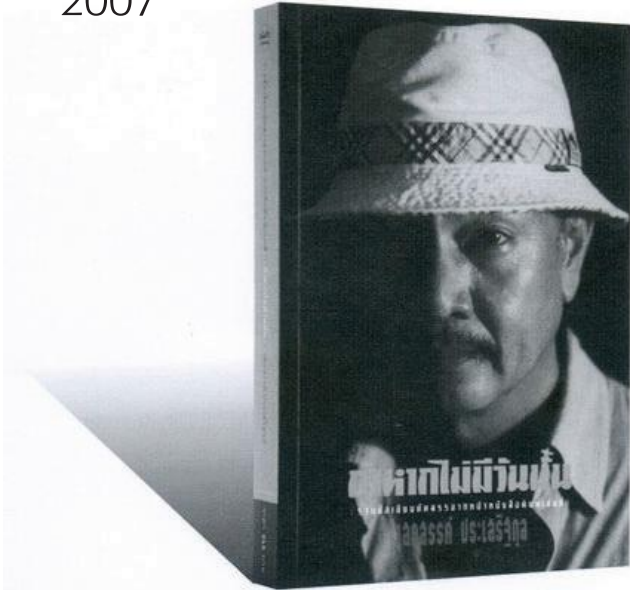
From your grave.

Bamboo Flowers

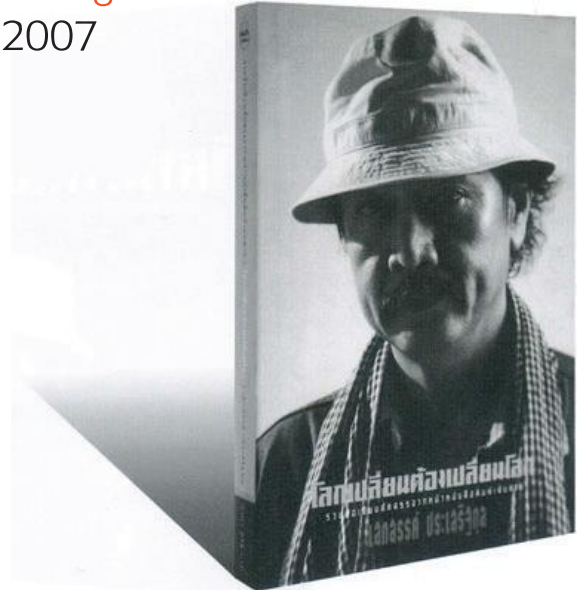
1984



If That Day Did Not Exist
2007



As the World Changes,
Change the World
2007



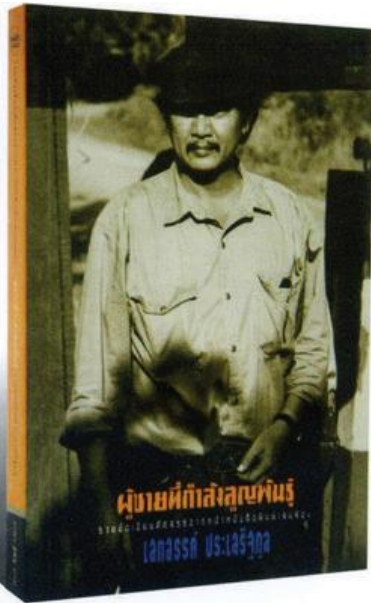
The free verse interspersed in “Khwam Ning Sa-ngat” (Utter Silence), written in 1997, is beautiful in its language and philosophical thoughts.

*Amid the silence there are words
Of a soul too tired...than to tell its story.
In the words there is the silence
Of a lonesome soul...without a resting place.
In the lonesomeness there is a journey
Of an agitated heart...in search of its owner.
In the journey there is a pause
Of a dismal awareness...in fetters.
In a dream there is reality
Of a wretched past...hidden under the pillow.
In reality there is a dream
Of a battered sensation...yearning for a guardian.*

Besides these three prominent works, at the end of this decade Seksan also produced prolific essays and articles expressing sharp ideas about society as collected in the book called ***Khluen Seriphap (Waves of Liberty)*** and in the four collections of articles from newspaper columns: ***Kan Phan Phon Khong Yuk Samai (Passage of an Era)***, ***Phuchai Thi Kamlang Soonphan (Endangered Males)***, ***Loke Plian Tong Plian Loke (As the World Changes, Change the World)***, and ***Thahak Mai Mi Wan Nan (If That Day Did Not Exist)***.

The third decade (199-2009)

Endangered
Males
1997

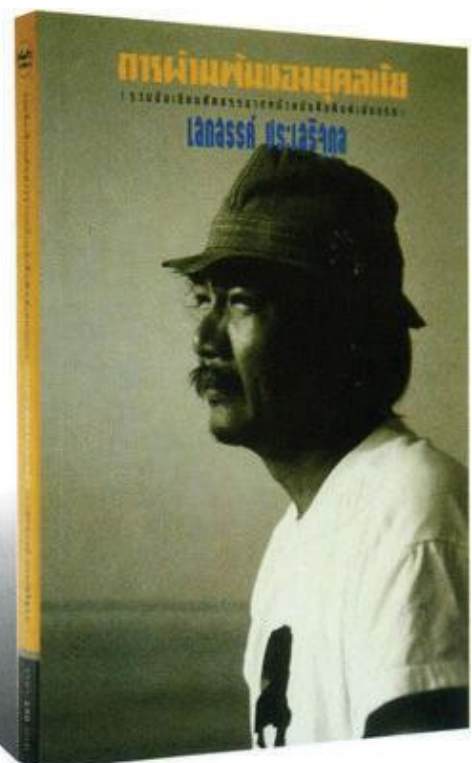


At the beginning of this decade Seksan stopped writing for three whole years to travel and read books. Then he returned to write columns for **Weekend Nation** magazine during the latter half of 2000. He spent one year after that to revise his works and had them printed in book form called **Wihan Thi Wangplao (An Empty Vihara)**. This life journal reflects a more sober mood than his past works. It is a collection of his intense outlook towards the world and life in every dimension, especially the allusion to the origin of the earth, the cosmos, and the universe, as interpreted from the accumulated body of knowledge he has gleaned from reading so many books in the genre. Moreover, **An Empty Vihara** shows the changes Seksan underwent in his fifties. He began to perceive that real suffering comes from within, not without, as he wrote in “Senthang

Thi Mai Mi Chutmai” (An Aimless Path):

“Or is it that a person’s character is another fetter? When crystallized, it becomes a mysterious force that keeps us under control all the time. We have to do this because we are what we are, and if we don’t do this there will hardly be any evidence left to tell us who we are. Then, is there any real freedom of being born a human being? Is it true or not that oftentimes we strive to tear down the outer barrier that keeps us outside only to be imprisoned in an inner prison we have built? Is it true or not that many times we are standing defiantly until the world dares not disturb us, but in a silent and lonely corner we are flogging ourselves brutally?”

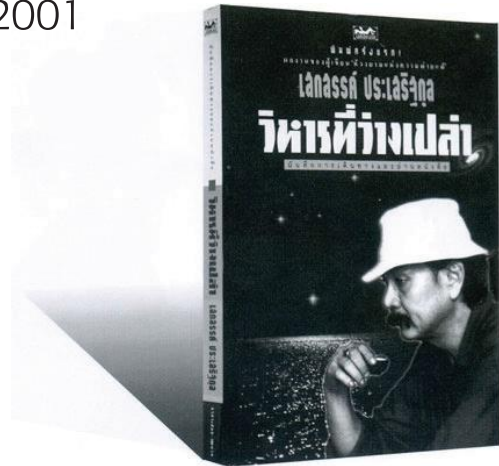
The Passing of an Era
1997



So, the idea of being one and the same with nature and a fragment of the galaxy has not completely created a mental peace, since clinging to his sense of self still caused conflicts with others, with society, and even with himself persistently. Seksan's "internal" journey involved going through a much more rugged terrain than the external journey. He found that he had no faith left in anything as stated in ***An Empty Vihara***. Seksan wrote that *"I found that the mental temple which once housed political and social ideals suddenly became an empty and lonely area."* His dubious way of thinking led to a question which might be the answer to his life ahead. *"As time passed, the question occurring to me was not only about what I should establish to replace those things... but I even probed deeper to the point whether it was necessary for me to search for the sacredness of life since perhaps they did not exist in life...It seemed that I was 'worshipping the bareness of life'...or was it that the sacredness that emerged to replace the ideals of youth was really a profound empty space that could never be replaced by any icon?..."*

An Empty Vihara

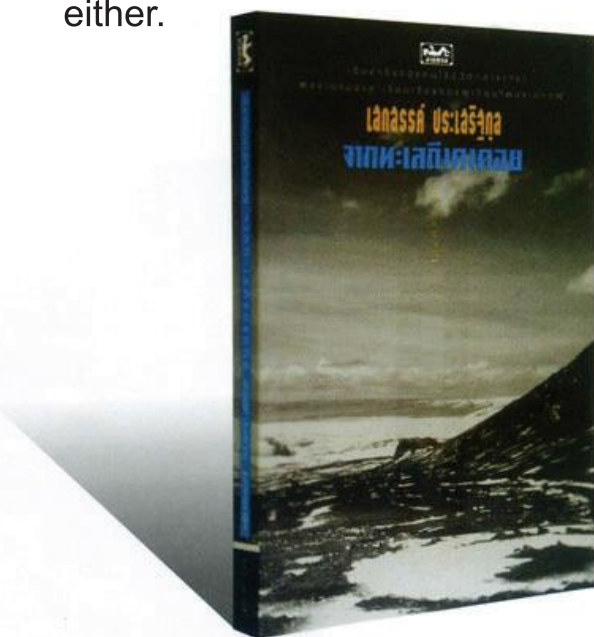
2001



The writings in this decade clearly show changes in Seksan, especially the outlook he had about himself. We may compare Seksan in his fifties to a "defeat addict" due to the persistent concept of "ancient warrior and real man" that he had emphasized in almost all of his writings during the past two decades . This kind of fixation created an irreparable misery since he was obsessed with defeat despite knowing that he had to let go of it by himself, as he had lamented in ***Huang Yam Haeng Khwam Phaiphae (Moment of Defeat)*** in 1998 that *"In a man's life there is nothing as burdensome as defeat. Every time that the external war ends with defeat, the internal war must go on successively. A defeated man is like an occupied city, no one can liberate him unless he sets himself free."* The works in the third decade make us see that Seksan in his middle age was starting to "let go of his 'ego,' thus abating the suffering he had been bearing, as he explained himself in "Thon Tua Chak

Khwam Phaiphae” (Withdrawing from Defeat), which is a part of **Phanphop Chueng Khon Phop (Spiritual History of a Writer)** that *“Until I was in my fifties I began to realize that perhaps I was not defeated in the war, but I was defeated by the feeling of being defeated. As soon as I realized that, all my pain and misery almost vanished. Moreover, when I trained myself to let go of the idea of looking at life as a matter of winning or losing and stopped connecting myself with any definition whether a manly man, warrior, father, or husband, I found more and more that perhaps in reality there is no sad story in the world, it may be only a concept resulting from the state of mind that refuses to live with the present moment, one that alienates itself from reality.”* His immense suffering led Seksan to find the way to end it by accident, or as he put it, “straying into a void.” When he was alone on his 50th birthday anniversary he was suffering from his own thoughts, but when he stopped thinking that it was his birthday, stopped being happy or sad about what had passed, and stopped worrying about the approaching old age, he felt that everything got better. Even though the void resulting from letting go was only temporary, since he himself began to experience the “void,” finding a way to end suffering all by himself occurred without being guided by any theory, just a common and natural way of thinking, that is, stop thinking about oneself, stop

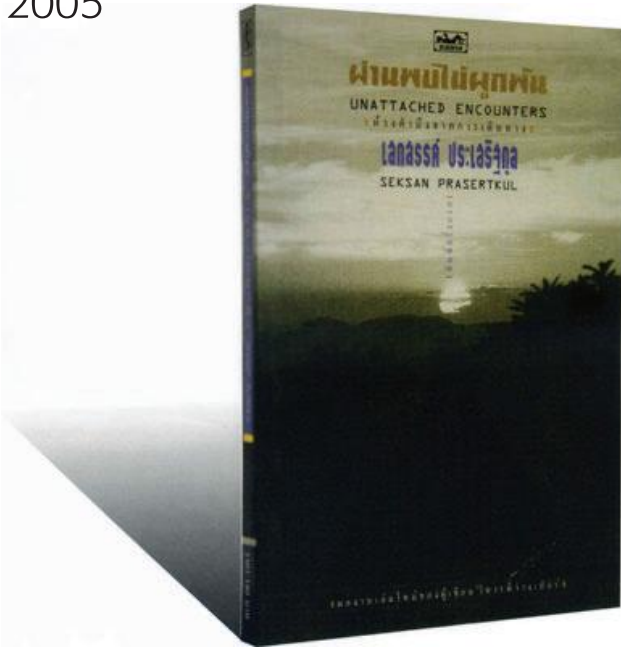
thinking about definitions or paying attention to external labels imposed by others. When one stops at the cause, then suffering can be extinguished at once. Seksan’s development of his mental state would go on until there was an unexpected change. A sense of peace and serenity emerged from within as he had never experienced before. Finally, he recorded in **Spiritual History of a Writer** that *“One morning at the beginning of August 2002, after having been stuck with suffering for years I suddenly discovered that I was inexplicably happy and joyful. It was a refreshing feeling deep inside that had nothing to do with external conditions.”* He said that this inner refreshing feeling made him abandon his emotional cravings, stop being angry, hateful, and made him compassionate towards all beings. He found himself happy and serene without knowing the reason and did not want know the reason either.



From the Sea to the Forest
and Mountain 1984

Unattached Encounters

2005



At the beginning of 2004 Seksan wrote columns in travel magazines. A year later these columns appeared in a collection called ***Phan Phop Mai Phukphan (Unattached Encounters)***, illustrated with photographs taken by the author himself, which can be said to be his first serious spiritual writing, a of distinctive trait of his works in the third decade after a trail had been blazed in ***An Empty Vihara***. Seksan expressed his attitude towards life in the Preface of ***Unattached Encounters*** that looking at the world in a positive way makes one find the bright side of life from all occurrences, while looking at the world in a negative way one will see nothing but the dark side. Moreover, the real objective of life is “within,” which leads to spiritual completeness. The biggest cause of suffering lies in negative thinking

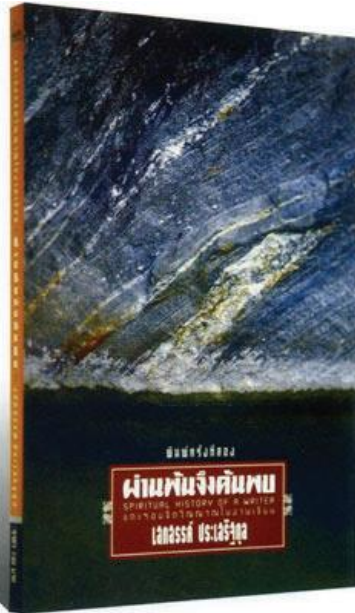
which is often based on fear which may be shielded in several negative emotions. Fear makes one look at the world in a possessive way, amassing and exploiting it. It makes one look at fellow human beings without trust, afraid to be one’s own true self and unable to adjust one’s life to comply with the principles of the cosmos. The thing that would make man more happy is spiritual courage, which means opening up to receive all events coming into life without being afraid, and being ready to find a balanced point in experiencing them and spiritual love at a limitless and unconditional level . Love in this sense is a powerful energy that would give rise to uninterrupted creative force and positive outlook towards the world. He concluded that *“To be able to do so, one must discard both possession and adherence and be conscious of the present in order to be free to move towards a balance.”* What Seksan was saying is not new. Prophets, philosophers and thinkers from many nationalities and cultures have discovered this truth, but Seksan was not quoting them. What he had said came from his own experiences and he always emphasized that one cannot act on behalf of another person.

The writing style of ***Unattached Encounters*** is different from those of other writings in that Seksan changed the pronoun “*phom*” (I) he always used to “*khun*” and “*than*” (both meaning you), a sign

that he has abandoned his identity and invited the readers to explore their “inner” selves. This book presents four principles of dharma:

Spiritual History of a Writer

2008



First--Life is an internal journey. The growth of the soul is the highest aim of being born a human.

“If you want to arrive at the deepest part of existence which is void of silence and suffering, you may have to connect external journey with internal journey.

Then you will find that the way from the external layer to the real essence of life is farther and more rugged than all the paths you have traveled.

Journeying for almost a year and you may not get there...

It is also a path you have to walk alone.”

(From “Thi Phak Chai Nai Loke Kwang”--Resting Place for the Heart in the Wide World)

Second—Man has to cleanse his heart to make room for enlightenment, to be one with all things.

“For one who is awake and fasten himself with the center of the cosmos, move and dance with the flame and stream of eternity in utter serenity, wherever such a person stands or sits, that place is considered sacred...”

“From then on, the relationship between us and life will change...There is no solitary existence, and at the same time there are no chains or shackles. We become a part of something both fulfilling and empty, both embracing and releasing, both calm and moving at the same time.”

“Fasten yourself to the moment of truth, not only to step out of the darkness ahead, but to go straight to the intellectual light that is above all wisdom. And at that point, do not rely on the existing light that shines on any teaching but become one and the same with the fraction of light by burning up ignorance...”

(From “Bot Nai Ban, Wihan Nai Chai”—Chapel in the House, Temple in the Heart)

Third—Spiritual discovery is the abandonment of objective.

“High mountains cannot offer you much, if your destination is merely to climb up to conquer them. But if while scaling the height there is only the relationship between you and the next step in your mind,

perhaps at that moment you may have been a few steps away from suffering.

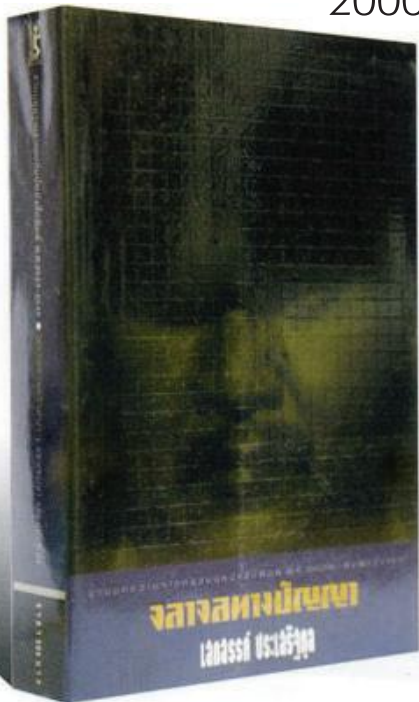
If in your conscience there is a void with no desire, not even the thought to reach somewhere,

then at that moment you may have “reached” the place you are looking for.”

(From “Thi Phak Chai Nai Loke Kwang”)

Intellectual Mutiny

2000-2002



Fourth—The way of one who is awake is living with the present. Do not pine for the past or anticipate the future. At the same time be not possessive and open your mind up to admit changes.

“At dawn when the first light of day caresses the chains of mountains, be one and the same with that picture as if in the whole world there is nothing else. Later in the day when you stretch yourself on

the carpet of grass near the stream, do not let the picture of dawn veil the rays of sunlight shining through the tree tops. At night, when you hear the chirping of cicadas, do not be trapped by the running stream lulling you to sleep during the day.

Yes, if you can approach such a time ahead of you, you will find that the sun is more beautiful than before, the mist from the brook more refreshing, the stream has some words to say, not to say that even the night has its own melodiousness.

Above all, you may feel that the strength of the mountains, the sun, and the stream has been conveyed to you without invitation or refusal, and you are finding the hidden force of life you have not experienced for a long time...the force you once had and lost along with your childhood.

Unattached encounters may be more profound and permanent than twining your heart to the chain that is often misnamed as love.

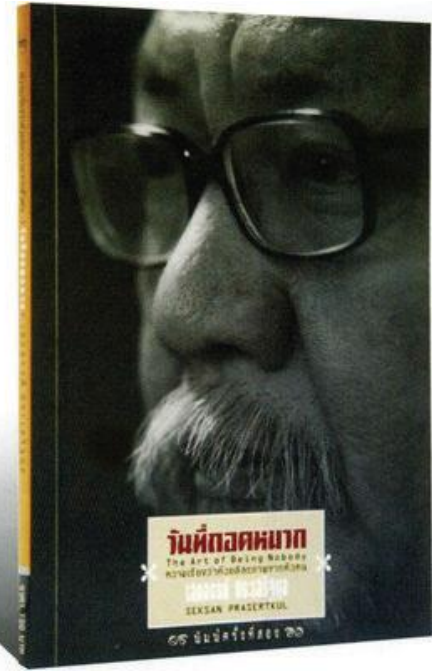
And then the present will move forward incessantly, opening up an amazing moment for you to be bound without attachment. Each moment is a new entity with no repetition or recurrence.”

(“Phan Phop Mai Pukphan”--Unattached Encounters)

Phan Phop Mai Pukphan has a flavor of Buddhism and Zen Buddhism in its “internal” self inspection, examination of nature, and abandonment of attachment to the self. In changing from being a warrior to an advocate of dharma, Seksan stated in *Spiritual History of a Writer* that in writing this collection he had read only two books on spiritualism: *The Celestine Prophecy* by James Redfield and *The Joy of Living Dangerously* by Osho. After the compilation of *Spiritual History of a Writer*, he was inspired to read quality works by a great number of spiritual teachers both Eastern and Western-- “Dalai Lama, Sri Aurobindo, Thich Nhat Hanh, Buddhadasa Bhikkhu, Acharn Man, Archarn Chah, Krishna Murti, Lao Tzu, Togen, Takuan, new generation of Zen teachers as Zuzuki Rochi, Steve Hagen, and Bernie Glassman, Vajarayana crossbreed such as Archarn Steve Batchelor, Tibetan teachers of dharma such as Sogyal Rinpoche and Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche, spiritual thinkers not affiliated with any sect such as Eckhart Toller, Neil Walsch, Castaneda, Deepak Chopra, and Ramdas, not to mention modern Thai thinkers as Phra Prayudh Payutto, Phra Khemananda, Archarn Suvinaï Pornavalai, and Dungtrin.” After reading the works of these Eastern philosophers, he was glad and assured that he had come across the right path.

The Art of Being Nobody

2007



In 1997 Seksan had a new book published called *Wan Thi Thot Muak (The Art of Being Nobody)*, which continually touched upon the issues of dharma and the soul, with an emphasis on freedom of self-abandonment. If compared with *Unattached Encounters*, written two years earlier, as a dharma theory derived from the author’s crystallization, *The Art of Being Nobody* is a concrete practical part and also a proof of Seksan’s development and sincerity. He compared these two books in *Spiritual History of a Writer* that “*If Unattached Encounters is considered a meditation, then the collection The Art of Being Nobody should be a record of concentrating one’s mind in daily life.*” Seksan used himself as a case study for others to see. The readers may picture an old man with declining health living in seclusion with his pet

dog and being happy with training himself to concentrate his mind all the time. The most significant issue in ***Spiritual History of a Writer*** is a caution to be aware of living one's life by being on to vices, and being wary of disarranged thoughts that would make up one's ego. Rooting out one's ego can be done by dissolving the sense of self, mitigating one's desires and others' demand as stated in various chapters of the book.

"An initial synopsis is, for a man to be happy he must first be freed from being overpowered by other people and he also must not want to overpower others." starin (From "Ru Thao Than Tua Eng"—Being on to Oneself)

"The only way not to have people overpower you is by not desiring anything from them. When you desire nothing, not only do other people have to take their pressure off you, even you yourself are supposed to withdraw from yourself."

Withdraw from one's own self, is there such a thing in the world?

Certainly there is! And this is the starting point of "being one's own self."

Is it true or not that when you stop desiring things from others you will step beyond the external restraints. And when you stop clinging to your own desire you will be detached from internal restraints. If this kind of life is not called freedom, then I do not know what to call it." (From "Phu Uen Nai Tua Rao"—Someone Else in Our Body)

"The meeting point between being one's own self and not having an entity needs only the dissolution of the self to find 'oneself' as it is, not as being made up."

Then you will find that there is no real 'self' since it is born and perishes and changes all the time. It is also tied in with other people and things until it cannot exist as a separate entity." (From "Ru Thao Than Tua Eng")

When the World Has No History 2002-2003

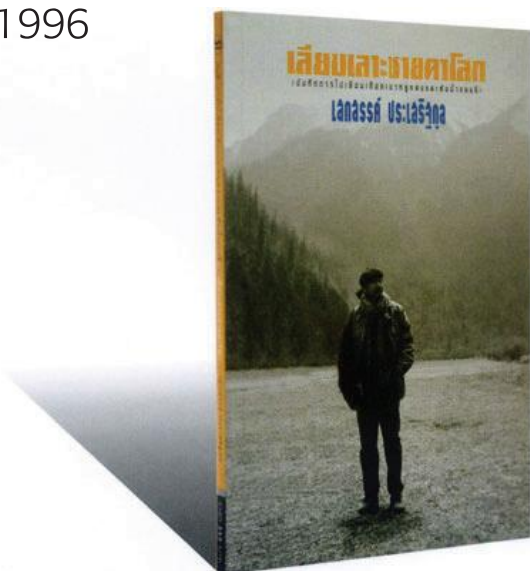


Two records of Seksan's experiences show whether we can use dharma to solve a problem as we have said we could when we face a real situation, and whether we would react or let go. The most prominent one is perhaps "Wan Thi Thot Muak" (The Day I Took My Hat off) in which Seksan wrote about the time when he took his hat off on account of a stray dog that usually

bit people with hats on. This piece of writing is symbolic of the abandonment of one's ego, which leads to compassion and humility. In "Khon, Ma, Lae Ngu" (A Man, a Dog, and a Snake), he begged the snake with its hood spreading to go away in peace. This is another story which shows that when fear and hatred are discarded, compassion emerges. The snake, the dog, and the man can coexist peacefully in the same world without harming one another.

Skirting the Roof of the World

1996



After *Unattached Encounter*, Seksan wrote another book, *Spiritual History of a Writer*, a retrospection of his own writings to explore his spiritual development and path of thinking about life. This book may be considered a review within review if the previous publicized volumes were seen as critiques of life in which the author was criticizing himself while telling about the emotional context of writing. This book enables readers

who follow Seksan's works to understand his thoughts, emotions, and feelings while he was writing and see the development of his thoughts and emotions more clearly.

Children of the Star is Seksan's latest book printed in 2009, the year he celebrated his 60th birthday anniversary. This book is similar to *Unattached Encounters* in that it has the metrical composition of a song, relating the moods and thoughts from his inner self to let "ther" (him/her) know. This may be seen as a talk with himself, which is being extended to the readers who wish to undergo spiritual experiences. This book can be philosophy, dharma, and poetry. Apart from the dharma concepts crystallized from training, practice, and study, its most distinguished aspect is the demonstration of his being a versifier. Seksan is able to make use of language to thread his thoughts, use prose style in his verse and poetic style in his prose normally, naturally, and harmoniously, as if to say that language and definition have narrowed his world vision, or as he always says, "*Language is a synopsis of truth. When we use language some part of truth is lost.*"

Like in his past writings, Seksan uses the sea, waves, traces in the sand, streams, mountains, plains, stars, sun, and full moon as vehicles to crack life's code. The sea and raindrops are one and the same, switching identities back and forth.

Mountains and plains make us see low in high and high in low. The darkest night enables us to see the stars and the moon. Big forests and small brooks are all perpetual cycles of births and deaths as stated in “Phleng Chiwit Nai Pa Chai” (Song of Life in the Forest of the Heart).

“In the big forest there are piled up leaves and rotten logs. Stories of the past are all hidden on the earth surface. A clod may contain some flowers from last winter. Tall trees grow from the seeds of ten years back. A pebble may come from a lofty cliff crowning a mountain range. Even the tiny stream is considered the daughter of past spring.

Human life...whether true or not, develops from the dissolution of something”

Seksan strung his words to say that life was created from all things in nature and has been developed for a long time in **Children of the Star**.

“We have traveled from a faraway place, from the flame of the Great Fire to the Ancient Cloud, shifting into the sphere of the stars, which develop into oceans and lands under torrents of rain and strips of rainbow.

Yes, you have traveled a long, long time before species come into existence. You are the sizzling embers from the tip of the mountain, mixed with the snowflakes of the night and the dews of the morn...

You are the earth, water, fire , and wind blended in harmony from mountains, fields, streams, and skies.

Emphatically, you are the fragment of a star whose shape has not been altered by accident, but a result of an incident.

In fact, you are the spiritual embodiment of the universe.”

In “Khao Met Noi” (Tiny Grains of Rice) Seksan wrote about the rice seeds that grow to become food to nourish life. The grains that fall before they could reach their destination are wasted. It is an allegory to make man aware that he must live his life, which is sacred, in a worthwhile manner, which means living properly in accordance with the way of the world by sharing and caring.

“When traveling you must know your directions. Live your life worthily because everything has its price. Handled with great care by the universe under the sun, you have shared with other lives, eaten from many rice fields, and drunk from many streams. You rely on people in order to survive. You grow up in the embrace of emptiness. The whole world is your motherland. The whole universe is your fatherland.

The journey of the rice grains ends with feeding people. The journey of the self ends with transmitting the Great Resolution, in which all beings become one.”

In “Thale Nai Saifon” (The

Sea in the Rain) Seksan mentioned living with “now,” letting go of the past, and not worrying about the future in order to find oneself in an unexpected dimension.

“You cannot cleanse your heart by wearing white,

But you can purify your heart by living in the present moment

The weal of past whip can no longer harm you,

If only you know how to fly away from the valley of remembrance

And dare to smother the fire of desire in order to light a lamp inside.

Memory is as asset borrowed from elsewhere.

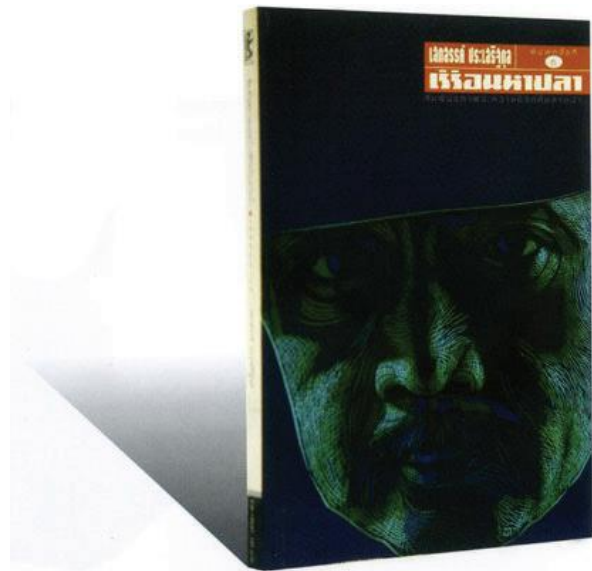
You were not born with it and need not travel the world with it.

You are more than you think but not more than you are, and if you dare change from what you are, you will be everything as it is. When you accept everything as it is, you will be nothing else but...

Life...is it true or not that it is the raindrop in the sea?

Is it true or not that it is the vast sea in the raindrop?”

As for the issue of being one’s own self, and not under the influence of others in order to avoid suffering and discard ignorance to attain wisdom undauntedly, Seksan listed the points as if he was writing an academic paper, but using a language with beautiful rhymes like poetic language in “Thang Sai Nai,” (The Internal Path) as follows.



Wandering in Search of Fish

1889

“First, do not choose the path set by others, no matter how beautiful it is. Choose the path you are willing to take even though there is no reward.

As long as you love what you do, you will be able to do what you love. Even though life may shatter, there still is some meaning to remember.

Second, you must be brave, for no one in the world is more assaulted than the free spirit.

Sometimes you may be scorned. Some day you may be the target of ill intent or may even be in danger. A lot of people want you to be defeated just to suit their pleasure.

However, do not forget that paths may be altered but the destination still remains. No one is born with knowledge. You have to train to be your own teacher.

If you fail, try again. Fail again, try again. An obstacle is not to be evaded. It should be considered the school of truth.

Do not hate yourself when you fail. Do not be conceited when you succeed but learn from those accounts and use them as a guiding light. If you want to be one and the same with the path you have to get rid of the barrier which is your ego.

Life directed by pride can never progress.

Rely on 'the soul of the novice' to annihilate ignorance."

In the same piece, besides using poetic prose Seksan also uses verses with alliteration at the end of the line like in "Klon Hua Diao" of folk songs.

*Then truth will appear
When you are liberated from
the external cover.*

*It is when you walk out to
get inside.*

*The answer of life
Is written here.*

*You will find the scripture
given by the sky and earth.*

*You must learn
To do by not doing.
Then you will discover the
words left by the Master.*

*The self you discover
Is the final chapter of the
imagination,*

*With no words to call it since
it is independent.*

*The self you are seeking
When found, does not exist
Since it is not this or that.
Without outside, there is no more*

inside.

*You are the absolute
freedom*

*In the context of the
elements,*

*The indistinct song of the
universe, solving the great mystery.*



"Thi Ni Lae Diao Ni" (Here and Now) is the ultimate literary achievement in **Children of the Star** since it is written entirely in verse, but the layout as seen is prose here and poetry there as if to point out that we may be deceived by illusions. When we experience it ourselves, we will find that the sounds, words, and thoughts are harmoniously unified. There is no need to define it as belonging to any specific literary genre.

*"The water cascades from a
high cliff in fine and soft mist. A
boulder bathed in vapors lies
motionless in the stream. Water
splashes, squirts, springs, murmurs,*

and roars. The sand, pebbles, and mud move back to form a ditch.

When the mist fades away the vapors become blurred. There appears a current rippling with schools of fish. The clear water flows gently, clouded by shadows of fish swimming to and fro as if trapped in a circle.

Then who are you in this place,

*A tiny fish in the water
Or a roving stream,
A rock that obstructs
Or just a spectator?*

*In the depth of emotion
How deep do you have to*

get

*To the inner aspect within,
Will it be wide open or tight*

shut?

Just to sense a challenging question is the beginning of a prayer . . . You are neither water nor fish, but you are the moment when fish and water become one . . .

The mist and rocks are pertinent in that they adorn and fulfill.”

In another part of the same poem, Seksan shows us impermanence and non-self. Thus, letting go and going into a void will enable you to reach truth.

“You only see what you see while you’re breathing,

Even when you’re gone, you’ll see it as an ordinary occurrence.

You will see nonexistence and untruth, seeing yourself as all things moving across the sky, seeing the manifestation of illusion that keeps changing eternally.

You will see life as merely a dream, ending once you’re awake.

When you’re not gazing at anything, you will see everything, and when you stop traveling, you will be going everywhere. The more you stop singing your own praises, the more your intelligence will become apparent.

Stop searching and you will find. Stop fighting and you will win. Stop being glad or sad and you will be more jubilant.

Come . . . come and sit here

...

Now and here, it is the only place for everyone.

*Lower yourself and lie down
On the surface of the cosmos.*

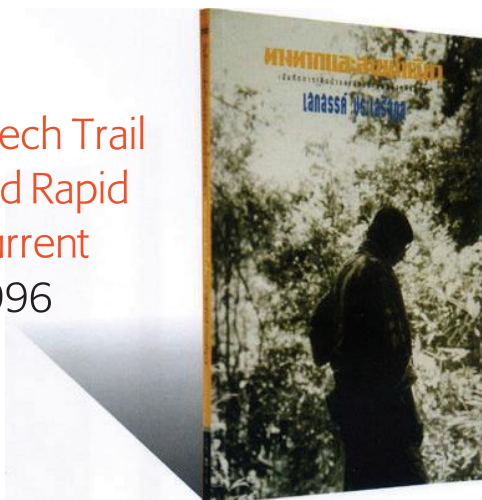
Then the song of tribute will be heard in the breeze.

The elements will be pleased

And bless you to lighten up.”

From analyzing and

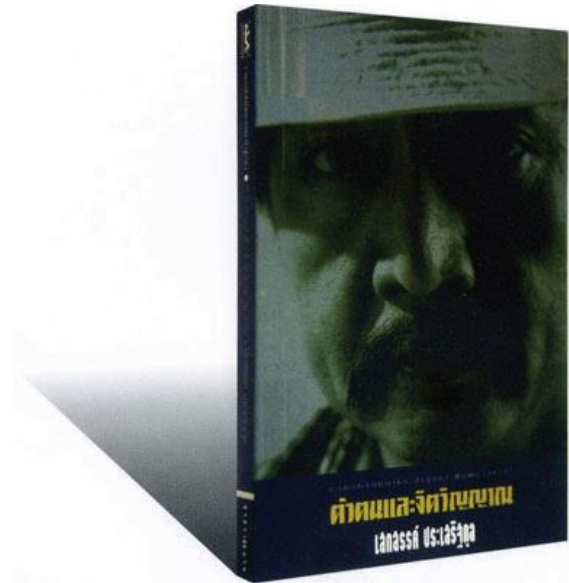
Leech Trail
and Rapid
Current
1996



assessing Seksan's literary works, it can be seen that they are distinctive in many aspects. First, they are distinct in building up a social awareness, generating sympathy towards those in plights and aiming at creating equality and justice in society. Second, it is distinctive in the spiritual view to understand life and find a way to end suffering through dharma principles according to Eastern wisdom. Since most of Seksan's writings cannot be separated from his own self, what he has known, thought, and felt have been derived through his own experiences which "grow" with time. The readers then learn of the failures, defeats, defiance, and fragility that the author has never concealed. His self-honesty enables Seksan's personal experiences as an individual to become mutual experiences shared by his steadfast readers. Even though he writes about himself as being defeated, the readers are overjoyed to realize that in his defeat Seksan manages to retain his lofty ideals which glorify the status of human beings. When he writes about pain, the readers also experience that pain which is converted into an energy that will boost their spirit. After he has salvaged himself from the ruins of life war through the discovery of Eastern dharma principles and practices, that is, through learning by himself, he passes the methods of developing and refining the internal life by means of dharma on to his fellow men through the concepts crystallized in his literary writings.

Self and the Soul

1998



Seksan's works are therefore substantial and emotional. The readers can perceive the rage, restlessness, suffering, and serenity which they can share, and their thoughts develop along with the author. Suvinai Pornavalai used to compare Seksan with a candle that burns itself to provide light. Therefore, for one who lays bare his life before the public, one who criticizes himself sharply and manages to guide his life from collapsing to regaining his foothold to be a lesson for others, he should be considered a man with spiritual bravery deserving praise. When we read Seksan's works from all three decades we can see that they have grown along with his spiritual growth. Readers of Seksan's works also grow in their attitudes, emotions, and thoughts. His works are true friends with whom the readers can share their mental journey without being afraid of deception. Seksan's literary works make us aware that even

though we may not know where our life will end, the right choice of paths and methods of practice should show that our life is beautiful and worthwhile, as he has written in a part of “Ruedu Laeng” (The Dry Season).

“If you really want to know someone, look at the path he has chosen and the methods he practices while on that path. However, you should not pay attention to whether he will reach his destination...”

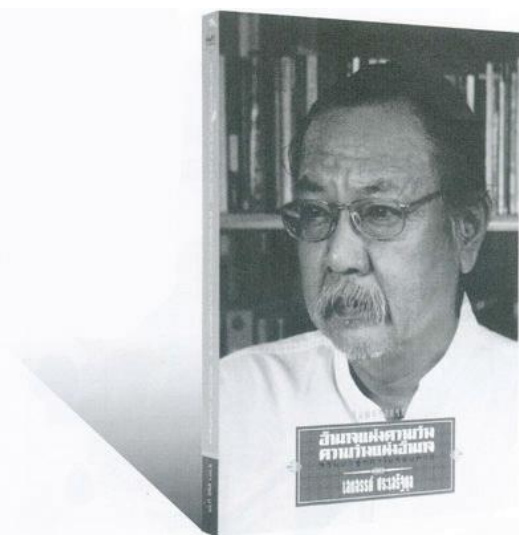
The starting point reflects man’s intelligence, whereas the finish line reflects Heaven’s wisdom. As for life along the path, in fact it is nothing else but the merging point between the heavens and man.”

Another prominent quality, a significant one for a writer, is literary ability. The already cited examples can show Seksan’s ability at the level of being “master of language” whether in the choice or coining of words such as *gleam of water, streak of sunlight, arch of clouds, spiral of water, and fold of chasm*, or the use of simile, metaphor, personification, symbol, oxymoron, and paradox. He often uses chiasmus such as *“even though you have traversed the grass field of silence, you may find yourself on the mountain of silence.”* Most of Seksan’s works are in prose, but the style of his prose is one and the same with poetry. Besides being rich in eloquence and imagery, they are also melodious with rhymes and rhythms. When tied in with the content, they create even more emotional thrill and depth as can be seen in “Pha Hin Lae Hin Pha” (Cliff and Rock) from ***Unattached Encounters***.

“The breeze, the stream, the sunlight, or even the stars and moon , are all related to the mountain nights and days. And the nuptial hour between the rocks and these components create a picture as dreamy as man’s lovemaking.

Whoever has seen the first light of day caressing the cliffs would recollect the first embrace he gave to his loved one upon waking up from slumber.

And if you have watched the mountain bathed in moonlight, you would feel as if the moon is putting a



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