The global dissemination of the revolutionary ideas of Mao Zedong has recently been the subject of much research. This includes study of the history of translation, dissemination, publication and reception of Quotations from Chairman Mao Zedong (the ‘Little Red Book’) as well as the Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung. However, a small collection of writings by Mao that also exerted a substantial and lasting influence on the Maoist Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) has thus far seemingly escaped scholarly scrutiny. The text in question is a collection of Mao’s short essays entitled Lao wupian 老五篇 (‘Five Old Articles’, 1967) that was printed in English as Five Articles in 1968. The first part of this chapter will give a general account of the origin, formation and constitution of this collection, which originally contained just three essays and was known

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1 The authors are grateful to Jose Ma. Sison and Hersri Setiawan, without whose knowledge and insights this chapter would not be possible. The authors would also like to thank Carol Hau and Tom Talledo for their invaluable comments, ideas and references.


as the *Lao sanpian 老三篇* (‘Three Old Articles’ or ‘Three Constantly Read Articles’, 1967). The changing meaning and significance of this collection will be situated within the shifting historical contexts of the Chinese Revolution and the Cultural Revolution. The next section will discuss the extraordinary Philippine reception, dissemination and translation of the *Five Old Articles* under the new Philippine title, *Five Golden Rays*. The final section will conclude with a brief comparison of the Philippine reception of these articles with their spread in Southeast Asia. Doing so will emphasise further the distinctive role these articles have played in the development of Maoism outside China.

### The ‘Five Old Articles’ in China

On 18 September 1966, Lin Biao gave a speech to high-ranking officers of the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) in which he advocated the deepening of revolutionary consciousness among the people. This would be achieved, he proposed, by putting together three popular articles by Mao: ‘*Wei renmin fuwu 为人民服务*’ (‘Serve the People’, 1944), ‘*Jinian Bai Qiu’en 纪念白求恩*’ (‘In Memory of Norman Bethune’, 1939) and ‘*Yugong yishan 愚公移山*’ (‘The Foolish Old Man Who Removed the Mountains’, 1945). These works were published as the *Three Old Articles* soon after in the well-known red-book format. Less than six months later, two earlier works by Mao were added to the set: ‘*Fandui ziyouzhuyi 反对自由主义*’ (‘Combat Liberalism’, 1937) and ‘*Guanyu jiuzheng dangneide cuowu xiangsi 关于纠正党内的错误思想*’ (‘On Correcting Mistaken Ideas in the Party’, 1929). This new collection was given the title *Five Old Articles* and made required reading throughout the Cultural Revolution.⁴

The five articles were written at different periods in the context of the development of both Mao’s thought and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). More than 15 years separates the oldest article from the most recent. Another 22 years separates that final piece from its eventual publication in a book. Over those four decades, the CCP managed to escape destruction, establish a base at Yan’an, hold off the Japanese, defeat Chiang Kai-shek’s Guomindang (GMD), found the People’s Republic of China (PRC) and begin the process of constructing a socialist state and

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society. At the same time, Mao fought his way to the top of the party, developed what would be called ‘Mao Zedong Thought’, had those ideas enshrined as the official ideology of the CCP, lost power and prestige after the errors committed during the Great Leap Forward and regained control of the party during the Cultural Revolution.

Contrary to how Mao’s thought has sometimes been presented, Stuart Schram argues that there were indeed changes in Mao’s thinking across these four decades. This is particularly evident when it comes to the question of how to build socialism in China, with Mao having initially endorsed, shortly after the founding of the PRC, models of economic development that were more centralised, technocratic and urban-centred than the agricultural collectivism of the Great Leap Forward or the radical class-levelling initiatives of the Cultural Revolution. With regard to other themes, however, there is more consistency. Schram notes, for example, that Mao always placed importance on what in Marxist terminology might be called ‘subjective’ and ‘political’ attitudes. In other words, Mao consistently emphasised the capacity of the people to overcome and change their ‘objective’ economic conditions, especially through proper conscious action and struggle. Elements of this line of thinking pervade many of his works, including the original ‘Three Old Articles’, which extol service and self-sacrifice (‘Serve the People’, ‘In Memory of Norman Bethune’) and perseverance (‘The Foolish Old Man Who Removed the Mountains’). Interestingly, this emphasis on conscious action and struggle is also formulated in these three texts in a way that harkens back to the Chinese tradition of moral education via the emulation of exemplars or models who are held up as virtuous examples of how to be a revolutionary (that is, Zhang Side, Norman Bethune and the eponymous ‘Old Man’, respectively).

Despite the continuity in this aspect of Mao’s thinking, it is impossible to ignore the influence of changing contexts in the reading of these texts. Promoting these articles at the onset of the Cultural Revolution involved a drastic change in both audience and the overall sociopolitical situation within which prospective readers might respond to Mao’s writing. This degree of change is most apparent in the oldest of the five articles.

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6 ibid., 54–55.
‘On Correcting Mistaken Ideas in the Party’ was written in 1929 as the first section of the *Gutian huiyi jueyi* 田会议决议 (*Gutian Congress Resolution*) adopted by the Ninth Congress of the CCP in the Fourth Red Army. In that period, the party leadership was still debating the precise nature of armed revolution—its form, location (for example, urban versus rural) and overall strategies. Mao, meanwhile, was struggling not only to have his ideas accepted by the party leadership, but also for his military and political authority to be recognised across the countryside. While this struggle for political and ideological supremacy may have parallels with the contentious political situation of the mid-1960s, Mao’s overall position in both the party and the military had shifted dramatically. In the late 1920s, Mao, expelled as an ‘alternate’ member of the Central Committee, was an isolated and often rebellious commander of the Red Army, at odds not only frequently with the party leadership but also occasionally with Zhu De, his fellow commander. But in the mid-1960s, despite his power having receded following the Great Leap Forward, Mao remained chairman of the party and wielded considerable influence. Thus, while pushing for their own models of economic development, Liu Shaoqi and the other members of the Politburo always tried to compromise with any issues Mao raised.

Meanwhile, in the military, through Lin Biao’s influence as minister for defence, simplified versions of Mao’s works formed the basis of the ordinary soldier’s political education, which had itself become one of the central aspects of life in the PLA. It was in this context that first the *Little Red Book* and, later, the *Three Old Articles* were published and disseminated. The articles soon became compulsory reading for young students as well as ‘mandatory recitation material’ for the whole population. Officially, these texts were meant to provide a shortcut for general readers to understand the core principles of Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought. Critics of Lin Biao, however, both during and after the 1960s,

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9 ibid., xxvi–xxviii, xliii–xliv.
argued that this campaign, which often involved the rote memorisation of texts, led to the ‘vulgarisation’ of both the Marxist tradition and Mao’s own writings. This campaign is also understood as one of a number of strategies Lin employed to both expand the relative power of the PLA within the party and promote a personality cult around Mao, both of which in turn consolidated Lin’s own power. By the time ‘On Correcting Mistaken Ideas in the Party’ was reprinted in the 28 January 1967 issue of the People’s Daily—and then included a few months later in the Five Old Articles—the Cultural Revolution was well under way. Read at this time, therefore, what could originally be thought of as a resolution on how to work out problems of party discipline and education within the Red Army had transformed into—in the words of the editorial note of the People’s Daily—a call for ‘[p]roletarian revolutionaries [to] unite and seize power from the handful of persons in the Party who are in authority and taking the capitalist road’.

The significance of such a shift becomes even more evident when looking at how Mao’s writings had already been used by different groups in the PRC to justify their positions in ideological debates. For example, Christos Lynteris has shown how, throughout the 1950s and 1960s—as the CCP grappled with the best way to balance the need for technical expertise to modernise China with the danger that such expertise would serve as the foundation for continued class inequality—contrasting interpretations of ‘In Memory of Norman Bethune’ were used to forward two competing models of the proper relationship between the self, the state and revolution. One model aligned itself with Liu Shaoqi’s neo-Confucian formulation of becoming a ‘good communist’ through proper self-cultivation. The other, which would become dominant during the Cultural Revolution, forwarded a concept of complete ‘selflessness’.

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It is beyond the scope of the current research to probe into every possible shift in the discourses produced as each of the ‘Five Old Articles’ was written, collected and disseminated within China. What matters here is simply the recognition not only that these shifts occurred but also that they were unavoidable, especially given the highly contentious and rapidly changing social and political environment within which the reading of the articles occurred. Such changes were even more drastic as Mao’s writing was translated, shipped overseas and integrated into other people’s movements—movements that each had their own cultures, contexts and characteristics. In fact, as the discussion below shows, the ‘Three Old Articles’ and ‘Five Old Articles’ have taken root outside China not exclusively in the context of a ‘vulgarisation’ of Marxist and/or Maoist texts, but also within the context of movement (re)building during periods of the popularisation, emergence and/or emergency of revolutionary movements.

The Philippine reception and translation of the ‘Five Golden Rays’

The significance of the Five Golden Rays (hereinafter FGR) in the history of Philippine Maoism cannot be overemphasised. According to the founder of the CPP, Jose Maria Sison:

Malaki at mapagpasiya ang kahalagahan ng LGS sa pagtutuon sa diwang rebolusyonaryo at komunista na magsakripisyo para puspusang mapaglingkuran ang sambayanang Pilipino at dapat bakahin ang pagkakasariili upang itaguyod ang mga karapatan at kapakanan ng masang anakpawis at isakatuparan ang pagkakaisa, kolektibong pagkilos at kapakanan ng lahat ng mamamayan.

[The FGR is of great and decisive importance in emphasising the revolutionary and communist spirit of sacrifice and wholehearted service to the Filipino people and the need to struggle against selfishness in fighting for the rights and welfare of the working classes and to uphold the unity, collective action and welfare of the people.]^{17}

^{17} Authors’ interview with Jose Maria Sison, online, 6 January 2021.
The story of how the ‘Five Old Articles’ entered the Philippines begins with its English translation. The first English edition of the ‘Five Old Articles’, entitled Five Articles, was published in China in 1968 by the Foreign Languages Press. It was a product of an active campaign to ‘export Chinese revolution to the world’ by means of translation. However, according to Sison, the Filipino cadres first learned of these articles from their republication with accompanying commentary in the Peking Review. He recalls it was around this time that the Propaganda and Education Bureau of the Kabataang Makabayan (Nationalist Youth) took charge of translating the articles into Tagalog and then printing and disseminating them in the Philippines. Given the timeline of the publication of the relevant issues of the Peking Review (February and March 1967), it is possible the popularity of these articles had already begun to take root in groups like the Kabataang Makabayan even before the founding of the CPP, which officially broke away from the older Soviet-oriented Communist Party of the Philippines (now self-styled as the Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas-1930, PKP-1930) in December 1968. The CPP Central Publishing House subsequently produced mimeographed editions and master copies of the articles for distribution to the various regions. The party’s Translation Bureau also made translations into various other Philippine languages such as Ilokano, Cebuano, Bikolano, Ilonggo and perhaps a few others.

18 See Mao Zedong, Five Articles, 1st vest-pocket edn (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1968). Also see Mao Zedong, Five Articles (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1968); Mao Zedong, Five Articles, 1st edn (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1972); Mao Zedong, Five Articles, 2nd edn (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1972); Mao Zedong, Five Articles, 2nd vest-pocket edn (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1972); Mao Zedong, Five Articles (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1982). The Foreign Languages Press also published in other languages, including French, as can be seen in Mao Zedong, Cinq articles (Pekin: Éditions en langues étrangères, 1972).


20 See Mao Zedong, ‘In Memory of Norman Bethune’, Peking Review 8 (1967): 5–6; Mao, ‘On Correcting Mistaken Ideas in the Party’; Mao Zedong, ‘Serve the People’, Peking Review 2 (1967): 6–7; and Mao Zedong, ‘The Foolish Old Man Who Removed the Mountains’, Peking Review 12 (1967): 8–19. The authors of this chapter are currently unable to verify whether ‘Combat Liberalism’ was ever published in the Peking Review. Regardless, it is possible the source of its English translation in the FGR was not the Peking Review, but the Selected Works or another anthology of Mao’s writing. If so, this might also be the reason ‘Combat Liberalism’ is the only article in the FGR that is not accompanied by an extended ‘commentary’ (which were also, it seems, taken from the Peking Review). Conducting a more in-depth study of the different editions of the FGR would be necessary to resolve this conundrum.

21 Interestingly, Sison recollects there were no reading materials analogous to the FGR during his time as a member of the PKP-1930.

22 Unlike in the case of Thailand, as will be discussed further below, Sison is not aware of any Philippine-language translations of the FGR done by the Chinese comrades themselves.
On the matter of the change of title from *Five Articles* (in the Foreign Languages Press edition) to *Five Golden Rays* (or *Limang Gintong Silahis* in Tagalog), Sison recalls the pamphlet was renamed to emphasise its qualities as a *maningning* (‘shining’) guide for proletarian revolutionaries. According to Sison:

May pormal na desisyon ng Party group ng KM na gamitin at palaganapin ang LGS bilang babasahan at aralin ng mga abanteng aktibista para ihanda silang maging kandidatong-kasapi ng Partido Komunista dahil sa simple, malaman, interesante at mabisa ang limang artikulo sa pagpapaliwanag at pag-inspira ng diwa at moralidad ng komunista: paglilingkod sa bayan, proletaryong internasyonalismo, pagpupursigi sa pakikibaka, paglaban sa liberalismo o indibidualismo at pagtutuwid sa mga maling ideya sa loob ng Partido.

[There was a formal decision by the party group of the Kabataang Makabayan to disseminate the *FGR* as reading and study material for advanced activists to prepare them to become candidate members of the Communist Party because the five articles were simple, pithy, interesting and effective in explaining and inspiring the spirit and morality of a communist: service to the people, proletarian internationalism, perseverance in the struggle, combating liberalism and individualism, and correcting wrong ideas within the party.]^{23}

Due to its popular appeal, the *FGR* was increasingly used by activists and even more widely disseminated by the party. The ‘Political Report to the Second Plenum of the First Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines’ in 1970 already mentions that both the *FGR* and the *Little Red Book* should be read alongside the basic documents of the CPP.^{24} According to the same document:

In all study courses as well as during practical work, the *Five Golden Rays* and the *Quotations from Chairman Mao Zedong* should be used extensively and often referred to in the ideological remoulding of entire units and individual members of the Party.^{25}

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23 Sison, Interview.
25 ibid., 289.
Similarly, in 1972, the party report, entitled ‘Summing up Our Experience after Three Years’, stated:

> We have reopened in an unprecedented way the great treasury of Marxism-Leninism–Mao Zedong Thought to Filipino revolutionaries. We have made available to them as constant reference in their daily work the *Five Golden Rays* and *Quotations from Chairman Mao Zedong* and as texts for more extensive and profound study Chairman Mao's works under the seven headings of philosophy, class analysis and social investigation, party building, armed struggle, united front, economic work and land reform, and culture.\(^{26}\)

Interestingly, for various reasons, the *Little Red Book* eventually fell out of general use in the Philippines. Sison surmises this was primarily due to criticisms by Filipino comrades of the dogmatic style of the quotations, which sounded like sermons or recitations of statements taken out of context and without any accompanying explanations.\(^{27}\) In contrast, Sison estimates the inclusion of the *FGR* as the first part of the larger volume of readings known as *Araling Aktibista* (‘Activist Reading Materials’) could have begun as early as the 1980s, where it remains to this day.\(^{28}\)

Beyond simply its longevity, it is also undeniable the *FGR* is one of the most memorable texts for activists in the Philippines. Former CPP member Joel Rocamora writes that, compared with both the *Little Red Book* and *Five Golden Rays*: ‘It might even be argued that Mao Zedong’s theoretical work played less of a role in the politicization of the first generation of CPP leaders.’\(^{29}\) Another former activist, Jose ‘Butch’ Dalisay, who became a professor of English literature at the University of the Philippines, recalls:

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26 ibid., 376.
27 Sison, Interview. The main reason for the relative neglect of the *Red Book* may, however, be because it is not included in the basic curriculum of activists known as the Pambansa-Democratikong Paraalan (PADEPA, National-Democratic School). See, for example, the ‘Manwal sa Gawaing PADEPA ng ANAKBAYAN’, which is available from: aklantangtibak.wordpress.com/category/padepa/. The authors are aware there is still some evidence of its contemporary use in criticism and self-criticism sessions among activists.
We devoured a plethora of works by Mao Tse-Tung, chiefly his red-covered *Quotations* and a booklet of morale-boosting selections called *Five Golden Rays*. One of those golden rays was ‘Serve the People,’ which became the motto of a generation that would be known in the Philippines as First Quarter Stormers.\(^{30}\)

Meanwhile, a Filipino former activist based in the United States recounts: ‘In terms of growing up in the movement, all I remember is Norman Bethune, *Five Golden Rays*.\(^ {31}\) Similarly, Antonio Zumel, former president of the National Press Club of the Philippines and chairperson of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines, singles out the *FGR* as a work that ‘inspired many people’.\(^ {32}\) Although many Filipino activists probably read the *FGR* in English, the impact of its various translations into different Philippine languages should not be underestimated, and they were a crucial element behind the receptivity of a wide range of Filipino readers to this text. Even more importantly, any study of the reception and interpretation of this text in a specifically Philippine context cannot ignore the matter of translation and the way in which translation changes one’s reading of material. In fact, the following discussion will try to show that what is arguably the most popular Maoist text in the Philippines is a striking example of what one scholar has termed the ‘Filipinisation’ of Maoism.\(^ {33}\)

Our analysis of the Tagalog (or, more precisely, Filipino) translation of the *FGR* will focus on the first three most read, and perhaps most memorable, essays. Because they are often read and studied together, they will be treated, despite their differences, as a single discursive totality experienced as an integrated textual whole and not in isolation from one another. The three Chinese texts will be assigned the following codes: ‘Serve the People’, STP; ‘In Memory of Norman Bethune’, MNB; and ‘The Foolish Old Man Who Removed the Mountains’, FOL. Each sentence in the original Chinese text will be assigned a number according to its order of appearance. The following discussion will indicate the location of

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pertinent words according to the Chinese text by code and sentence number—for example, ‘STP 10’ will refer to the tenth sentence of ‘Serve the People’.

This kind of sentence-by-sentence comparison between translations is useful in revealing nuanced differences between the texts that may not be clear on a surface reading. For example, a comparison with the English translation and the Chinese original shows the Tagalog version is a relay translation from English. More interestingly, comparative analysis reveals a potentially insightful point of entry into understanding the reception of the FGR by its Tagalog readers: the conceptual pair ‘pagmamalasakit’ and ‘pagpapakasakit’.

*Pagmamalasakit* and *pagpapakasakit* are both central to the moral-ethical imagination of Tagalog speakers. In the FGR, *pagmamalasakit* is generally used to translate the English ‘concern’ and ‘care’ (*guanxin* 关心). On the other hand, *pagpapakasakit* is used as the translation for ‘sacrifice’ (*xisheng* 牺牲). These two words derive from the root-word *sakit*, which generally means ‘sickness’ or ‘pain’. However, the prefix *mala*- joined to -*sakit* forms *malasakit* (noun), which roughly means ‘having a sense of compassion’ or an attitude of ‘caring for the wellbeing of another’. It is used to allude to a sense of empathy for the ‘pain’ or ‘suffering’ felt by another. *Malasakit* also appears in another form as *magmalasakit*. The prefix *mag*- joined to *malasakit* to form *magmalasakit* (verb) means an ‘act of caring for the wellbeing of another’. Finally, the Tagalog prefix *pag*- joined to *malasakit* with the first syllable *ma*- reduplicated to form *pagmamalasakit* (noun) basically means the same as *malasakit* but with perhaps a heightened sense of intensity. On the other hand, the root-word *sakit* combined with the prefix *pagpaka*- with the second syllable reduplicated as *pagpapaka*- results in *pagpapakasakit*, which means ‘sacrifice’, ‘suffering’, ‘perseverance’ and ‘abnegation’. A close synonym of this is *pagpapakahirap* (‘to endure’; ‘to persevere’) from the root-word *hirap* (‘difficulty’; ‘suffering’).

It should be observed that the Tagalog *pagmamalasakit*, as a sense of empathy for the pain and suffering of others, is not simply an internally felt emotion but something that is necessarily acted on to help a person in need. It is not a purely psychological state of empathy in which one merely gazes passively at the suffering of another; such a person would

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34 ‘Serve the People’ [hereinafter STP], 22, 23.
35 ibid., 19, 21; ‘The Foolish Old Man Who Removed the Mountains’ [hereinafter FOL], 13.
have *walang pagmamalasakit* (or be ‘without *pagmamalasakit*’) despite any emotions he or she may outwardly display. In addition, *malasakit*, unlike other modes of social reciprocity, seems to genuinely connote a selfless sense of giving without expectation of any personal return. However, acting to alleviate or end the suffering of other people is not always a simple matter and often requires sacrifice and perseverance on the part of those who feel *malasakit*. This is where *pagpapakasakit* (‘sacrifice’; ‘perseverance’) comes in.

In other words, *pagmamalasakit* already implies *pagpapakasakit*. The most intense and idealised type of *pagmamalasakit* in the *FGR* is one that involves *walang pag-iimbot* (‘no self-interest at all’), which is translated from the English ‘selfless’ and from the Chinese original, ‘*haowu lijide dongji*’ (毫无利己的动机). Canadian doctor Norman Bethune’s spirit of selflessness was made even more striking by the fact that, being *waiguoren* (an ‘outsider/foreigner’) from a faraway country, he appeared to have nothing at stake in the victory of the Chinese Revolution for which he puzzlingly gave his life. The sacrifice of a foreigner in *guojizhuyide jingshen* (the ‘spirit of internationalism’) therefore became the highest ideal and paradigmatic example of selfless sacrifice in the *FGR*.

Transplanted to another context, this narrative of selflessness could easily be reimagined to refer to Filipino student activists coming from the intelligentsia and petty bourgeois strata *na lumubog sa masa* (‘who immerse themselves among the masses’) and work as full-time cadres of the revolution. Communities sometimes see them as *dayuhan* (‘foreigners’) or *dayo* (‘someone who comes from elsewhere’) because of their often distinctive appearance, manner, ethnic origin and language (at least initially) and because they seem to have given up every comfort and privilege to serve the poor and impoverished in remote and far-flung areas. Coming from relatively better off classes in the urban areas, they nevertheless throw in their lot with the lives and struggles of the masses.

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36 ‘In Memory of Norman Bethune’ [hereinafter MNB], 3.
37 ibid., 3.
38 Mao also underscores this spirit of internationalism by pointing out that, despite the war with Japanese imperialists, the Japanese people themselves were allies in the war against imperialism: ‘We must unite with the proletariat of all the capitalist countries, with the proletariat of Japan, Britain, the United States, Germany, Italy and all other capitalist countries, for this is the only way to overthrow imperialism, to liberate our nation and people and to liberate the other nations and peoples of the world.’ ibid., 7.
Like Bethune, therefore, they strive to embody the *tunay na diwang komunista* (‘the true communist spirit’; *gonchangzhuyi zhede jingshen* 共产主义者的精神性) or *diwa ng ganap na di makasarili* (‘spirit of absolute selflessness’; *haowu zisili zhi xine jingshen* 豁无自私自利之心的精神).  

Such themes may seem all too familiar to Tagalogs immersed in the world of daily moral-ethical discourse. The usages of *pagsalamat* and *papakasakit* shown above have a long history in Philippine radical politics and mass mobilisation. The Sakdalistas, for example, one of the most prominent nationalist mass movements in the 1930s, frequently used both terms/concepts in their writings calling for independence, a more just and equitable society and unity among the poor and oppressed. As just one example, in a passage that was often repeated in the *Sakdal* weekly newspaper, the main publication of their movement from 1930 to 1938, the Sakdalistas wrote:

*Maglingkod ka sa Bayan nang hindi magiimbot ng anumang katungkulan, biyaya o ganting-pala, pagka’t ang tunay na pagmamahal ay ang pagbibigay nang walang hinihintay, pag-ibig nang walang kapalit, papapakasakit ng sarili para sa kabutihan ng labat. Ang mga katungkulan ay nakasisira ng loob, naguudyok sa pagdaya at paglinlang sa kababayan. Samantalang wala kang sarili ay magtiiis ka sa iyong kalagayan. Ang paniniwala sa iba ay pagpapahaba lamang ng panahon ng iyong pagkaalipin.*

[Serve the people without looking for any office, blessing or reward, for true love is giving without expectation, love without reciprocation, sacrificing oneself [papapakasakit ng sarili] for the good of all. Serving in office destroys the moral sense, arouses exploitation, leads to the cheating and deceiving of fellow countrymen. For while you have no self you will continue to suffer in your state. Serving others only prolongs your servitude.]  

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39 ibid., 4, 19.  
40 ibid., 27. In this vein, the centrality of the notion of *jingshen* 精神 (‘spirit’; ‘soul’) (3, 4, 10, 19, 27, 29) in the Chinese original can be remarked on. This is evidently an important concept that strongly correlates with notions of selflessness and sacrifice. However, the Tagalog word used consistently to translate *jingshen*, *diwa* (likely borrowed from Sanskrit through Malay, *jiwa*), which means ‘spirit’ in the sense of ‘attitude’, apparently does not have the same complex meaning and historical weight as the Chinese term.  
41 ‘Maglingkod ka sa Bayan [Serve the People]’, *Sakdal*, 2 July 1932, 2. This same passage is repeated in eight further issues of *Sakdal* from July to October 1932, and again in four issues from July to August 1936.
In the above passage, the Sakdalistas implore their readers to reject selfishness and rewards, the highest form of which is serving in ‘office’, by which they mean the colonial government (a source of wealth and power). Instead, they ask everyone to sacrifice themselves (pagpapakasakit ng sarili) for the good of all, without thinking of what they might get in return. Meanwhile, the last two sentences of the passage, which might seem contradictory at first glance, are a reminder that they need to love their country (the ‘self’ or, more precisely, ‘what is your own’) and not serve foreign, colonial interests (the ‘others’ in ‘serving others’).

The use of pagmamalasakit and pagpapakasakit, in other words, draws on an existing matrix of moral-ethical discourse that itself is deployed in the political arena. What distinguishes the FGR, however, from previous moral arguments like those that appear in the Sakdal, is the way these values—usually directed towards an undifferentiated kapwa (‘fellow human’)—are reinterpreted along lines drawn by historical social relations in class struggle. In MNB, kapwa is therefore given a very different meaning in the phrase ‘lubos na pagmamalasakit sa kapwa nang walang pagsasaalangalang sa sarili’ (translated from the English ‘utter devotion to others without any thought of self’ and from the Chinese ‘haobu liji zhuanmen liren 毫不利己专门利人’). The notion of kapwa that usually pertains to one’s fellow humans abstracted from all other aspects of social or cultural identity now refers exclusively to a member of the oppressed classes. This can be contrasted with the previous quotation and general concept of sacrifice in the Sakdal, where the injunction to serve your countrymen and defend the poor does not link up with any systematically defined notions of classes of oppressors and oppressed, especially among Filipinos.

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42 See Virgilio Enriquez, From Colonial to Liberation Psychology (Quezon City, Philippines: University of the Philippines Press, 2008).
43 A complementary reformulation might have also taken place in the original Chinese texts. Just as Filipino notions of pagpapakasakit towards an undifferentiated kapwa are realigned in the FGR towards the specificity of relations in class struggle, ‘Serve the People’ as it was originally formulated in 1944 may have also been reinterpreting previous notions of ‘service’ within the context of Confucian filial piety—that is, in support of a priori constructions of social hierarchy—towards an awareness of the relations between individual action and attitude, the concrete historical context/situation and the desire to create a more egalitarian society. See Karl, “Serve the People”, 215–30.
44 MNB, 10.
Both pagmamalasakit and pagpapakasakit should be directed to sambayanan (the ‘people’) and not towards local and foreign oppressors. The *liyi* 利益 (‘interest’) of the nation and of the oppressed classes should be the main consideration in all one’s actions. Every effort should be for the *interes ng sambayanan* (‘people’s interest’; ‘renmin de *liyi* 人民的 利益’),\(^{46}\) for the *kapakanan ng sambayanan* (‘benefit of the people’; ‘rénmin de *liyi* 人民的 利益’),\(^{47}\) and *alang-alang sa sambayanan* (‘for the sake of the people’; ‘wei renmin *liyi* 为人民利益’).\(^{48}\) In fact, the most popular and universally recognisable slogan among Filipino activists is ‘Paglingkuran ang sambayanan’ (‘Serve the people’; ‘wei renmin fuwu 为人民服务’). While the referent of *kapwa* has been made more precise, the meaning of pagmamalasakit, which has humanitarian connotations of feeling empathy towards and providing immediate relief to people in need, has been expanded, especially in connection with pagpapakasakit. In the last, it now means much more than giving food to the poor, for example; it now also means fighting to change socioeconomic structures and challenging class rule. This is a bridging of the distinction between a saint in religious discourse and a communist in political discourse hinted at by the Latin American practitioner of liberation theology, Brazilian Archbishop Hélder Câmara in his famous quote: ‘When I feed the poor, they call me a saint. When I ask why so many people are poor, they call me a communist.’

Another dimension of pagpapakasakit that should be underlined is that of ‘perseverance’ or ‘endurance in suffering’. One must be able to go the distance in sacrificing for others. This is what the FGR emphasises in such phrases as ‘walang takot sa pagpapakasakit’ (translated from the English ‘unafraid of sacrifice’, from the Chinese ‘bùpà xīshēng 不怕牺牲’)\(^{49}\) and ‘mapanggingibabawan nila ang lahat ng kahirapan’ (from ‘surmount every difficulty’, from ‘paichu wannan 排除万难’).\(^{50}\) Pagpapakasakit also implies an almost religious sense of faith and fidelity to one’s purpose, which is often misinterpreted by unsympathetic observers as ‘dogmatism’.\(^{51}\)

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46 STP, 2.
47 ibid., 13, 20.
48 ibid., 6, 7.
49 FOL, 13.
50 ibid., 13.
A person who pursues this purpose to the end is someone who does not swerve from their conviction, ‘hindi natitinag sa kanyang paniniwala’ (from ‘unshaken in his conviction’, from ‘haobu dongyao 毫不动摇’).  

It should not be surprising, then, that the concepts of pagmamalasakit and pagpapakasakit are also deeply and irrevocably immersed in the Catholic religious ideology and popular Christology of the Philippines. Indeed, Mercado merges both terms under a single concept of sacrifice in the Catholic religious sense. In addition, the religious tenor is not eased but compounded by the story in FOL (no matter how metaphorical) of a ‘god’ who takes pity and sends two ‘angels’ from the heavens to help the persevering earthly revolutionaries overthrow feudalism and imperialism. In a way, these types of discourse may partly explain why the Maoist movement has developed particularly strong roots among liberation theologians and religious congregations of various denominations in the Philippines. In the FGR, the Maoist revolutionary is called on to enact, on the path to national liberation, an almost spiritual narrative of pagmamalasakit and pagpapakasakit. It is only the seemingly innocuous injunction to activists and revolutionaries to avoid di-kinakailangang pagpapakasakit (‘unnecessary sacrifices’; bu biyaode xisheng 不必要的牺牲), which in practice allows for a wide enough latitude of interpretation, that prevents this secular ‘selflessness’ from becoming a saintly asceticism and a demand for complete self-abnegation. In the extreme case that one’s pagpapakasakit leads to the ultimate sacrifice of one’s life, the FGR states that though death is only natural and comes to everyone, the only makabuluhang kamatayan (‘meaningful’ or ‘worthy’ ‘death’; sideqisuo 死得其所) is in the service of the people. As the classic

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52 FOL, 23.
54 ibid., 24. The use of ‘God’ and ‘angels’ in the FGR, which are translated as ‘Diyos’ and ‘anghel’ in the Tagalog version, comes from translations made not by Filipino activists but by the original translators of Mao’s texts into English, who sought for English equivalents to shangdi 上帝 and shenxian 神仙, respectively. That the words chosen should resonate so well with a predominantly Catholic Filipino audience was probably never imagined by the original translators.
56 STP, 21.
57 ibid., 20. The Chinese word qisuo 其所 means, literally, ‘appointed place’. Arguably then, the Filipino makabuluhang kamatayan puts even more emphasis on the agency of the person in choosing to sacrifice and possibly encounter a ‘worthy death’.
aphorism from the FGR says, ‘ang mamatay alang-alang sa sambayanahan ay higit na mabigat kaysa bundok Tai, subalit ang maglingkod sa mga pasista at mamatay para sa mga nagsamantala at mga nang-aapi ay higit na magaan kaysa isang balahibo [to die for the people is weightier than Mount Tai, but to work for the fascists and die for the exploiters and oppressors is lighter than a feather; wei renmin liyi er sijiu bi Taishan hai zhong ti faxisi maili ti boxue renmin he yapo renminde ren qu sijiu bi hongmao haiqing 为人民 利益 而 死 就 比 泰山 还重替法西斯卖力替 剥削人民和 压迫人民的人去死就比鸿毛还轻].’ Filipino Maoists, who may not necessarily know where the real Mount Tai is (in Shandong Province), use this aphorism to this day to give the highest honour to their comrades who have died in the struggle or served it to the end of their lives. For example, after the passing on 23 July 2020 of Fidel Agcaoili, head of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines’ Negotiating Panel, a tribute from a legal democratic umbrella organisation revised and indigenised the aphorism by likening his death to the Sierra Madre—not a mountain, but a mountain range, and in fact the longest in the Philippines—to highlight the heaviness of his death. Another tribute, meanwhile, from an underground organisation of revolutionary teachers, declared: ‘Ang pagpanaw ng mga kumprador, ang pagkamatay ng mga berdugong pasista ay mas magaan pa sa balahibo ng ibon. Ngunit ang pagpanaw ni Ka Fidel ay mas mabigat pa sa bundok ng Banahaw [The passing of compradors, the deaths of fascist executioners are lighter than the feathers of a bird. But the passing of Comrade Fidel is heavier than Mount Banahaw].’ The choice of mountain here is important; Mount Banahaw is an active volcano on the island of Luzon with great cultural and historical significance for Filipinos. Like Mount Tai, one of the sacred mountains of China, Mount Banahaw is linked with folk traditions of spiritual power. Mount Banahaw is also associated by some with the Philippine revolutionary tradition, both because it was used as a camp for revolutionaries in the war against Spain and because the mountain is still seen by some religious

58 STP, 6.

59 Katipunan ng mga Gurong Makabayan [Association of Nationalist Teachers], ‘Pagpupugay sa mga dakilang aral na pinamana ni Kasamang Fidel Agcaoili, kasamang rebolusyonaryo ng mga gurong nagsusulong ng armadong rebolusyon [Tribute to the Great Lessons We Have Learned from Comrade Fidel Agcaoili, Revolutionary Comrade of Teachers in Armed Struggle], PRWC Newsroom, 8 August 2020, available from: prwcinfo.wordpress.com/2020/08/08/1899/.
groups as ‘the altar of brave Filipino heroes like José Rizal, Andres Bonifacio, Emilio Aguinaldo, Gregorio del Pilar, Agapito Illustrisimo, and Bernardo Carpio’.60

If kapwa is redefined in the FGR to pertain only to members of the oppressed nation and classes, even kamatayan (‘death’) is given a new meaning; the bare fact of death in STP ‘divides into two’ (yifenwei’er 一分为二) along the lines of historical class struggle, one meaningless and another meaningful. There is a kind of life after death in the revolutionary imagination wherein ang mga martir ng rebolusyon (‘the revolutionary martyrs’) are given the highest respect and recognition. The wording of the FGR that foregrounds the sacrifices of those who fought and sacrificed their lives against foreign and local oppressors unavoidably resonates with the nationalist commemoration of the heroes of the Philippine anticolonial revolution of 1896 against Spain. Such national heroes as Andres Bonifacio (1863–1897), Antonio Luna (1866–1899), Apolinario Mabini (1864–1903) and José Rizal (1861–1896), as well as the nameless masses who have continued to fight since that time for the ideals of the ‘unfinished revolution’,61 become imbricated in the textual density of the FGR.62 One can even argue that selfless sacrifice is a foundational virtue for the Philippine revolutionary and nationalist traditions, as exemplified by the climactic self-sacrifice of the character Elias in Rizal’s novel Noli Me Tangere (Touch Me Not), which helped inspire the Philippine revolution.63

61 Ileto, Pasyon and Revolution.
62 According to Floro Quibuyen, Rizal read Thomas à Kempis’s La imitacion de Cristo (The Imitation of Christ, 1418–27) in the days before his execution by firing squad by the Spanish Army on 30 December 1896. This, as well as other actions by Rizal, opened the way for various interpretations of his life and death as the ‘Tagalog Christ’. Kempis’s book was translated into Tagalog as Pagtulad kay Cristo (1880). Though quite different in almost all respects from Limang Gintong Silahis, à Kempis’s famous work was also translated into many languages and seemed to offer Rizal a way to understand the meaning of his martyrdom. Floro Quibuyen, ‘Rizal and the Revolution’, Philippine Studies 45(2) (1997): 247. Filipino activists, unsurprisingly, have a long history of drawing on the stories of the sacrifices of the heroes of the Philippine Revolution. The CPP similarly, continues to celebrate the anniversary of the birth of Andres Bonifacio.
63 In this vein, the Chinese tradition of moral education through the emulation of exemplars (for example, Norman Bethune) parallels similar traditions of character and values education in the Philippines that have roots in the pedagogical practices of Catholicism, American colonialism and twentieth-century Philippine nation-building.
Thus, activists and mass revolutionaries who read the FGR can imagine themselves as the genuine heirs of the Philippine national revolutionary tradition. It is fitting that, according to Walter Benjamin, the image of their enslaved forefathers remains the most powerful source of hatred and capacity for sacrifice of the oppressed classes whose historical mission is to finish the work of liberation in the name of previous defeated and downtrodden generations.\textsuperscript{64}

This deeply felt lived connection with history therefore serves to further deepen the commitment of Filipino Maoists to persevere through the decades in the face of setbacks, difficulties and innumerable attempted refutations of their revolutionary project. Sison writes:

\begin{quote}
Angkop pa ang paggamit ng mga halimbawa tulad nina Chang Szu-teh, Norman Bethune, at ng pabula ng ‘Matandang Hangal’ bilang mga halimbawa ng katakapan, paninindigan at taos-pusong paglilingkod sa kasalukuyang panahon. Pero totoo naman na sa hinaba ng ating pakikibaka at dinami ng mga parangal natin sa ating mga Pilipinong martir at bayani, matagal nang puee kayong maglikom at pumili ng mga parangal para sa inspirasyon ng mga kasama at mga aktibista. Matagal nang angkop na gamitin natin ang mga halimbawa mula sa karanasan ng kilusang revolucionaryo sa Pilipinas.

[It is still appropriate up to the present time to use Chang Szu-the, Norman Bethune, and the fable of the ‘Foolish Old Man’ as examples of fidelity, firmness, and whole-hearted service. But it is true that in the many years of our struggle and the many tributes we have given to Filipino martyrs and heroes, it has been some time since we could have collected and chosen tributes for the inspiration of comrades and activists. It has been a long time since we could use examples from the Philippine revolutionary movement.\textsuperscript{65}]
\end{quote}

Beyond the FGR, the importance of the term and idea of pagpapakasakit in modern Philippine revolutionary discourse is also highlighted by its prominence in a revolutionary song titled ‘Ang Gabay’ (‘The Guide’).


\textsuperscript{65} Sison, Interview. Some individuals from the Philippine revolutionary movement (for example, Lean Alejandro, Lorena Barros, Edgar Jopson and Emmanuel Lacaba) are recognised as martyrs even in mainstream publications. See Asucion David-Maramba, \textit{Six Young Filipino Martyrs} (Pasig City, Philippines: Anvil, 1997); and Benjamin Pimentel, \textit{U.G.: An Underground Tale—The Life and Struggle of Edgar Jopson}, 3rd edn (Pasig City, Philippines: Anvil, 2019). See also the website Bantayog ng mga Bayani [Monument to the Heroes], available from: www.bantayog.org/.
The song is attributed to ‘Ka [Comrade] Arting’, a fighter of the New People’s Army, and a book of revolutionary songs indicates ‘Cagayan Valley, 1979’ as the place and year of the song’s composition.

The song, a lullaby that ends on a high note, with the cadence of a march, draws on the country’s tradition of religious-nationalist imagery. Like the title Five Golden Rays itself, the song’s lyrics are filled with metaphors for light: sikat (‘ray’), liwanag (‘light’), ningning (‘radiance’), sinag (‘beam’), ginto (‘gold’), luningning (‘brilliance’) and bukang-liwayway (‘dawn’).

Known in some regions as ‘Awit ng Partido’ or ‘Song of the Party’—already an important designation in a movement that featured the ‘Song of a Farmer’, ‘Song of a Worker’ and other such ‘songs’—it likens the Communist Party to a messiah that will ‘liberate’ the poor whose persona is singing the song. It is said that in celebrations of the anniversaries of the Communist Party, the song is a constant presence, sung standing by attendees like the ‘Internationale’. The song’s last lines, during which the marching cadence sets in, are: ‘You are our true hope, Communist Party/That will liberate us/How sweet it is to live on this land/If in sacrifice [pagpapakasakit], we will be free.’ Here, pagpapakasakit is used to signify everything the poor do to support and advance the revolution:

Ang Gaba
Tumatagos sa diwa ang iyong pagsikat
Nagsisilbing gabay ang iyong liwanag
Sa balat ng lupa ang ningning mong sinag
Katumbas ay ginto sa aming mahibinaap.
Kung sa aming buhay ay di ka dumating
Di namin malilikha mga gintong awitin
Binulag man kami ng mga ganid at sakim
Ang mga sinag mo ang tunay na nagpalumingning.
Tulad mo ay butil na hinasik sa bukid
Tumubo’t namulaklak sa aming anakpawis
Ang lambong ng gabi’y iyong pinapalis
Na nagpapalaya sa isipang napiit.
Pag-asa kang tunay sa pagbubukang-liwayway
Na sa amin ay gintong similay
Anong tamis pala ang sa lupa mamuhay
Kung sa pagpapakasakit ay may tagumpay.
Pag-asa kang tunay Partido Komunista
Na sa amin ay magpapalaya
Anong tamis pala ang mamuhay sa lupa
Kung sa pagpapakasakit, tayo’y lalaya.)
[The Guide]
Your rays penetrate the soul
Your light serves as a guide
On the surface of the earth, your shining rays
Are like gold for us who are poor
If you did not come into our lives
We would be not able to write this golden song
We may have been blinded by the greedy and selfish
Your rays have bathed everything in light
You are like a seed that has been sown in the field
Which has grown and flowered for us workers
You have banished the veil of darkness
And liberated the imprisoned mind
You are a genuine hope as the sun rises
Like gold shining upon us
How sweet it is to live on this land
If in sacrifice there is victory
You are our true hope, Communist Party
That will liberate us
How sweet it is to live on this land
If in sacrifice, we will be free.]

It was unavoidable that the secular, internationalist and proletarian perspectives of Philippine Maoism would overlap with the accumulated layers of meaning of the popular idioms used to translate Mao’s works. Despite the complex stratified nature of Philippine languages, the uniquely Filipino and peculiar mélange of religious and moral idioms, rhetoric and languages of nationalism, and the discourses of class struggle point to the intimate dialectic of ideological formation between intellectuals and the masses that takes place in the FGR.66 One Filipino historian, invoking leaders of the country’s revolutionary movements from the 1896 revolution to the early 1970s, describes the opposing poles of this dialectic—an opposition he deems it necessary to transcend—as such: “[E]very period needs a “brain” and an “executive,” which are symbolized in our consciousness by a Jacinto/Rizal for a Bonifacio, Mabini for an Aguinaldo, Lava for a Taruc and Guerrero for a Dante.”67

66 Floro C. Quibuyen, A Nation Aborted: Rizal, American Hegemony, and Philippine Nationalism (Quezon City, Philippines: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1999), 220.
The point, however, is not to conflate Philippine Maoism with religious or ethical-moral discourse. Rather, what the \textit{FGR} shows is the complex interplay in tension and non-reductive intermingling of these languages within a living social movement.\footnote{There has been a tendency in the scholarship of movements in Philippine history to either define them using rigid and positivist categories or to assume, ultimately, that every movement has at its core the same ‘indigenous’ Filipino character (which is often portrayed as some form of syncretic millenarianism). Reynaldo Ileto’s classic study, \textit{Pasyon and Revolution}, has played an important role in criticising the former tendency, but it has also ironically often promoted the latter. Unfortunately, classifications of either sort ignore the complex and conflicting nature of social movements, mass mobilisation and cultural transformation. For a lengthier discussion of the problem, see Sy, ‘Child of the poor’, 14–57.} The translated texts combine traditional Tagalog moral concepts, the genre of the religious exemplum, the history of the unfinished Philippine revolution and the political manifesto of class struggle. The Tagalog translation demonstrates how moral-ethical and political idioms are not necessarily contradictory but can deeply intertwine with one another. These rich layers of meaning may explain why this ‘dusty relic’ from the Chinese Cultural Revolution seems to have found a durable home in the Philippines. It is no longer simply an alien text but one that resonates within a new context. The convergence of Catholic and nationalist idioms of heroism and sacrifice may also explain why sectors of the petty bourgeois intelligentsia, including youth and students, are particularly drawn to the \textit{FGR}. After all, these are the natural adepts of the dominant religious ideology and the nationalist secular religion of the state.

\section*{Conclusion}

This chapter began with a look at how the writing, collection, interpretation and dissemination of the \textit{Five Old Articles}, even within China, passed through changes in social and historical context. To conclude, it may prove useful to digress briefly into a few other countries in Southeast Asia, particularly Indonesia, to show how the Philippine case is distinctive in its use of Mao's writing, especially the \textit{Five Old Articles}.

It is interesting to note, given the continued existence of the Filipino Maoist movement, that the translation and dissemination of Mao's writing seems to have occurred throughout much of Southeast Asia before the Philippines. In Vietnam, 1949 was the year of both the Conference of Debate in Viet Bac—where the VCP unanimously resolved to uphold
the slogan ‘Revolutionise ideology and popularise activities’—and the translation of Mao’s ‘Talks at the Yanan Forum’, which solidified what King Cheng and David Marr have dubbed the ‘Chinese influence’ in the VCP. The translation of this essay led to the translation, publication and dissemination of many of Mao’s other works in North Vietnam during the 1950s. Each of the five articles was included among the works of Mao that were promoted at this time. After an influx of young cadres following the Việt Minh’s victory in Dien Bien Phu, the newly established Ministry of Culture launched both a special education program for cadres and a mass literacy program for all citizens. In the program for cadres, all five articles were included in the required reading. For the mass literacy program, meanwhile, both ‘In Memory of Norman Bethune’ and ‘Serve the People’ were included among the materials.

69 Tuan Ngoc Nguyen, ‘Socialist realism in Vietnamese literature: An analysis of the relationship between literature and politics’ (PhD. diss., Victoria University, Melbourne, 2004), viii.
72 Such translations were also facilitated by the long history of Chinese-language use among the Vietnamese educated and elite. For more on the Maoist influence in Vietnam in the 1950s, see Hoaøng Vaên Hoan, Gọi Nhỏc trong Biển Cầu [A Drop in the Ocean] (Portland, OR: N. Tran, 1991).
74 Perhaps this inclusion should come as no surprise, given how political attitudes like those seen in the five articles were already being propagated in the writings of the Việt Minh and the Vietnamese Communist Party (VCP) during their successive military campaigns against the Japanese and the French (1938–54). For example, in two of Trường Chinh’s seminal works at the time—Cách mạng Tháng Tám [The August Revolution] (1946) and Kháng chiến nhất định thắng lợi [The Resistance Will Win] (1947)—the value of self-sacrifice, serving the interests of the masses and self-effacement (especially for intellectuals) were consistently emphasised. For a look at how these ideas were integrated with the cultural policies of the VCP, as well as an examination of the cultural anticommunist response it generated both within the party and externally among groups inside and outside Vietnam, see Amado Anthony G. Mendoza III, ‘Ang Anti-Komunistang Diskursong Pampanitikan sa Timog-Silangang Asya sa mga Antolohiya, Kritisimong Pampanitikan, Polemikong Pampanitikan at Opisyal na Dokumento mula sa Indonesia, Pilipinas, at Vietnam [Anticommunist literary discourse in Southeast Asia in anthologies, literary criticism, literary polemics, and official documents from Indonesia, the Philippines, and Vietnam]’ (Master’s thesis, University of the Philippines, Diliman, 2019), 127–97. After the ‘failure’ of the land reform campaign in the mid-1950s and in the wake of the Nhan Van Giai Pham Controversy, the VCP (with the Ministry of Culture) focused its energies on consolidating its authority and stifling ideological unorthodoxy. This change in priorities led the VCP to hasten the institutionalisation of ‘Hồ Chí Minh Thought’ like that of Maoist Thought in China. One corollary of this process was a decline in the propagation of Maoist materials. This effectively spelled the end of the dissemination of Mao’s writing, including the Five Articles, in Vietnam. See Kim Ngoc Bao Ninh, A World Transformed: The Politics of Culture in Revolutionary Vietnam, 1945–1964 (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2002), 164–203.
In Thailand, the initial translations of Mao’s works were carried out by those of ethnic Chinese descent, who made up a majority of the members of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Thailand. As Kasian Tejapira shows, each of the five articles was included among the various texts by Mao that were translated into Thai. However, unlike in Vietnam, the motivation for these translations seemed to be mostly intellectual and did almost nothing to influence the concrete practices of the Communist Party of Thailand.

Perhaps the most interesting case to compare with the Philippines, however, is Indonesia. While much of the current scholarship on the Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI) dates its ‘Maoist turn’ to the tumultuous 1960s, Hersri Setiawan, a former alternate member of the PKI’s Central Committee and former head of the Yogyakarta chapter of the Lembaga Kebudayaan Rakyat (Institute of People’s Culture), claims the dissemination of Mao’s writing in Indonesia began much earlier. As early as 1951, just a few years after reconstruction of the party began following the Madiun Affair of 1948, PKI members who were fluent in Chinese read many of Mao’s works, including most, if not all, of the five articles. They then translated and distributed these writings among select party officials and cadres. This move, according to Setiawan, was initiated by the party leadership to membaja ketetapan hati (‘steel their resolve’) through the painstaking process of resurrecting revolutionary fervour in the consciousness of the Indonesian people.

A potentially illuminating example in this regard is D.N. Aidit’s speech entitled ‘Menempuh Jalan Rakyat [Taking the People’s Way]’. In this speech, delivered on 23 May 1952 during commemoration of the thirty-second anniversary of the PKI, Aidit emphasised the party’s important

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76 Perhaps as an ironic twist of fate, some of the key anticommunist texts produced in the first half of the twentieth century, the literary works of Rama VI, used similar themes of selflessness and self-sacrifice to attack what he claimed was the fake utopianism of communists. See Rama VI, *Uttarakuru: An Asiatic Wonderland* (Bangkok: Siam Observer Press, 1913), 1–34.
78 Authors’ interview with Hersri Setiawan, online, 21 January 2021. All translations in this study are provided by the authors.
role in advancing and serving the interests of the people. As in most speeches of this kind, Aidit also stressed the duty of both the party and the people to safeguard the revolutionary legacies of the August Revolution, for by doing so they would serve the interests of all oppressed classes in both Indonesia and the world. When asked about 'Menempuh Jalan Rakyat' and to what extent the Five Articles may have influenced Aidit, Setiawan notes:

Aidit, Njoto, dan petinggi partai lainnya, tetapi terutama Aidit, menganggap 'Melayani Rakyat', 'Untuk Mengenang Norman Bethune' dan 'Sang Bodoh, Orang Tua yang Memusnahkan Pegunungan' sebagai karya yang menanamkan baik tua maupun muda kader pentingnya iman yang teguh pada rakyat dan revolusi. 'Tentang Mengoreksi Ide-ide yang Salah dalam Partai' dan 'Memerangi Liberalisme' menjadi penting selama tahun 1960-an, ketika Partai mencoba membikin daftar bacaan untuk rekrutan dari militer. Bahkan dalam perdebatan anggota CC setelah 1965, artikel-artikel tersebut sering dikutip atau digunakan untuk membenarkan argumen dan posisi politik tertentu.

[Aidit, Njoto, and other high-ranking party officials, but especially Aidit, considered ‘Serve the People’, ‘In Memory of Norman Bethune’ and ‘Foolish Old Man Who Removed the Mountains’ as works that instil in both young and old cadres the importance of unwavering faith in the people and the revolution. ‘On Correcting Mistaken Ideas in the Party’ and ‘Combat Liberalism’ became crucial during the 1960s, when the party was trying to come up with a reading list for recruits from the army. Even in debates of CC [Central Committee] members after 1965, these articles were often quoted or used to justify certain arguments and political positions.]

Setiawan’s confirmation of the much earlier dissemination of Mao’s writings among PKI members—both during its reestablishment and ascent in the 1950s and at its peak (and dissolution) in the 1960s—explains certain gaps in the extant literature on the political and ideological shifts happening within the PKI. This, for instance, partly explains why the importance of Mao Zedong Thought would be consistently emphasised in many of the PKI’s most important documents (even in the party’s so-called otokritik or ‘self-criticism’) from 1965 to 1971.

80 ibid., 20–22.
81 Hersri Setiawan, Interview.
Most notable among these is the 1971 document *Tegakan PKI yang Marxis-Leninis Untuk Memimpin Revolusi Demokrasi Rakjat Indonesia* (‘*Uphold a Marxist-Leninist PKI in Order to Lead the Democratic Revolution of the Indonesian People*’). Aside from the expected outline and delineation of the PKI’s prospects after Suharto’s rise to power, the introduction to the document boldly declares the PKI is a Marxist-Leninist party that also upholds *pikiran Mao Tjetung* (‘Mao Zedong Thought’). This earlier spread of Mao’s texts—including the different works that would become the *Five Old Articles*—may also help to explain the emphasis the PKI’s cultural arm, the Lembaga Kebudayaan Rakjat (People’s Cultural Institute), placed on self-effacing attitudes when it came to serving the masses. This is particularly exemplified by its ‘*turun ke bawah*’ (lit., to ‘go under’ or ‘go down’) method, which exhorted cultural workers—inellectuals, writers and cadres—to learn from the masses.

It is beyond the scope of this chapter to discuss why the Philippine translation and dissemination of Maoist writings took place much later than in countries like Vietnam and Indonesia. A provisional hypothesis, however, may be that the spread of Maoism was hindered by the strained relationship between the PKP-1930 and the ‘Chinese Bureau’—a branch of the CCP that was based in the Philippines. Interestingly, members of this Chinese Bureau were already reading Mao’s texts as early as the 1930s. These texts had not, however, been translated into local languages. It is possible the belated translations were in part a result of state suppression of communists in the late 1940s and 1950s, which included increased state surveillance of the Chinese community in the Philippines. The intensity of the suppression of both communists and Chinese was such that the leaders of the PKP-1930 and their armed wing, the Huks, lost contact with the Chinese Bureau for many years. In addition, there were always tensions between the PKP-1930 and the Chinese Bureau over the issue of the latter’s autonomy in the Philippines. Such tensions may

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82 Politburo CC-PKI [Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Indonesia], *Tegakan PKI yang Marxis-Leninis Untuk Memimpin Revolusi Demokrasi Rakjat Indonesia: Lima Dokumen Penting Politburo CC PKI* [Build the PKI Along the Marxist-Leninist Line to Lead the People’s Democratic Revolution in Indonesia: Five Important Documents of the Political Bureau of the CC PKI] (Jakarta: Delegation of the CC PKI, 1971), i.


have precluded the kind of deep interpersonal exchange that would have allowed an earlier communication of Maoist ideas and writings to non-Chinese communists in the country.

On the more important point of what these comparisons can show us about the dissemination of the *Five Old Articles*, the most interesting finding is the fact that, in the Philippines and also possibly in Indonesia, during periods of the popularisation of and emergency for revolutionary movements, the *Five Articles* (and Mao’s writing as a whole) played a role not in ‘vulgarising’ Marxism through dogmatic memorisation (as may perhaps have happened in China) but in a genuine (re)building of parties and movements. As mentioned above, from as early as 1951, members of the PKI fluent in Chinese had already read and translated at least some of the *Five Articles*. They had reportedly found these useful to *membaja ketetapan hati* (‘steel their resolve’) in the coming struggles. This Indonesian reception is similar to the Philippine interpretation. ‘Ketatapan hati’ in Tagalog is *lakas ng loob* (‘strength of the will’) — a phrase that occurs in the Tagalog text of the *FGR* in a passage from the commentary attached to ‘The Foolish Old Man’:

*Ang itinuturo ni Tagapangulong Mao na ‘maging matatag, huwag matakot sa pagpapakasakit at pangibabawan ang lahat ng kabirapan upang magtagumpay’ ay nangangahulugan, sa huling pagsusuri, ng pagbibigay diin sa salik ng tao, ng panghihikayat sa atin para palargahan nang husto ang ating subetibong inisyatiba, ng pagiging walang-takot sa mga kaigitan at kabirapan, at ng lakas ng loob para makibaka at magtagumpay.*

[What Chairman Mao teaches us, ‘be resolute, do not fear sacrifice’ and overcome all difficulties in order to be victorious’ means, in the final analysis, to give emphasis to the human factor, to encourage us to unleash our subjective initiative, of having no fear in the face of repression and difficulty, and to have the strength of the will needed to fight and win.]85

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Furthermore, in the Philippines, as this study has shown, the FGR has become part of an ‘ethical technology’ that is ‘aimed at the formation of a “Filipino” subject of moral and political knowledge and action’.86 It should be emphasised that this process of subject formation does not gesture towards the creation of a ‘new man’ as seen in the revolutionary imaginaries of the past,87 including that of Rizal’s notion of ‘hombres nuevos’.88 In fact, the idea of the bagong tao (‘new man’) does not figure at all in Philippine Maoist phraseology.

The FGR is, then, an ethical technology that appeals instead to the capacity of each Filipino for pagmamalasakit and pagpapakasakit, reinterpreted in the service of the oppressed classes. Indeed, the strong imprint of this popular revolutionary ethic may be part of the reason, despite the errors and excesses it has acknowledged, the CPP–New People’s Army is distinguished both by its longevity and by the fact that, even despite strident anticommunist propaganda, it has not devolved into a patently ‘gangster’ or ‘terrorist’ organisation.89

If Mao constantly insisted on the Sinicisation of Marxism, the reception, creative reinterpretation, translation and dissemination of the FGR and other revolutionary texts in the Philippines point to the ‘Filipinisation’ of Maoism. This process of vernacularisation90 underlines the potential universality of Maoism while drawing attention to the extremely unique, almost contingent and inimitable qualities of some of its effects. Nevertheless, the recent reprints of the Five Old Articles in other countries under its Philippine title, Five Golden Rays,91 as well as the printing of the compilation known as Activist Study Material (Araling Aktibista, to preserve its Tagalog title),92 which includes the FGR, are significant as a symbolic return of a text from the global Maoism of the 1960s that, having found its home in the Philippines, has come back to an international readership in the twenty-first century.

92 CPP-NED, Activist Study.