

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES,
ARTS, AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Research Highlights 'Interview'



Self-Introduction

- Briefly introduce yourself, the department and school that you are in.

My name is **ZHOU Taomo** and I am assistant professor of history.

Elaboration

- Share with us what is your research project.

My recently published book, *Migration in the Time of Revolution: China, Indonesia, and the Cold War* (Cornell University Press, 2019) address the question of how formerly colonized countries that emerged after World War II interacted with one another on the global stage when citizenship was contested, political loyalty was in question, identity was fluid, and the boundaries for political mobilization were blurred.

- What inspired you to embark on this research project?

The overseas Chinese are an important but highly controversial resource for Beijing's advancement of its interests abroad. In Indonesia, the Suharto regime imposed institutionalized discrimination against the Chinese minority based on charges that they were used by Beijing for exporting communist revolution. My project investigates the veracity of these accusations and the interconnectedness between diplomacy and the life experiences of the diaspora.

- **What is/are the most interesting finding(s) of this project?**

In the mid 1950s, hoping to dispel Indonesia's suspicion that China was using the local ethnic Chinese as proxy, Beijing actually encouraged its diaspora to pledge loyalty to Jakarta. However, the political activism of the overseas Chinese had a life of its own and ultimately derailed Beijing's foreign policy.

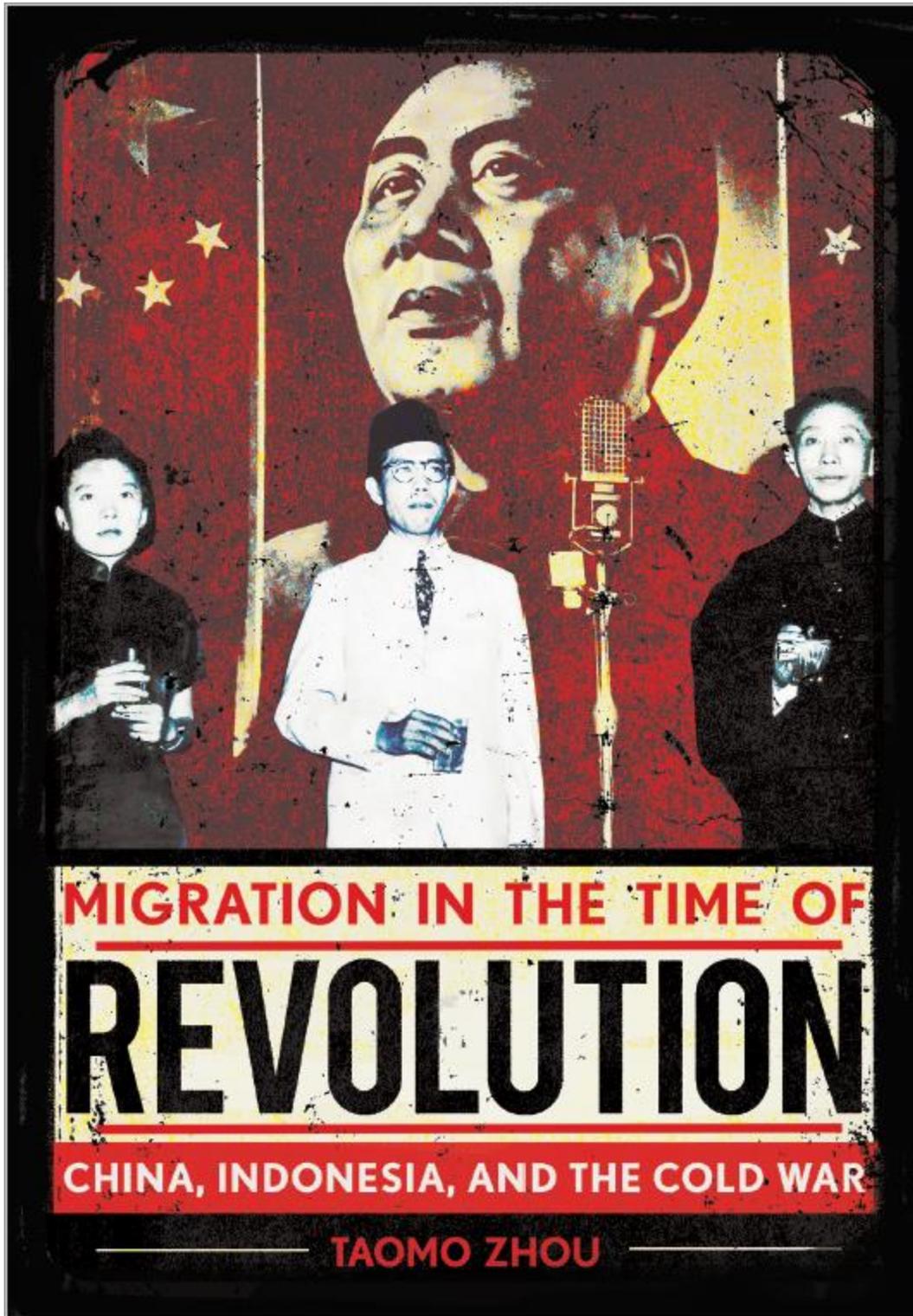
- **How do you think your research can impact society?**

I hope my book will help us better evaluate contemporary concerns over China's influence, interference or infiltration through the overseas Chinese. I also hope the book will help us gain a clear view of the upheavals in Indonesia in 1965-1966, which was one of the worst mass killings in 20th century human history.

Future Plans

- **Tell us about your future research plans and if you are looking for any research collaborators!**

I am writing a second book on Shenzhen, a city located in the Southern Chinese Province of Guangdong immediately north of Hong Kong. In 1980, Deng Xiaoping initiated the People's Republic's first Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in Shenzhen. This migrant city is commonly known as China's "window" to the world and the "laboratory" for Chinese economic reforms. I'd be happy to work together with researchers who share similar interests in economic history of modern China, migration, and urban history.



MIGRATION IN THE TIME OF

REVOLUTION

CHINA, INDONESIA, AND THE COLD WAR

TAOMO ZHOU

Event held at National Library Building

