

PETER GUANGPEI RAN

Ph.D

Assistant Research Fellow

Institute for Social Anthropology

Nanjing University

359 Heren Building, 163 Xianlin Avenue

Nanjing, 210023, P. R. China

Tel. +86 135125-7064

Email: pran@nju.edu.cn

Anthropologist with expertise on southwest China | Ethnographic filmmaker | Photographer

Previous appointment

- 2023-2024 Visiting Scholar in Chinese studies,
University of Freiburg (Germany)
- 2015-2017 Visiting Lecturer in Chinese Cultural Studies and History,
Department of Modern Languages and Cultures,
University of Westminster.

Education

- 2013-2018 Ph.D in Asian Studies (Anthropology) with Visual Media, the University of Westminster
Dissertation: *The Residue of a Deep Past: Struggle over Cultural Transmission in Southwest China*.
Audiovisual component: *The Gorge Is Deep* – documentary film, HD video, 58 mins.
Examiners: Stephan Feuchtwang and Andrew Irving
Advisors: Harriet Evans, Michael Rowlands and Joram ten Brink
Also received training at Centre for Critical Heritage Studies, Institute of Archaeology, UCL.
- 2015-2016 Postgraduate Certificate of Special Study in Supporting Learning (Masters level), the University of Westminster
- 2012-2013 MA in Visual Anthropology, University of Manchester
With distinction
Dissertation: *Xiansheng: Passing down the Tradition* – documentary film with companion text, 27 mins.
Advisor: Paul Henley
- 2008-2012 BA in Journalism (Visual Media), Tsinghua University, Beijing
GPA: 88.1/100 (Equivalent to first-class honors)
- 2011 Exchange Student in English and Foreign Languages (French)
National Cheng Kung University, Taiwan

Membership

I am an Associate Fellow of Higher Education Academy, UK.

Research Outputs

Publications

- 2024 “The Placing of Care: Ordinary ethics of mobility in the Sino-Tibetan borderlands”, *Journal of Royal Anthropological Institute* **31**, 3.
- n.d. “Beyond Exoticism: Rethinking southwest China” (co-editor), special feature forthcoming in *China Perspectives*.
- n.d. *Ordinary Ethics: Anthropology, language, and action* (ed. Michael Lambek), translated by **Peter Guangpei Ran** and Ziyuan Shi into Chinese language. East China Normal University Press.
- 2021 “Commitments to the Past: Cultural Transmission in a Naxi Village”, in *Grassroots values: local perspectives on cultural heritage in China*, edited by Harriet Evans and Michael Rowlands. Lexington Books.
- 2020 “Migration Myth and Ancestor Worship in Southwest China”, in *Handbook on Religion in China*, edited by Stephan Feuchtwang. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Reviews

- 2019 “Visual Exploration Based on Observations: Review of *Under the Palace Wall* directed by David MacDougall,” in *Kuige*, 1.
- 2017 “Review of *Occupational Hazards: Sex, Business, and HIV in Post-Mao China* by Elanah Uretsky,” in *Anthropology in Action*, published online, available at https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1892733234300887&id=1429954747245407&substory_index=0

Selected Films

- 2021 *The Wall* (producer)
A documentary film about school dropouts in rural Yunnan. China, 74 mins.
- Excellent Film Award at the Fourth Chinese National Biennial Ethnographic Film Festival (in permanent collection of the Chinese National Museum of Ethnology and the National Library)
- Official selection, American Asian Studies (AAS) 2023 Film Expo
- 2018 *The Gorge Is Deep*
An ethnographic documentary film about the transmission of Naxi rituals in everyday life. UK-China, 58 mins.
- 2013 *Xiansheng: Passing down the Tradition*
An ethnographic documentary about a group of ritual specialists and their funerary practices in a Tujia village in southwest China. UK-China, 27 mins.
- Official selection, Culture Unplugged Festival 2016, Online: <http://www.cultureunplugged.com/documentary/watch-online/play/54870/Xiansheng--Passing-down-the-tradition>
- Awarded with the prize of “Researching the Arts/Social Sciences 2014”,

joint annual conference for research students, Brunel University and University of Westminster.

- 2013 *Addiction – a Fiction* (co-directed with Simon Rasing)
An ethno-fiction film about an ex-addict's search for the reasons behind his addictive problems. UK, 18 mins.
- Official selection, One with a Movie Camera, Marburg International Ethnographic Film Festival 2013.
- 2012 *A Funeral in Spring*
An ethnographic documentary film about a Tujia funeral in southwestern China. China, 50 min.
Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/50408501>

Conferences and workshops

Paper delivered

- 2024 “Sacred Margins: Transforming landscape and power on the Sino-Tibetan Frontier”, Research Seminar on Anthropological Theory, LSE.
- 2021 “Making a Fluid World: Mobility, Translocality and Hopes on the China-Vietnam Border”, Global Encounters: joint forum between Nanjing University, Vietnam National University (Hanoi) and Bielefeld University, online.
- 2020 “Ethnofiction and Performance as Methods”, Inside and Outside, Academia and Beyond: A Popular Interpretation of Visual Anthropology, Southern University of Science and Technology (Shenzhen).
- 2019 “Mobility, Care and Gender: the moral landscape of a Naxi village”, Place, Migration and Imagination: Contemplating Mobility in Southwest China and Beyond, Social Anthropology Workshop, Nanjing University.
- 2018 “Cultural Transmission and Storytelling in Visual Practices”, Ethnographic Film Making, Ethnic Memory and Cultural Heritage, International Forum on Visual Anthropology 2018, Yunnan University.
- 2018 “How to Move with Place: The Art of Earth-mapping in Naxi Ritual”, Art, Materiality and Representation, the RAI Conference 2018, British Museum and SOAS.
- 2017 “The Cosmology of Displacement in Southwest China”, British Association for Chinese Studies Conference 2017, University of Glasgow.
- 2016 “Household Shrine and Mao: Everyday ritual in a Naxi house”, London Conference in Critical Thought 2016, Birkbeck, University of London.
- 2016 “Physical Pain, Rice Transplant and Mao Posters: Everyday encounters with the state in southwest China”, Anthropology in London Day 2016, UCL.

Film Screenings

- 2024 Public screening of *The Wall*, at Kommunales Kino, Freiburg, Germany.
- 2018 Screening of *The Gorge Is Deep*, at “Ethnographic Film Making, Ethnic Memory and Cultural Heritage, International Forum on Visual Anthropology” 2018, Yunnan University.

- 2018 Public screening of *The Gorge Is Deep* at Regent Street Cinema, London.
2014 Screening of *Xiansheng: Passing down the Tradition* at “Researching the Arts/Social Sciences 2014” joint annual conference for research students, Brunel University and the University of Westminster.

Organized

- 2019 “Place, Migration and Imagination: Contemplating Mobility in Southwest China and Beyond”, Social Anthropology workshop, November 8-10th, Nanjing University.
2017 “Conflicts in Cultural Value: Localities and Heritage in Southwestern China” final workshop for Leverhulme project (assistant organizer), September 21-22nd, the University of Westminster.

Teaching

- 2019-2024 Anthropology in Theory
(Postgraduate core module for MA in Social Anthropology)
Visual Culture and Film Practices
(Undergraduate module)
Visual, Sensory and Media Anthropology
(Postgraduate module for MA in Social Anthropology)
2016-2017 Expressions of Chinese Culture
(Undergraduate second year core module)
The Chinese World and the Word
(Undergraduate first year core module)
2015-2016 China’s Century of Revolutions: 1895-1980
(Undergraduate second year module)
Introduction to Chinese Culture and Society I: History and Politics
(Undergraduate first year core module)

Research Grants and Awards

- 2019 School of Social and Behavioral Sciences Research Grant (¥80000), Nanjing University.
2017 Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities Doctoral Research Support Grant (£1000), University of Westminster.
2013-2016 Leverhulme Studentship, full funding of fee and living expenses, the University of Westminster.
2014 Prize of “Researching the Arts/Social Sciences 2014” joint annual conference for research students, Brunel University and University of Westminster.
2013 M.A. Thesis, passed with distinction.

Fieldwork

- 2020 Research on migration on the China-Vietnam border, southern Guangxi, China
2019 Research on rural education, northeastern Yunnan, China

- 2014-2015, 2017 PhD Dissertation Research in a Naxi community, northwestern Yunnan, China.
2013 MA Dissertation Research in a Tujia community, northeastern Guizhou, China.

Other experience

- 2015-2017 Event photographer for the Royal Anthropological Institute, London.
Events documented:
London Anthropology Day 2017;
'Anthropology, Weather & Climate change' conference, at the British Museum, London;
London Anthropology Day 2016.
- 2014 Volunteer for 'Anthropology and Photography 2014' conference, at the British Museum, London.
- 2013 Assistant director and still photographer of research film project *British Born Chinese*, Manchester.
- 2011-2012 Assistant director for Chinese Central Television, Beijing

Language Skills

- Mandarin Chinese: native.
English: fluent, both written and spoken.
German: intermediate (B1), both written and spoken.
French: intermediate, both written and spoken.
Naxi: intermediate, both written (*dongba* scripts) and spoken.

Technical Skills

Recording

- Video filming in MiniDV, HDV and HD SLR formats.
Digital and analog photography.
Digital sound recording, on location.

Software

- Adobe Premiere Pro, Apple Final Cut Studio Pro, and other non-linear editing software.
Adobe Photoshop and other photo editing software
Adobe Audition and other audio editing software
Microsoft Office Suite