



American Center for Mongolian Studies and SOS Medica Clinic in Ulaanbaatar  
Inner Asian Film Series Seminar 2, February 21, 2008

**Mongolian Ping Pong: A film by Ning Hao (2004) – 102 minutes**

While watching the film please take note of the various contrasting elements and themes within the story and cinematography. Examples are rural vs. urban, traditional vs. modern, light vs. dark, and sky vs. earth. In particular watch for examples in which the lifestyle of the Mongolian families are both idealized through visual depictions of landscape and place, and yet ridiculed through the premise of the story and interactions of the characters with the world around them. There may be other dichotomies you notice which you should also take note of to share with the group.

The primary questions we will discuss at the end of the film, in addition to any questions you may pose, are:

What is the director trying to convey with these dichotomous themes, if anything? Is it a part of the story itself or just part of the director's storytelling style? Does it add to or detract from the power of the story?

Is there a paradox of idealization and condescension present in the film? If so, do you think the director has done this on purpose, or is it a subconscious byproduct of cultural prejudice? Or, are there other reasons?

Was the movie enjoyable, well told, or otherwise worth recommending to others? Why or why not?

**Contrasting Themes:**

Rural vs. Urban

Traditional vs. Modern

Light vs. Dark

Sky vs. Earth

Idealization vs. Condescension

\_\_\_\_\_ vs. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ vs. \_\_\_\_\_

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