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Appendice

1. Chinese top five box-office hits in 21st century

| Year | Title | Ticket sales (in millions RMB) | Director |
|------|---|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 2000 | 1. <i>Fatal Decision</i> | 100 | Zhang Yuben |
| | 2. <i>Sorry Baby</i> | 30 | Feng Xiaogang |
| | 3. <i>A Sigh</i> | 30 | Feng Xiaogang |
| | 4. <i>Shower</i> | 10 | Zhang Yang |
| | 5. <i>Agreed not to separate</i> | | Ming Fei, Wang Hailin |
| 2001 | 1. <i>Big Shot's Funeral</i> | 30 | Feng Xiaogang |
| | 2. <i>The Gua Sha Treatment</i> | 20 | Zheng Xiaolong |
| | 3. <i>Purple Sunset</i> | 15 | Feng Xiaoning |
| | 4. <i>Who Cares</i> | 8 | Jianxin Huang |
| | 5. <i>Red Turn</i> | 5 | Shan Liang, Xiepu Li |
| 2002 | 1. <i>Hero</i> | - | Zhang Yimou |
| | 2. <i>The Missing Gun</i> | - | Lu Chuan |
| | 3. <i>Charging Out Amazon</i> | - | Song Yeming |
| | 4. <i>I Love You</i> | - | Zhang Yuan |
| | 5. <i>C.E.O.</i> | - | Wu Tianming |
| 2003 | 1. <i>Cell Phone</i> | - | Feng Xiaogang |
| | 2. <i>Warriors of Heaven and Earth</i> | - | He Ping |
| | 3. <i>Zhou Yu's Train</i> | - | Sun Zhou |
| | 4. <i>Warm Spring</i> | - | Wulan Tana |
| | 5. <i>Deng Xiaoping</i> | - | Ding Yinnan |
| 2004 | 1. <i>House of Flying Daggers</i> | - | Zhang Yimou |
| | 2. <i>A World Without Thieves</i> | - | Feng Xiaogang |
| | 3. <i>Deng Xiaoping in 1928</i> | - | Li Xiepu |
| | 4. <i>Zhang Side</i> | - | Yin Li |
| | 5. <i>Baober in Love</i> | - | Li Shaohong |
| 2005 | 1. <i>The Promise</i> | 170 | Chen Kaige |
| | 2. <i>Perhaps Love</i> | 28 | Peter Chan |
| | 3. <i>Ren Changxia</i> | 26 | Shen Haofang |
| | 4. <i>Riding Alone for Thousand Miles</i> | 22 | Zhang Yimou |
| | 5. <i>Between Life and Death</i> | 20 | Zhou Youchao |
| 2006 | 1. <i>Curse of Golden Flower</i> | 230 | Zhang Yimou |
| | 2. <i>The Banquet</i> | 130 | |
| | | 62 | |

| Year | Title | Ticket sales (in millions RMB) | Director |
|------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| | 3. <i>A Battle of Wits</i> | 36 | Feng Xiaogang |
| | 4. <i>The Knot</i> | 24 | Zhang Ziliang |
| | 5. <i>Tokyo Trial</i> | | Yin Li |
| | | | Gao Qunshu |
| 2007 | 1. <i>The Warlords</i> | 190 | Chen Kexin |
| | 2. <i>Assembly</i> | 180 | Fen Xiaogang |
| | 3. <i>Blood Brothers</i> | 30 | Chen Yili |
| | 4. <i>Urban Railway</i> | 28 | She Yan |
| | 5. <i>The Sun Also Rises</i> | 27 | Jiang Wen |

Source: *Dianying Yishu (2000 to 2008)*

2. Synopsis of blockbusters not included in the analysis

2000

Fatal Decision (Sheng Si Jue Ze)

Synopsis: Li Gaocheng is the mayor of the city of Haizhou. One day, workers at the textile factory of which he used to be chief are in uproar. Indeed, the workers accuse the new managers of the factory are stealing money allocated to the plant. Initially, Li can't believe the men he selected are corrupt, but later he finds out more and more evidence against them. Soon after, Li discovers the most senior backer of this scheme is the person who selected him as the mayor as well as his wife is involved in this conspiracy.

Source: *The Internet Movie Database - IMDb*

Sorry, Baby (Mei Wan Mei Le)

Synopsis: The film offers a humorous, comical yet critical comment on contemporary Chinese society. Taxi driver Han (Ge You) chases after travel agent owner Ruan (Fu Biao) for the \$98,000 he owes him. Extremely desperate, Han even kidnaps Ruan's girlfriend Liu (Jacklyn Wu) and blackmails Ruan to repay the debt. Ruan tells Han, "Kill the hostage if you dare!" Annoyed by her boyfriend's words, Liu decides to help her kidnapper.

Source: *YesAsia.com*

A Sigh (Yi Shen Tan Xi)

Plot: The Sigh tells the story of an affair between a struggling Chinese screenwriter and his young female assistant, its effects on his marriage and the impact on the man himself.

Source: *IMDb*

Shower (Xi Zao)

Plot: An award winning film, "Shower" indeed is the second feature film by the talented Zhang Yang. The film evolving around a family and a public bathhouse in China, depicting the fading of Chinese tradition for the modern world. It also examines the relations between father and sons, and brothers. Director Zhang Yang follows up the wildly popular Spicy Love Soup with Shower, a funny and disarmingly real portrait of a family and their traditional bathhouse. Da Ming (He Zheng) is an avowed urban professional who returns home to Beijing when he receives news that leads him to believe his father has passed away. But dad (Zhu Xu) is alive, and still running the family bathhouse with Da Ming's mentally-challenged brother Er Ming (Jiang Wu). Da Ming immediately tries to return to his work, but within a matter of days, he begins to discover just what's lacking from his relationship with his family. Disparate values, cultures, generations, and experiences separate the three men, and soon he discovers that many possibilities - and even the hope of reconciliation - can be found at the bathhouse, which is a place where life and community can be found almost everyday. Director Zhang Yang uses everyday details of the Beijing bathhouse to create a charming film filled with real characters facing real situations. Source: *YesAsia.com*

2001

Big Shot's Funeral (Da Wan)

Plot: Yankie director Don Tyler (Sutherland) faces mounting insecurity and declining health while on location in Beijing, so his assistant (Kwan) hires down-and-out cameraman YoYo (Ge) to take the reins. Scrambling, studio boss (Mazursky) sells the sagging picture to a Japanese media company. But YoYo is determined to upstage the whole production by granting the director's wish to have a grand "comedy funeral". To raise the money for it, he auctions off advertising and sponsorships for the funeral to companies around the world.

Source: *IMDb*

The Gua Sha Treatment (Gua Sha)

Plot: Datong is a patrician of a St. Louis Chinese-American family and a designer of violent video games. When Datong's father visits from China, he performs some traditional Chinese medicine (the "Gua Sha" treatment) on his young grandson. Though painless, the treatment leaves bright red marks on the skin, which are interpreted by the

kid's teacher as welts. Soon the Child Welfare Agency is accusing the family of child abuse and transfers the kid to a foster home. Source: *YesAsia.com*

Who Cares (Shei Shuo Wo Bu Zai Hu)

Plot: Depiction of the generational gap between the older generations and their children, such as issues like marriage. Source: *IMDb*

2002

The Missing Gun (Xun Qiang)

Plot: In a province in China, Detective Ma Shan wakes up on the day after the wedding party of his sister Ma Juan and finds that his gun with three bullets is missing. Ma Shan drank too much in the party and does not recall what might have happen with his weapon. He falls in disgrace with his superiors and investigates who might have stolen the gun. When his former sweetheart Li Xiaomeng is found dead with a shot of his weapon, he becomes the prime suspect. Source: *IMDb*

I Love You (Wo Ai Ni)

Plot: A young woman who has lost her first love begins a relationship with his best friend, and the two of them attempt to create a baggage-free future. Source: *IMDb*

2003

Cell Phone (Shou Ji)

Plot: Mainland director Feng Xiaogang has recently become popular in the Western world with his epic *The Banquet* and the Andy Lau-starring *A World Without Thieves*, but he has been one of the biggest names in China for many years. His popular 2003 movie *Cell Phone*, an excellent suspense thriller filled with black humor, is definitely worth a see. Best actor winner Ge You, who stars in almost every Feng Xiaogang movie, plays a popular TV program host in the film. The ubiquitous cell phone absurdly becomes the source of all troubles for this poor man! Everything begins with his wife discovering his illicit affairs when he leaves his cellphone at home.

Source: *YesAsia.com*

Zhou Yu's Train (Zhou Yu de huo che)

Plot: Starring Gong Li and Tony Leung Ka Fai, *Zhou Yu's Train* tells the story of a beautiful girl called Zhou Yu whose work entails by painting fabric and ceramic vases. The girl goes to visit her lover, introverted poet Liang Jiahui, who works in the library

each week. As she has to get to the library by train, Zhou Yu soon catches the attention of a veterinarian (Sun Honglei), which leads to a complicated triangle love affair.

Source: *YesAsia.com*

Warm Spring (Nuan Chun)

Plot: Hua, a homeless poor little girl, was taken home by a beneficent old man in a small village. However, the son and daughter-in-law of this old man rejected to accept her into their family, and tried to drive her out.

Source: *IMDb*

Deng Xiaoping

Plot: Film concentrates on the last 20 years of Deng's life, from 1978, when he took control of China's leadership and instituted economic reforms to reverse effects of Mao Zedong's Cultural Revolution.

Source: *YesAsia.com*

2004

House of Flying Daggers (Shi mian mai fu)

Plot: 859 AD, the incompetent Emperor and corrupted government decline the Tang Dynasty. Rebel armies are forming, among them underground alliance "The House of the Flying Daggers" is the largest and most prestigious. Feng Tian's country two local captains Leo and Jin are ordered to capture the House leader in ten days. Captain Leo suspects that Mei, the beautiful new dancer at the Peony Pavillion is actually a daughter of the former leader and hatches a plan to capture her and bring her in for questioning. At the same time, captain Jin will pretend to be a lone warrior Wind, rescue Mei from prison, earning her trust and escorting her to the secret headquarters of the House of Flying Daggers.

Source: *YesAsia.com*

A World Without Thieves (Tian xia wu zei)

Plot: Long partners in love and crime, the two thieves meet a country farmer named Xa Gen (Wang Baoqiang) in a train station. The naive, honest Xa Gen is convinced that he lives in a "world without thieves", but the very train he's boarding is proof of the contrary. Besides Wang Bo and Wang Li, legendary thief Uncle Bill is on board, and he and his men are ready to take Xa Gen's savings for themselves. Uncle Bill is also determined to outwit Wang Bo - and he just might have his chance. When Wang Li decides to protect Xa Gen from Uncle Bill's men, Wang Bo finds himself caught in the middle. Unlike Feng Xiaogang's popular satirical comedies, A World Without Thieves is an idealistic motion picture mixing a commercial storyline with an unparalleled collection of pan-Asian actors, including Hong Kong superstar Andy Lau, Taiwanese singer-actor Rene Liu, Mainland star Ge Yu, Hong Kong actor Gordon Lam, and

athletic Mainland actress Li Bing Bing.

Source: *YesAsia.com*

Zhang Side

Plot: Film about the life of Mao's bodyguard and soldier.

Baober in Love (Liang ai zhong de Bao Bei)

Plot: Liu Zhi is a teenager searching for love at first sight. His wish comes true one day when he drops his favorite DVD, and it is picked up by the charming Baober. After a brief romance, the girl who arrived from out of the blue slips out of Liu Zhi's life again. Innovative portrayal of young love in modern China.

Source:

YesAsia.com

2005

Perhaps Love (Ru guo ai)

Plot: A love triangle develops during the making of a musical in mainland China.

Source: *IMDb*

Ren Changxia

Plot: Film about the life of model police woman.

Riding Alone for Thousand of Miles (Qian li zou dan qi)

Plot: Estranged from his son for many years, Gou-ichi (Takakura) receives an unexpected call from his daughter-in-law, Rie, asking him to come to Tokyo to visit his son, Ken-ichi, who is in the hospital suffering from a stomach ailment. Gou-ichi decides to make the trip against his better judgment, but when he arrives, his son refuses to see him as he is still bearing the scars of the unspoken reasons why they were torn apart. Determined to reunite them, Rie gives Gou-ichi a videotape of an article Ken-ichi wrote about Li Jiamin, a Chinese folk opera master from Yunnan Province. Ken-ichi had promised Li that he would come back and film him performing "Riding Alone for Thousands of Miles," an opera based on one of the stories in the literary classic Romance of the Three Kingdoms; Gou-ichi makes it his mission to travel to southern China, find Li, and film the performance himself. With the help of tour guides Gou-ichi takes off to the great unknown, trying to do right by the son who still appears to hate him.

Source: *YesAsia.com*

2006

The Banquet (Ye yan)

Plot: Inspired by the Shakespearean play Hamlet, The Banquet unfolds a story about

power struggle in the royal court, which eventually climaxes at a night banquet. The film promises a thrilling visual experience with its carefully designed details. Set in 907 AD, when the Tang Dynasty is in tatters, Zhang Ziyi stars as the young Empress Wan, who used to be in love with Prince Wu Luan but is now his step-mother. The late emperor's brother Li comes to throne and sees Wu Luan, now living away from the palace indulging himself in arts, a great threat to his power. He sends assassins to kill Wu Luan but the mission fails. The young prince returns to the palace and meets Empress Wan, who is newly married to Li, and a young girl Qing who falls for him. Emperor Li decides to host a banquet, but everyone has a hidden agenda.

Source: *YesAsia.com*

2007

Blood Brothers (Tian tang kou)

Plot: Classic tale of love, brotherhood, and betrayal in 1930s Shanghai. The closing film of the 64th Venice Film Festival, Blood Brothers brings together a dream cast of Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Mainland stars. Daniel Wu (Protege), Liu Ye (Curse of the Golden Flower), and Tony Yang (Ming Ming) serve as the core of the film, the trio of brothers whose souls are tested in the big city. Boasting big budget production values, Blood Brothers creates the aura of Old Shanghai with stylish cinematography and beautiful wardrobe and set design. Fung and his best friends, brothers Kang and Hu, leave the countryside together to make it big in Shanghai. Things aren't so easy in the city, however, and the brothers stumble and toil until opportunity brings them to Club Paradise and ruthless mob boss Hong. While Kang embraces his newfound power in the Shanghai triad, Fung and Hu are less comfortable with the crime and violence, sending the brothers slowly but surely down opposite paths. Fung falls for Hong's woman, sassy nightclub singer Lulu who is also involved with Hong's top henchman Mark. When Hong catches scent of the betrayal, he sends Kang to finish off business, leading the brothers to meet at gunpoint on a cold Shanghai night. Source:

YesAsia.com

The Sun Also Rises (Zai tai yang sheng qi de di fang)

Plot: Making use of an elliptical narrative with four overlapping threads, The Sun Also Rises opens in 1976 with the topsy-turvy lives of a harried young man and his seemingly crazed mother in a quiet village in eastern China. The brigade leader of his village, the son is constantly tending to his mother's strange habits and disappearing routine, which hint of a story-laden past. In another part of China, university professor Liang attracts the attentions of a seductive nurse and then a persistent mob when he gets accused of sexual harassment. He can only turn to friend Tang for help. Seemingly

unrelated lives begin to intersect in the past and present when Tang is sent to the young brigade leader's village for reform labor. Like his previous two features, *The Sun Also Rises* is set in a politically sensitive period, primarily the waning days of the Cultural Revolution.

Source: *YesAsia.com*