Chinese Cinema in Global Perspective Fall 2022 For your Midterm, please write a well-organized essay of about 800-1000 words that presents a clear argument and comparative analysis of two primary sources (films). You should also engage the ideas in at least one secondary source. Please submit your complete, correctly formatted essay Choose and answer ONE (1) of the following essay questions (100 points). Keep the following in mind: 1. Construct a clear, well-rounded thesis / argument. 2. Analyze and discuss TWO (2) films within the framework of your central thesis / argument. 3. Integrate and engage ideas in at least ONE (1) secondary source of relevant scholarship or theory. Be sure to accurately cite the author and title of the text(s) you are referring to. 4. Follow correct formatting guidelines (MLA or Chicago Manual of Style) for all references and bibliography (list of works cited). 1. The films Song at Midnight (Yeban gesheng 夜 半 歌 聲 , 1937) and Street Angels (Malu tianshi 馬路天使, 1937) are two of the earliest sound films made during the “Golden Age of Chinese Cinema.” Yet, they are very different from each other in tone and style. Song at Midnight is considered to be China’s first horror film, while Street Angels is a realist work that is often considered to be a masterpiece of Chinese left-wing cinema. Critically analyze these two films in a comparative framework by highlighting each work’s key themes, cinematic techniques, innovations, and meaning shortly before the outbreak of war. Note: If you wish, you may critically compare and discuss other films of this First Golden Age of Chinese cinema in the 1930’s. You may find and view more films here: https://chinesefilmclassics.org 2. What is the May Fourth Movement, why is it called “The Chinese Enlightenment,” and how is the “New Woman” trope central to this political, social, and cultural movement? Analyze and critically compare two films that engage the “New Woman” theme by focusing closely on key aspects of story and plot; characterization and performance; set design; and cinematography. In your film analysis, consider the ways in which these films contributed to the May Fourth “New Woman” discourse. 3. When we look at post-war Chinese films, we see the emergence of two types of films. On the one hand, in the film Crows and Sparrows (Wuya yu maqe 乌鸦与麻 雀, 1949), we see the realistic portrayal of social reality along with an urgent sense of political. intervention and a focus on the masses. On the other hand, in a film like Spring in a Small Town (Xiaocheng zhi chun 小城之春, 1948), we see a more lyrical portrayal of characters’ inner worlds and feelings. Describe these different cinematic modes by discussing these two films in a comparative framework. Focus closely on key themes, cinematic techniques, and messages each film conveys. Note: If you wish, you may critically compare and discuss other post-war films of this Second Golden Age of Chinese cinema in the late 1940’s. You may find and view more films here: https://chinesefilmclassics.org 4. What is Chinese revolutionary cinema, when did it emerge, and what was the purpose of these films? How are these films effective at communicating and bolstering communist revolutionary ideals? How are women represented in these revolutionary films, and for what purpose? Choose two films and discuss them in a comparative framework. In your essay, you may discuss either realist film or revolutionary opera, or compare these to genres to each other. Analyze the aesthetics and cinematic techniques of this genre by describing the music, dance, stage design, acting, cinematography, and ideological messages of these works. 5. What is the “Fifth Generation of Chinese Filmmakers” and why was this generation so important? Why are these filmmakers called “a new avant-garde? What are some of the most important innovations that they introduced to Chinese filmmaking? What are some of the key themes, techniques, and aesthetics they engaged in their cinematic work, and how do these films reject and subvert socialist realist cinematic modes? Choose two Fifth Generation films and analyze them in a comparative framework.