拉面哥外刊

[1 . Date:2.27 4](#_Toc204172372)

[2 . Date:2.28 6](#_Toc204172373)

[3 . Date:3.1 9](#_Toc204172374)

[4 . Date:3.2 11](#_Toc204172375)

[5 . Date:3.3 14](#_Toc204172376)

[6 . Date:3.4 17](#_Toc204172377)

[7 . Date:3.5 20](#_Toc204172378)

[8 . Date:3.6 24](#_Toc204172379)

[9 . Date:3.7 27](#_Toc204172380)

[10.Date:3.8 32](#_Toc204172381)

[11.Date:3.9 35](#_Toc204172382)

[12.Date:3.10 38](#_Toc204172383)

[13.Date:3.12 39](#_Toc204172384)

[14.Date:3.13 42](#_Toc204172385)

[15.Date:3.14 46](#_Toc204172386)

[16.Date:3.15 49](#_Toc204172387)

[17.Date:3.16 52](#_Toc204172388)

[18.Date:3.17 55](#_Toc204172389)

[19.Date:3.18 61](#_Toc204172390)

[20.Date:3.19 64](#_Toc204172391)

[21.Date:3.20 68](#_Toc204172392)

[22.Date:3.21 71](#_Toc204172393)

[23.Date:3.23 74](#_Toc204172394)

[24.Date:3.24 78](#_Toc204172395)

[25.Date:3.25 80](#_Toc204172396)

[26.Date:3.26 83](#_Toc204172397)

[27.Date:3.27 86](#_Toc204172398)

[28.Date:3.28 91](#_Toc204172399)

[29.Date:3.29 94](#_Toc204172400)

[30.Date:3.30 96](#_Toc204172401)

[31.Date:3.31 99](#_Toc204172402)

[32.Date:4.1 102](#_Toc204172403)

[33.Date:4.2 105](#_Toc204172404)

[34.Date:4.3 108](#_Toc204172405)

[35.Date:4.7 110](#_Toc204172406)

[36.Date:4.9 112](#_Toc204172407)

[37.Date:4.10 116](#_Toc204172408)

[38.Date:4.11 120](#_Toc204172409)

[39.Date:4.12 124](#_Toc204172410)

[40.Date:4.13 127](#_Toc204172411)

[41.Date:4.14 130](#_Toc204172412)

[42.Date:4.16 132](#_Toc204172413)

[43.Date:4.17 135](#_Toc204172414)

[44.Date:4.18 138](#_Toc204172415)

[45.Date:4.19 142](#_Toc204172416)

[46.Date:4.20 147](#_Toc204172417)

[47.Date:4.21 151](#_Toc204172418)

[48.Date:4.22 156](#_Toc204172419)

[49.Date:4.23 161](#_Toc204172420)

[50.Date:4.25 163](#_Toc204172421)

[51.Date:4.26 167](#_Toc204172422)

[52.Date:4.27 170](#_Toc204172423)

[53.Date:4.28 173](#_Toc204172424)

[54.Date:5.1 177](#_Toc204172425)

[55.Date:5.3 182](#_Toc204172426)

[56.Date:5.4 186](#_Toc204172427)

[57.Date:5.5 188](#_Toc204172428)

[58.Date:5.6 192](#_Toc204172429)

[59.Date:5.7 195](#_Toc204172430)

[60.Date:5.10 199](#_Toc204172431)

[61.Date:5.12 204](#_Toc204172432)

[62.Date:5.14 207](#_Toc204172433)

[63.Date:5.17 215](#_Toc204172434)

[64.Date:5.18 224](#_Toc204172435)

[65.Date:5.19 226](#_Toc204172436)

[66.Date:5.20 228](#_Toc204172437)

[67.Date:5.22 230](#_Toc204172438)

[68.Date:5.23 232](#_Toc204172439)

[69.Date:5.24 234](#_Toc204172440)

[70.Date:5.26 236](#_Toc204172441)

[71.Date:5.28 239](#_Toc204172442)

[72.Date:5.30 241](#_Toc204172443)

[73.Date:6.3 243](#_Toc204172444)

[74.Date:6.10 247](#_Toc204172445)

## **1 . Date:2.27**

After completing the first draft of “On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres”, Copernicus was filled with inner conflict and struggle. He was well aware that once this work was published, it would certainly stir up a great commotion in both the scientific and religious communities, challenging the geocentric theory that was then regarded as the established truth. As a result, he chose to set the manuscript aside temporarily and continued his in-depth research, hoping to find more conclusive evidence to support his heliocentric theory.

In the following years, Copernicus used simple astronomical instruments to observe the movements of celestial bodies continuously. He carefully recorded the positions, brightness changes, and movement trajectories of the planets, attempting to find more compelling evidence from them. One day, while observing Mars, he discovered an abnormal "retrograde phenomenon in its orbit. This phenomenon was difficult to explain within the framework of the geocentric theory. However, according to the heliocentric theory, the Earth and Mars orbit the Sun in their respective orbits, and due to the difference in their speeds, from the perspective of the Earth, there would be an illusion of Mars' "retrograde" motion. Copernicus realized that this could be one of the key pieces of evidence he had been searching for.

To further verify his idea, Copernicus began to conduct more detailed observations of other planets. He found that the satellite systems of Jupiter and Saturn also exhibited motion patterns consistent with the heliocentric theory. These satellites revolve around their consistent with the heliocentric theory. These satellites revolve around their parent planets, just as the Earth and other planets revolve around the Sun. Copernicus was overjoyed, knowing that these new discoveries would greatly enhance the credibility of the heliocentric theory.

As his research progressed, Copernicus also met some like-minded scholars. They jointly explored the mysteries of astronomy and exchanged their research findings with each other. The support and encouragement from these scholars made Copernicus even more determined to publish “On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres”

Finally, after years of hard work and accumulated efforts, Copernicus believed that the time was ripe. He made the final revisions and improvements to “On the Revolutions of improvements to “On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres”, incorporating all his research achievements and new discoveries over the years into it. This work, which embodied his life's efforts was finally published.

The publication of “On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres “immediately attracted widespread attention in the academic community. Although it was initially opposed and attacked by some conservative forces, more and more scholars, through the study and verification of Copernicus' theory, gradually came to recognize the validity of the heliocentric theory. As time went by, the heliocentric theory was gradually accepted by people and became one of the fundamental theories of modern astronomy.

Copernicus thus became famous throughout the ages. His perseverance and courage not only advanced the progress of science but also opened a new door for humanity to understand the universe. His story has inspired countless scientists who came after him to bravely pursue the truth and face difficulties and obstacles.

Question:

1. Which of the following statements is NOT true according to the passage?

A. Copernicus set aside the manuscript of On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres because he was afraid of the opposition from the scientific and religious communities.

B. The "retrograde" phenomenon of Mars was difficult to explain by the geocentric theory but could be well accounted for by the heliocentric theory.

C. The support and encouragement from like-minded scholars strengthened Copernicus' determination to publish his work.

D. Copernicus' heliocentric theory was initially opposed but gradually accepted over time and became a fundamental theory of modern astronomy.

## **2 . Date:2.28**

In the collaborative activities of human society, a noteworthy behavioral pattern has gradually emerged: individuals often exert significantly less effort in group tasks than they do when acting independently. This prevalent psychological phenomenon is referred to as the “social loafing effect” in social psychology.

This effect has typical manifestations in various social scenarios. In group project studies in the field of education, some students reduce their participation due to the psychology of “shared responsibility.” In team projects organized by enterprises, certain members adopt a “free-riding” mentality and respond negatively to their assigned responsibilities. Even in community volunteer activities, some participants slack off because they perceive that their individual contributions are not clearly recognized. This decline in individual motivation within collective actions has become a significant issue that restricts organizational effectiveness.

A French engineer named Ringelmann (1913) conducted an experiment. He asked the subjects to pull ropes in different situations, including when they were alone and in groups of various sizes, and used a dynamometer to measure their pulling force. The results showed that as the number of subjects increased, the average pulling force exerted by each individual decreased. When pulling alone, the average force exerted by an individual was 63 kilograms; in a group of three, the average force per person was 53.5 kilograms; and in a group of eight, it was 31 kilograms. Pessin’s experiment also indicated that when college students were required to memorize meaningless syllables, they spent more time on the task when others were present compared to when they were alone. This reflects the decrease in individual efficiency due to the diffusion of responsibility, which is inherently related to the social loafing effect. There are two possible reasons for the above observations. One is that the subjects failed to coordinate their efforts optimally, and the other is the occurrence of the social loafing effect. Relevant meta-analyses have provided conclusive evidence supporting the social loafing phenomenon. Researchers (J. M. Jackson and K. D. Williams, 1988) summarized 49 related experimental studies involving over 4,000 subjects. The results showed that as the number of people in a group increased, the less effort each individual exerted. When the group size reached 16, an individual’s effort was only 80% of that exerted when working alone.

When exploring its causes, we can analyze the phenomenon from the perspectives of social cognition and group dynamics. The primary factor lies in the diffusion of responsibility: when individuals are hidden within a group, their sense of responsibility is easily diluted, leading to a psychological bias of “safety in numbers.” Similar to the tug-of-war effect in a physics experiment, each participant subconsciously reduces their effort, resulting in a non-linear decrease in the collective force. Secondly, weak goal identification constitutes a deep-seated cause: if members lack a sense of alignment with the collective goal, it is difficult to stimulate their internal motivation. For example, employees who are skeptical of the company’s strategy often exhibit a negative attitude in cross-departmental collaboration.

The negative impacts of the social loafing effect are twofold. At the group level, it not only leads to a marginal decrease in resource allocation efficiency—similar to the “1+1<2” effect in management—but also erodes organizational cohesion: the sense of fairness among diligent members is undermined, potentially triggering the “broken window effect” and leading to a continuous decline in overall effectiveness. At the individual level, individuals who have long relied on the group’s cover are prone to developing a psychological pattern of “responsibility evasion.” When faced with situations requiring independent decision-making, they often exhibit structural deficiencies in their ability to cope.

To address this behavioral dilemma, a multi-dimensional governance system needs to be established. At the foundational level, it is necessary to enhance the responsibility definition mechanism. Using the SMART principle (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound), the individual’s role should be clearly defined, such as through the use of the RACI matrix (Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, Informed) in project management. At the institutional level, a differentiated evaluation system should be established, integrating the Kirkpatrick Four-Level Evaluation Model (Reaction, Learning, Behavior, Result) with the incentive mechanism to create a virtuous cycle of “rewarding the capable.”At the same time, fostering a sense of “psychological ownership” can encourage members to internalize the collective mission as their personal value pursuit.

Questions:

1. According to the passage, the “social loafing effect” refers to:

A. Individuals’ tendency to work harder in groups than independently

B. The phenomenon that individuals exert less effort in group tasks than when acting alone

C. The increase of individual motivation in collective actions

D. The situation where group members share responsibilities equally

2. Ringelmann’s and Pessin’s experiments are mentioned in the passage to:

A. Prove that people can coordinate their efforts better in groups

B. Illustrate the positive effects of group work

C. Provide evidence for the existence of the social loafing effect

D. Show that the number of group members has no impact on individual effort

3. The primary cause of the social loafing effect is:

A. The lack of a clear goal in group work

B. The diffusion of responsibility within a group

C. The negative attitude of employees towards the company’s strategy

D. The failure of members to communicate effectively

4. To address the social loafing effect, which of the following is NOT mentioned as a measure in the passage?

A. Establishing a clear responsibility definition mechanism at the foundational level

B. Encouraging members to compete with each other at the institutional level

C. Strengthening goal alignment at the cultural level

D. Integrating the Kirkpatrick Four-Level Evaluation Model with the incentive mechanism at the institutional level

## **3 . Date:3.1**

In the vast forests of North America, when opossums encounter natural enemies, they immediately fall to the ground, with their heartbeats and breaths rapidly decreasing, as if they were real corpses. This behavior of playing dead is not confined to the American continent. In Australia, female leaf-tailed geckos pretend to be dead when facing excessive courtship from males. On the African savannah, certain beetles suddenly become stiff and motionless when sensing danger. These animal behaviors across different regions not only demonstrate the common wisdom of life in the face of threats but also provide a unique perspective for understanding transnational phenomena in human society.

The behavior of animals playing dead reflects the universality of biological evolution. British biologist Charles Darwin detailed the self-protection mechanisms of various organisms in South America in his work On the Origin of Species. He found that not only mammals but also insects feign death to avoid predators. This similar behavior across different species reflects the common choices made by life under survival pressures. As the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle once stated, “Nature does nothing in vain.” Playing dead, as an evolutionary strategy, has been observed worldwide.

From animal behavior to human society, this survival wisdom shows striking similarities. During the American Westward Expansion, many pioneers adopted a strategy of temporary forbearance when facing threats from Native American tribes. At that time, the pioneers were relatively scattered and weak in strength. Confronted with potential attacks from Native American tribes, they did not resist blindly but chose to avoid conflicts, seeking suitable times and places to establish settlements while secretly growing and strengthening their forces. Like animals playing dead and waiting for the right opportunity, these pioneers, through their forbearance, eventually established a firm foothold on the land and gradually promoted the development of the Westward Expansion. Similarly, during the Middle Ages in Europe, Venetian merchants often opted to temporarily yield and covertly build up their strength when confronted with powerful competitors. These historical examples illustrate that the strategy of playing dead is not exclusive to animals but also an important survival wisdom for humans in complex social environments.

The widespread occurrence of playing dead behavior underscores that survival strategies exhibit cross-cultural commonalities. American psychologist Abraham Maslow, in his study of the hierarchy of human needs theory, found that the need for safety is one of the most basic physiological needs. This aligns with the self-protection instincts of animals. In modern international relations, small nations often adopt neutral policies under pressure from larger powers, effectively employing a “playing dead” strategy. This approach is not a sign of cowardice but a survival wisdom based on practical considerations.

The wisdom of life transcends species and regions. Playing dead, as a survival strategy, has been fully validated both in the natural world and in human society. From opossums in the Americas to pioneers during the American Westward Expansion, from beetles in Africa to Venetian merchants, this survival strategy demonstrates the resilience and adaptability of life. In today’s globalized world, comprehending this cross-cultural survival wisdom not only enhances our understanding of the biological realm but also offers a fresh perspective for navigating complex social dynamics. As the German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel once stated, “Everything that exists is reasonable.” Playing dead, as a survival strategy, holds its own value and significance in both the natural world and human society.

Questions:

1. In the context of the passage, the strategy of animals playing dead and its parallel in human society primarily demonstrates:

A. That humans adopt these strategies out of cultural norms rather than survival instincts like animals.

B. A universal survival logic where both adapt to threats by appearing vulnerable to gain time or avoid harm.

C. The superiority of animal instincts over human strategic thinking as animals’ responses are more immediate.

D. That while animals use it for physical survival, humans use similar strategies mainly for economic gain.

2. Based on Hegel’s “Everything that exists is reasonable” and the passage, how does the “playing dead” strategy in animals and humans reflect this philosophy considering evolution, instincts, and strategies?

A. It’s a result of random mutations and arbitrary choices, yet its persistence proves its reason for existing.

B. In animals, it’s a natural instinct; in humans, a strategic choice; both serve survival, justifying Hegel’s idea.

C. Animal response is primitive, human strategy sophisticated, but both aid life continuation, fitting the concept loosely.

D. Linking this strategy to Hegel’s philosophy is wrong as animal reaction is mechanical and human strategy short-sighted.

3. The author’s purpose of citing the examples of American pioneers during the Westward Expansion and Venetian merchants in the Middle Ages is to:

A. Highlight the differences between human and animal survival strategies through historical cases.

B. Prove that human survival strategies are more complex and diverse compared to the simple instincts of animals.

C. Illustrate that humans, like animals, can employ strategies of feigning weakness or retreating temporarily to achieve long-term survival and development.

D. Emphasize the unique historical backgrounds of these groups and how they shaped their respective survival strategies.

## **4 . Date:3.2**

The United States, a powerful nation in terms of global economy and technology, has long been trapped in predicaments within the medical field. Persistent problems such as skyrocketing medical expenses, insufficient health insurance coverage, and unequal distribution of medical resources have remained intractable. Behind all these issues, the political system of separation of powers plays a complex and crucial role. The contradictions and conflicts arising from it not only hinder the progress of healthcare reform but also profoundly affect the health and well-being of the American people.

Under the system of separation of powers in the United States, the legislative power resides with Congress, the executive power is vested in the President and the government, and the judicial power belongs to the federal courts. The original intention of this design is to prevent the concentration and abuse of power through checks and balances, thus ensuring the stable operation of the democratic system. However, when it comes to healthcare issues, the separation of powers has triggered a series of irreconcilable contradictions.

From a legislative perspective, Congress plays a central role in formulating healthcare policies. However, since Congress is composed of the Senate and the House of Representatives, its members are influenced by multiple factors, including partisan interests, the financial backers behind them, and the demands of voters in their electoral districts. As a result, there are serious discrepancies in healthcare-related legislation. Take the Affordable Care Act (commonly known as Obamacare) for example. The Obama administration attempted to expand health insurance coverage through this act, enabling more people to enjoy medical protection. This act underwent a long and intense debate in Congress. Most Democratic members supported the healthcare reform, believing that it was a necessary measure to ensure social fairness and enhance people’s well-being. In contrast, Republican members strongly opposed it. They were concerned that the healthcare reform would increase the government’s financial burden, interfere with free market competition, and harm the interests of businesses. Such opposition between the two parties made the deliberation of the act in Congress extremely difficult. It was only after numerous revisions and compromises that the act was finally passed. Even so, in the following years, the Republican Party continuously attempted to repeal or weaken the act, leading to the long-term instability of U.S. health insurance policies.

The exercise of executive power in medical affairs also faces numerous challenges. As the representative of executive power, the President has the authority to formulate and implement healthcare-related policies. However, under the system of separation of powers, the President’s decisions are often restricted by Congress and the judiciary. For instance, during the tenure of President Trump, in order to fulfill his campaign promises, he took a series of administrative measures to undermine Obamacare, including canceling the mandatory insurance enrollment requirement and cutting subsidies for the health insurance market. Although these executive orders represented the exercise of the President’s executive power, they triggered strong dissatisfaction among Democratic members in Congress. They believed that the Trump administration’s actions had undermined the stability of the health insurance system and damaged the interests of the people. Meanwhile, some state governments also questioned the Trump administration’s healthcare policies and safeguarded their own rights and interests through legal proceedings. This indicates that in the process of implementing healthcare policies, the executive branch has to face not only the discrepancies among domestic political forces but also the scrutiny and challenges from the judiciary.

The judiciary also plays a significant role in healthcare issues. The Supreme Court has the ultimate power of legal interpretation and judicial review, and its rulings have a decisive influence on the direction of healthcare policies. In some major cases related to healthcare, the judgments of the Supreme Court often become the focal point of political struggles. For example, the constitutionality of the Affordable Care Act was submitted to the Supreme Court several times. During the adjudication process, the justices of the Supreme Court showed serious discrepancies due to differences in their political stances and judicial philosophies. Conservative justices tended to limit the power of the federal government and were skeptical about the Affordable Care Act. On the other hand, liberal justices supported a greater role for the government in the medical field and defended the legality of the healthcare reform act. This politicized tendency in judicial rulings makes it difficult for the judgments of the Supreme Court to be completely based on laws and facts. Instead, they are influenced by political factors, further intensifying the uncertainty of U.S. healthcare policies.

The checks and balances under the system of separation of powers were originally intended to ensure democracy and fairness. However, in the case of healthcare issues, they have led to low decision-making efficiency, lack of policy consistency, and a huge waste of resources. Various interest groups, pursuing their own interests, engage in political maneuvering in the formulation and implementation of healthcare policies, turning those who truly need medical protection into victims of political struggles. The healthcare issues in the United States are not merely social and livelihood issues but also a concentrated manifestation of the deep-seated contradictions within its political system. To address the healthcare dilemma in the United States, it is necessary to reflect profoundly on and reform the system of separation of powers, break the political deadlock, and seek a more effective model of political governance to achieve the rational allocation of medical resources and improve people’s health and well-being. Otherwise, the healthcare problems in the United States will continue to deteriorate, and social contradictions will be further intensified.

Questions:

1. According to the passage, the system of separation of powers in the US was originally designed to:

A. Facilitate the resolution of long-standing medical field problems

B. Distribute political power evenly among different interest groups

C. Safeguard the democratic system by preventing power concentration and abuse

D. Promote the rapid development of the healthcare industry

2. The example of the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare) is used to demonstrate that:

A. Healthcare reform can stimulate free market competition to some extent

B. The legislative process of healthcare policies is frequently disrupted by partisan divides

C. The executive branch can effectively implement healthcare policies without hindrance

D. The judicial branch has little influence on the final outcome of healthcare legislation

3. It can be inferred from the passage that the Trump administration’s measures towards Obamacare:

A. Might have been influenced by both political promises and certain economic considerations

B. Were mainly aimed at improving the stability of the US health insurance system

C. Received widespread support from both Democratic and Republican members in Congress

D. Were completely in line with the original intention of the system of separation of powers

4. The politicized tendency in the Supreme Court’s judicial rulings on healthcare cases is likely to result in:

A. A more balanced distribution of medical resources across the US

B. Increased trust from the public towards the judicial decisions on healthcare

C. A more complex and uncertain situation for US healthcare policies

D. A quicker resolution of the long-existing healthcare issues in the US

5. The word “intractable” in the sentence “Persistent problems such as skyrocketing medical expenses, insufficient health insurance coverage, and unequal distribution of medical resources have remained intractable” probably means:

A. Somewhat difficult to handle but still manageable

B. Extremely hard to deal with and not easily solved

C. Likely to be resolved with more financial input

D. Having been recently exacerbated by political factors

6. In the author’s view, to tackle the healthcare dilemma in the US, the following actions might be necessary EXCEPT:

A. Making adjustments to the system of separation of powers

B. Reducing the influence of interest groups in healthcare policy-making

C. Enhancing cooperation among different states in the medical field

D. Breaking the political deadlock among different branches of the government

## **5 . Date:3.3**

Chocolate, currently regarded as an emblem of sweetness and romance, a token commonly exchanged on Valentine’s Day to convey affection, and a staple offering in the assortments of numerous dessert shops worldwide, harbors a historical narrative that is as intriguing as it is little known: a past in which it functioned as a form of currency. This role has intricately woven itself into the fabric of its development, adding a layer of unique allure to its story.

The origin of chocolate can be traced back to the cocoa bean, the fruit of the cocoa tree, a plant that exhibits an almost finicky dependence on its environmental conditions for survival and growth. Flourishing predominantly in the warm, humid climates of the tropics near the equator and demanding specific soil compositions that offer both fertility and excellent drainage, the cocoa tree has been a subject of human cultivation for approximately three millennia. It was the ancient South Americans who first began to domesticate and nurture these trees, with the Mayans, in particular, developing an extraordinary affinity for the cocoa beans they produced. The Mayans, demonstrating remarkable ingenuity in their culinary practices, would meticulously dry and crush the cocoa beans, combining them with water and chili peppers to create a beverage that was not only bitter in taste but also contained theobromine and trace amounts of caffeine. These substances provided a stimulating effect, making the drink highly prized within their society, especially in religious ceremonies and social gatherings.

In the economic framework of the Mayan civilization, where the concept of currency deviated significantly from the metallic coins that would become prevalent in later historical periods, the scarcity and practical utility of certain commodities led to their adoption as mediums of exchange. Cocoa beans, due to the arduous nature of cultivating cocoa trees—a process that required several years from the planting of a sapling to the first fruition and yielded relatively limited harvests—emerged as a valuable and sought-after commodity that gradually assumed the role of currency. Archaeological excavations and the careful analysis of ancient records have provided valuable insights into the economic significance of cocoa beans in Mayan society. For example, it has been determined that the exchange value of a turkey was equivalent to around 100 fresh cocoa beans, a large tomato could be acquired for a single bean, and a sumptuous garment might cost between 8 and 100 beans, reflecting a sophisticated system of valuation based on these precious commodities.

Moving forward in history to the era of the Aztec Empire, the status of cocoa beans as a form of currency was further solidified and expanded. The Aztecs, who held cocoa beans in even higher esteem than the Mayans, imposed a tribute system on neighboring tribes requiring them to pay a certain quantity of cocoa beans as a sign of submission and allegiance. In the daily lives of the Aztecs, cocoa beans played a central role in economic transactions, serving not only as a means to purchase essential goods and services but also as a form of payment for labor, with the daily wage of a laborer being set at 100 cocoa beans. However, the high value attributed to cocoa beans also attracted the attention of those seeking to profit from counterfeiting. The Aztecs, known for their advanced craftsmanship, developed sophisticated techniques for creating fake cocoa beans, such as baking fresh beans in hot ashes to alter their appearance or using amaranth dough, wax, and avocado pits to fashion imitations that were then encased in genuine cocoa bean shells. The proliferation of these counterfeit beans in the market created a degree of chaos and uncertainty, highlighting the challenges associated with maintaining the integrity of a commodity-based currency system.

The 16th century marked a pivotal moment in the history of chocolate with the arrival of Christopher Columbus in the Americas. During his exploration of Mexico, Columbus encountered the beverage made from cocoa beans, spices, and water, a discovery that would eventually lead to the introduction of the cocoa tree to Europe. In Spain, the initial reception of cocoa beans as an exotic novelty soon gave way to a more refined appreciation as the Spanish began to experiment with different recipes, adding sugar and honey to the bitter beverage to create a more palatable version that quickly gained popularity among the European aristocracy. At this time, chocolate remained a luxury item accessible only to the upper echelons of society, including royalty, nobility, and wealthy merchants, who saw it as a symbol of status and sophistication.

The 19th century, characterized by significant technological advancements and social changes, witnessed a revolutionary transformation in the production and consumption of chocolate. In 1828, a Dutch chemist’s invention of the cocoa pressing technique represented a major breakthrough enabling the separation of cocoa butter from cocoa powder and laying the foundation for the development of modern solid chocolate. This technological innovation not only increased the efficiency of chocolate production but also made it more accessible to the general public, as the lower production costs allowed for a wider distribution and a broader range of consumers. As a result, chocolate gradually evolved from a privilege of the elite to a mass-market product enjoyed by people of all social classes, its cultural significance shifting from a symbol of luxury to a more democratic form of pleasure and indulgence.

The journey of chocolate from its humble beginnings as a currency in ancient civilizations to its current status as a beloved global treat is a testament to the complex interplay of cultural exchange, technological progress, and social transformation. It reflects the ways in which different societies have interacted with and adapted to new resources, as well as the enduring human desire for pleasure and the pursuit of novel experiences. Each time we savor a piece of chocolate, we are not only indulging in a sensory delight but also participating in a historical narrative that spans thousands of years and connects us to the diverse cultures and traditions that have contributed to the evolution of this remarkable substance.

Questions:

1. Which of the following statements about the use of cocoa beans in Mayan and Aztec civilizations is true?

A. In both civilizations, the value of cocoa beans was influenced by their scarcity and practical functions in society.

B. Aztecs used counterfeit cocoa beans in their daily economic transactions to reduce costs.

C. Mayans mainly used cocoa beans for making bitter beverages and seldom involved them in economic activities.

D. Aztecs’ tribute system using cocoa beans weakened the status of cocoa beans as a currency in daily economic transactions.

2. The introduction of chocolate to Europe by Columbus resulted in:

A. A decline in the economic value of other imported exotic goods in the European market.

B. The establishment of chocolate as a luxury closely associated with the upper class’s identity in the initial stage.

C. An immediate replacement of traditional European beverages with chocolate among all social classes.

D. A surge in the number of cocoa tree plantations across Europe due to high market demand.

3. What can be inferred from the invention of the cocoa pressing technique in the 19th century?

A. It made chocolate manufacturers focus solely on cost reduction, ignoring the innovation of chocolate flavors.

B. It led to a decrease in the overall quality of chocolate products as mass production took precedence over quality control.

C. It not only improved the production efficiency but also expanded the consumer base and changed chocolate’s cultural significance.

D. It triggered a series of protectionist policies in European countries to safeguard their domestic chocolate industries.

4. The counterfeiting of cocoa beans in the Aztec Empire indicates that:

A. The Aztec economic system was highly flexible and could adapt to the impact of counterfeiting without significant losses.

B. Counterfeiting cocoa beans was a unique phenomenon in the Aztec Empire and had no impact on other commodity-based currency systems.

C. The high value placed on cocoa beans in the Aztec economy inevitably attracted individuals seeking illegal profits.

D. The Aztec government actively supported the production of counterfeit cocoa beans to boost the economy in a short term.

## **6 . Date:3.4**

In the profound realm of human behavior science, cognitive dissonance theory serves as a crucial theoretical cornerstone, offering a unique and profound perspective to understand the complex psychological and behavioral patterns of human beings. This theory was innovatively proposed by the American social psychologist Leon Festinger in 1957. Since then, it has been like a powerful beam of light, illuminating the hidden corners where cognition and behavior interact deeply within the human psyche.

The core of cognitive dissonance theory is that when there is a discrepancy between an individual’s behavior and their existing self-cognition, or among different cognitive elements, an uncomfortable state of tension—cognitive dissonance—arises. This dissonance is not merely a subtle psychological fluctuation; it has a powerful driving force that prompts individuals to adopt various strategies to reduce this incoordination and restore psychological homeostasis. Essentially, it reflects humanity’s innate pursuit of cognitive consistency and its self-regulatory mechanism when facing contradictions.

In the vast arena of real life, the phenomenon of cognitive dissonance is omnipresent and manifests in various forms. Take the conflict between moral cognition and behavior as an example. A person who adheres to the principle of honesty may, under specific situational pressures, engage in the act of lying. At this moment, the act of lying conflicts with their deep-seated cognitive belief in honesty, triggering cognitive dissonance. To alleviate the discomfort caused by this dissonance, they may reinterpret their behavior. For instance, they might explain the lie as a “white lie” told to avoid hurting others’ feelings. Alternatively, they may adjust their definition of honesty, believing that in certain special circumstances, lying does not go against the essence of honesty. Such a reconstruction of cognition is actually a self-protection mechanism for individuals facing cognitive dissonance. By changing their cognition to align with their behavior, they can reduce inner conflict.

In the field of consumer behavior, cognitive dissonance theory also has a wide and profound influence. Consumers often encounter conflicts and uncertainties in various information during the purchasing decision-making process. For example, a product may be advertised as having excellent performance and quality, but consumers may find some unsatisfactory aspects when using it in practice. At this point, there is a dissonance between the consumer’s purchasing behavior and their expected cognition of the product. To reduce this dissonance, consumers may selectively focus on the product’s advantages while ignoring or downplaying its disadvantages. Alternatively, they may attribute the product’s problems to external factors, such as improper usage methods or environmental influences. This phenomenon not only reflects the psychological adjustment process of consumers facing cognitive dissonance but also provides important insights for businesses in product marketing and after-sales service.

From a macroscopic perspective of social culture, cognitive dissonance theory can also explain many social phenomena and changes in values. During periods of social transformation, conflicts often arise between old values and behavioral patterns and new social realities, leading to cognitive dissonance among individuals and groups. For example, in today’s era of rapid technological development, some traditional occupations and ways of life have been unprecedentedly impacted, and people’s perceptions of occupational stability and social status have also changed. To cope with this cognitive dissonance, members of society may undergo a process of ideological transformation and behavioral adjustment, gradually accepting and adapting to the new social reality.

However, cognitive dissonance theory is not without its flaws. While it provides a powerful framework for explaining human behavior, it also has certain limitations. For instance, it struggles to fully explain individual differences in responses to cognitive dissonance. Why can some people quickly adjust their cognition and behavior, while others remain in a state of dissonance for a long time? Additionally, the influence of cultural and social environments on cognitive dissonance, as well as the manifestations of individual cognitive dissonance in different cultural contexts, still require further in-depth research.

As an important theory in human behavior science, cognitive dissonance theory reveals the complex relationship between human cognition and behavior. It helps us realize that human thinking and behavior do not exist in isolation but develop dynamically through continuous interaction and influence. Through in-depth research on cognitive dissonance theory, we can not only better understand human psychology and behavior but also provide useful theoretical support and practical guidance for solving real-world problems, such as marketing, mental health, and social change. In future research, we need to continuously expand and refine this theory to more comprehensively and deeply uncover the mysteries of the human inner world.

Questions:

1. What was the significance of Leon Festinger’s proposal of the cognitive dissonance theory in 1957?

A. It immediately became the most influential theory in the field of social psychology.

B. It filled a gap in the research of human behavior science at that time.

C. It provided a new and unique perspective for understanding complex human moral patterns.

D. It successfully explained the contradictions between human behavior and cognition.

2. Which of the following is an example of cognitive dissonance in consumer behavior according to the passage?

A. A consumer buys a product with high expectations based on the advertisement but later discovers some flaws, then focuses only on the product’s advantages to reduce the dissonance.

B. Consumers always believe the advertisements and never find the products unsatisfactory.

C. Consumers adjust their definition of product quality to match their purchasing behavior when the product doesn’t meet their expectations.

D. Consumers attribute all the problems of the product to the environmental factors without considering their own usage methods.

3. It can be inferred from the passage that in the face of cognitive dissonance caused by the impact of technological development on traditional occupations, members of society may:

A. Make some superficial adjustments in behavior while maintaining their core values and beliefs unchanged.

B. Initially be unaware of the dissonance and continue their old ways until forced to change by external circumstances.

C. Engage in a continuous struggle between adhering to the traditional and embracing the new without ever reaching a stable state.

D. Gradually modify their values and behaviors through a process of internal reflection and external influence to adapt to the new situation.

4. The underlined word “homeostasis” in the second paragraph probably means:

A. A state of stability.

B. Imbalance.

C. Fluctuation.

D. Conflict.

5. What is the main idea of the passage?

A. Cognitive dissonance occurs when there is a discrepancy between behavior and cognition, and people adopt different strategies to reduce it.

B. Cognitive dissonance theory is a crucial theory in human behavior science proposed by Leon Festinger.

C. Through in-depth research on cognitive dissonance theory, we can better understand human psychology and behavior and solve practical problems.

D. Cognitive dissonance theory explains various phenomena in real life, including moral, consumer, and social aspects, and also has its limitations.

## **7 . Date:3.5**

In the complex fabric of modern computer-human interaction, the mouse, an ostensibly unassuming peripheral, has become a crucial element, revolutionizing how we interact with computers. Its journey from a basic invention to a highly advanced input device is a narrative filled with remarkable technological progress and ingenuity, embodying humanity’s constant pursuit of more intuitive and efficient operation modes.

The mouse’s origin dates back to 1964 when Douglas Engelbart, a pioneer in human-computer interaction, created the world’s first mouse. Made of wood, this primitive device was vastly different from modern ones. With two perpendicular rollers at its base, it relied on the friction between these rollers and the desktop to control the cursor’s movement on the screen. It was named “mouse” because it resembled the small rodent, thanks to the long cable trailing behind. In an era dominated by complex command-line interfaces, this nascent mouse, capable of basic positioning within a fledgling graphical user interface operating system, was a revolutionary idea. It laid the groundwork for the eventual dominance of graphical operating systems, ushering in a new era of human-computer interaction.

Subsequently, the mechanical mouse emerged as a significant development, marking a golden age in its evolution. Building on the first-generation mouse, the mechanical mouse incorporated a more intricate system of mechanical components. A rubber ball, when rolled on the desktop, set two shafts in motion. These shafts were connected to a grating signal sensor, which cleverly converted mechanical motion into digital signals, enabling far more precise cursor positioning. This technological improvement led to a notable enhancement in both accuracy and reliability, making the operation smoother and more responsive. During the 1980s and 1990s, the mechanical mouse became an essential part of personal computing, used in a wide range of applications, from ordinary office document processing to the growing field of early computer gaming, like Minesweeper and Solitaire.

However, the mechanical mouse had its inherent flaws. The exposed rubber ball was highly likely to collect dust and debris. Over time, this buildup would reduce the mouse’s sensitivity, requiring regular and often troublesome cleaning to maintain optimal performance. This drawback, though, spurred the innovation that led to the optical mouse.

The optical mouse represented a major change in mouse technology. Abandoning the mechanical components of its predecessor, it used an optical sensor as its core mechanism. A light-emitting diode (LED) at the mouse’s base emitted light onto the desktop, which was then reflected back to the sensor. By carefully analyzing the details of the reflected light, the optical mouse could calculate its movement in distance and direction with great precision. This design not only eliminated the need for mechanical moving parts but also increased durability and greatly reduced maintenance. As a result, the optical mouse became the standard for computer users, promoting the widespread use of computers by providing a more reliable and convenient user experience.

The arrival of the 21st century saw the rapid rise of wireless communication technology, which paved the way for the wireless mouse to enter the mainstream. Using either Bluetooth or 2.4GHz wireless technology, these mice broke the physical connection to the computer, freeing users from cable restrictions and offering unprecedented freedom of movement. Whether in a corporate boardroom during an important presentation or in the comfort of one’s living room on the sofa, the wireless mouse provided a seamless and convenient computing experience. To meet users’ diverse needs, manufacturers innovated, introducing ergonomic designs that fit the natural shape of the human hand and multi-button programmable mice that allowed users to customize input options for higher productivity.

In today’s technological landscape, the combination of artificial intelligence and the Internet of Things has given birth to the smart mouse, a cutting-edge development at the forefront of mouse evolution. Beyond traditional mouse functions, smart mice are equipped with a variety of advanced features. Voice recognition technology enables users to dictate text, execute commands, and search for files by speaking, eliminating manual typing and significantly improving work efficiency. Gesture control, another key feature, allows for intuitive computer interaction, with users able to perform operations like scrolling, zooming, and switching applications through simple hand movements. Moreover, smart mice are designed to be an integral part of the booming smart home ecosystem, integrating seamlessly with other smart devices to provide a unified and intelligent living experience.

In summary, the mouse’s evolutionary path, from its simple mechanical start to its current high-tech intelligent form, testifies to human innovation and the unquenchable desire for technological advancement. Each new iteration has not only overcome the limitations of its predecessors but also introduced new capabilities that have redefined human-computer interaction. Looking ahead, the mouse’s future holds the promise of even more profound changes, driven by emerging technologies such as quantum computing, augmented reality, and neural-interface technology, which are set to reshape how we interact with our digital world.

Questions:

1. According to the passage, which of the following contributed most to the mechanical mouse’s improved cursor positioning compared to the first-generation mouse?

A. The use of a rubber ball instead of wooden rollers, which provided better traction on the desktop.

B. The incorporation of a more complex system of mechanical components, including shafts and a grating signal sensor.

C. The enhancement of the material quality of the mouse body to reduce interference with cursor movement.

D. The optimization of the cable connection to ensure more stable signal transmission for cursor control.

2. It can be inferred from the passage that the development of the smart mouse in the context of artificial intelligence and the Internet of Things is mainly driven by:

A. The pursuit of creating more luxurious and high-end computer peripherals to increase market profit margins.

B. The need to adapt to the growing complexity and interconnectedness of modern digital environments and user demands.

C. The competition among different mouse manufacturers to outperform each other in technological innovation.

D. The popularity of certain software applications that require more advanced input devices for better operation.

3. Which of the following statements best summarizes the main idea of the passage?

A. The mouse has evolved from a simple wooden device to a sophisticated intelligent tool, with each stage of development being influenced by technological progress and user needs, and its future is likely to be shaped by emerging technologies.

B. The history of the mouse is a story of how computer manufacturers continuously improved their products to meet the changing market demands, and smart mice are the latest and most successful result.

C. The development of the mouse reflects the constant struggle between different technological approaches, such as mechanical and optical, and how they have been integrated in modern smart mice.

D. The mouse’s evolution is mainly a response to the development of computer operating systems, and as these systems become more advanced, the mouse will continue to change accordingly.

4. The optical mouse became the standard for computer users mainly because:

A. It was more aesthetically pleasing in design compared to the mechanical mouse, which attracted more consumers.

B. It offered a more reliable and convenient user experience by eliminating mechanical moving parts, increasing durability and reducing maintenance.

C. It was more compatible with a wider range of computer operating systems than the mechanical mouse.

D. It could be used in more complex working environments without being affected by factors like dust and debris.

5. Based on the passage, what is likely to be the relationship between emerging technologies like quantum computing, augmented reality, and the future development of the mouse?

A. These emerging technologies will provide new possibilities and directions for the mouse’s development, potentially leading to significant changes in its functionality and interaction methods.

B. The mouse will gradually become less relevant as these emerging technologies introduce entirely new ways of interacting with digital devices, making the mouse obsolete.

C. The development of the mouse will drive the progress of these emerging technologies by providing practical application scenarios and user feedback.

D. These emerging technologies will only have a minor impact on the mouse’s development, mainly affecting its appearance and some peripheral features.

6. The author mentions the use of the mouse in early computer games such as Minesweeper and Solitaire in order to:

A. Emphasize the importance of gaming in the overall development history of the mouse as it was the primary driving force for innovation.

B. Illustrate that the mechanical mouse was initially designed specifically for gaming purposes rather than general office work.

C. Show that the mouse’s functionality was sufficient to support the operation of various software applications during that period, including both office and gaming ones.

D. Demonstrate how the limitations of the mechanical mouse were more evident in gaming compared to other types of software usage.

## **8 . Date:3.6**

On the expansive African continent, in numerous poverty-stricken enclaves, a phenomenon defies the norms of traditional economic theory: the Giffen goods phenomenon. This isn’t merely an economic oddity; it’s a multi-faceted reflection of Africa’s economic development quandaries, the harsh realities of daily life for its people, and the deeply-rooted social and economic issues plaguing the region.

Take Somalia and South Sudan, regions marred by war and poverty. Here, staple food crops like corn and sorghum exemplify Giffen goods. For the destitute families in these areas, daily earnings are meager, scarcely sufficient to cover the most basic living expenses. Food expenditures consume the lion’s share of their household budgets. Their dietary patterns are alarmingly simplistic, relying almost exclusively on these relatively low-cost grains. In a textbook economic scenario, when the prices of corn and sorghum increase, the demand for them should wane. But the ground reality tells a different story. These impoverished families not only refrain from cutting back on their purchases but are forced to dig deeper into their pockets and buy even more. The reason is plain: they lack the financial means to afford pricier meats, vegetables, or other more nutritious alternatives. To stave off the clutches of hunger, they pour their limited resources into these staple foods, which, despite the price hikes, remain the most “economical” option for meeting their fundamental survival requirements.

Underpinning the Giffen goods phenomenon is Africa’s long-standing battle with poverty. In certain parts of the continent, the level of economic development remains abysmally low. The industrial base is feeble, and agricultural production technology lags far behind global standards. A significant number of farmers still rely on age-old farming practices, leaving them vulnerable to the whims of nature. As a result, crop yields are highly erratic. The situation is exacerbated by recurrent wars and natural calamities such as droughts and massive locust infestations. These disasters have dealt a series of devastating blows to agricultural production, leading to a chronic shortage in the food supply. Even a minor disruption in the supply-demand balance can trigger a sharp spike in food prices.

Poverty in Africa has also cast a long shadow over the education sector. With limited financial resources, many families cannot afford to send their children to school for an extended period. As a consequence, a large number of young people drop out early, ill-equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to secure stable employment and decent incomes. This perpetuates the cycle of poverty. Moreover, children from poor families often suffer from malnutrition, which hampers their physical and cognitive development, further narrowing their prospects for a better future.

The Giffen goods phenomenon also shines a light on Africa’s disadvantaged position in the international economic arena. African countries generally face an uphill battle in international trade. They are predominantly exporters of primary agricultural products and mineral resources, while relying heavily on imports of industrial finished goods and high-end technological products. Lacking in core competitiveness, they have little say in setting international market prices and are left to endure the vagaries of price fluctuations. When international food prices soar, African countries’ import costs skyrocket. This, in turn, fuels a further increase in domestic food prices, heaping more suffering on the already-impoverished population.

In essence, the Giffen goods phenomenon in Africa is not a straightforward economic matter. It is a complex social conundrum that encompasses poverty alleviation, economic development strategies, and international relations. To address this issue comprehensively, African countries must take the lead. They need to channel more investment into agriculture, modernize agricultural production techniques, beef up infrastructure construction, and focus on improving the overall well-being of their people. Simultaneously, the international community has a crucial role to play. By providing substantial support and meaningful assistance, the global community can help Africa break free from the chains of poverty, navigate out of the economic quagmire, and enable the African people to finally shed the helplessness imposed by Giffen goods and embrace a prosperous future.

Questions:

1. What role does the industrial base play in the Giffen goods phenomenon in Africa?

A. A strong industrial base would lead to higher food prices, worsening the Giffen goods situation.

B. The feeble industrial base restricts economic growth, contributing to poverty, which is a root cause of the Giffen goods phenomenon.

C. The industrial base has no significant connection to the Giffen goods phenomenon as it mainly involves agricultural products.

D. A developed industrial base would directly solve the Giffen goods problem by providing more job opportunities.

2. Considering the interrelation between education, employment, and the Giffen goods phenomenon in Africa, which of the following statements accurately describes how the education level influences the prevalence of Giffen goods?

A. Higher education levels lead to more job opportunities with better pay, enabling people to afford a more diverse diet and reducing the reliance on Giffen goods.

B. Even with low education levels, people can still obtain high-paying jobs through physical labor, thus having no impact on the Giffen goods situation.

C. Education level has a negligible effect on the Giffen goods phenomenon as it mainly depends on the availability of food resources.

D. A high education level may cause people to migrate to other regions in search of better opportunities, increasing the local demand for Giffen goods due to the reduced workforce.

3. In the context of international trade, which of the following is the most significant factor contributing to Africa’s disadvantaged position and its connection to the Giffen goods phenomenon?

A. The high cost of importing industrial finished goods.

B. The lack of a diverse range of export products.

C. Dependence on primary product exports and vulnerability to price fluctuations.

D. The difficulty in competing with developed countries in high-end technology products.

4. What can be inferred about the comprehensive solution to the Giffen goods phenomenon in Africa?

A. African countries should focus on developing the service sector to boost economic growth.

B. International support alone can solve the Giffen goods problem by providing sufficient resources.

C. A combination of African countries’ own efforts in various aspects like agriculture and infrastructure, along with international assistance, is essential.

D. African countries should first prioritize reducing the import of high-end technological products to save costs.

## **9 . Date:3.7**

The rifts and sutures in the European energy landscape have always been intertwined with multiple tensions. The dispute over the distribution of North Sea oil and gas resources acts as a prism reflecting the post-Brexit UK’s attempt to reshape its energy sovereignty. When the exploration data submitted by a British company significantly deviated from the joint data of Norway and Denmark, the focus of the three-country game had long surpassed technical differences and evolved into a reshuffle of future energy control in the North Sea. This undercurrent of competition has a mirror image across the English Channel: when France pushed ahead with the construction of a border nuclear power plant, it was challenged by Belgium’s safety standards. What seems to be a dispute over technical specifications actually affects the delicate balance of energy power between France and Belgium. The nuclear energy strategy not only stirs the geopolitical pattern of the European continent but also extends the game field to the African hinterland. The UK, France, and Italy are quietly redrawing the boundaries of traditional spheres of influence in the competition for new energy projects.

The wave of energy transition is reshaping the power structure of the European electricity market. The rapid expansion of renewable energy in Germany has not only impacted the market share of Dutch natural gas but also given birth to the embryonic form of a new-type industrial alliance. The efforts of the Netherlands and Belgium to build an alternative energy network are both a rebellion against traditional energy dependence and a counterbalance to Germany’s green technology hegemony. This structural adjustment has triggered a chain reaction in Southern Europe: Spain’s ambitious solar energy plan has encountered the ecological red line of Portugal, and the hydropower dispute in the Pyrenees has exposed the deep-seated contradictions in cross-border resource management. When solar panel arrays compete with hydrological systems for space, the geopolitical tug-of-war behind the development of clean energy has quietly emerged.

The clean energy competition in Northern Europe presents a more complex ecological dimension. Although Sweden’s wind power project in the Arctic Circle is in line with environmental protection principles, it conflicts with the fishing economy and ecological tourism of Norway and Finland. How to draw the red line for polar development has become a touchstone for testing the development of environmental protection consensus in Northern Europe? This contradiction continues to ferment in the Baltic Sea: the turbine units of Denmark’s offshore wind power not only disrupt the marine ecological balance but also trigger a share scramble in the Nordic electricity market. The “green premium” of clean energy is evolving into a new-type trade barrier. When wind turbine blades and undersea cables become geopolitical tools, the commitment to sustainability has to engage in a difficult game with economic benefits.

The covert battle in the natural gas market is tearing at the unity of Europe from another dimension. The tough stance of the Netherlands on issues such as environmental protection standards for exploitation and pricing rights exposes the survival anxiety of resource-based countries in the energy transition. The passive situation of Belgium as a transit hub reflects the structural dilemma of small and medium-sized countries in the energy game. This tense relationship reaches its peak in Eastern Europe: the tug-of-war over the “Nord Stream-2” project is not only a dispute over energy corridors but also a fierce collision between security paradigms and economic rationality. When Italy’s energy security demands encounter the geopolitical fears of Eastern European countries, the dividing line within the EU becomes visible in the natural gas pipelines.

The cooperation mechanisms forced by the crisis have finally sprouted in the cracks of the game. The establishment of a joint data monitoring platform has shifted the North Sea dispute from a zero-sum game to a rule reconstruction; the conclusion of a cross-border nuclear safety agreement has found an institutional solution to the differences in technical standards. What is more groundbreaking is the embryonic form of the African energy development framework, marking the beginning of a shift from the competitive model left over from the colonial era to a cooperation paradigm. The value of these innovative mechanisms lies not only in resolving specific contradictions but also in creating new-type governance tools. From third-party mediation mechanisms to flexible transition period arrangements, from ecological compensation schemes to the joint negotiation of market rules, Europe is struggling but firmly weaving a network of energy governance.

The formulation of ecological protection agreements for Arctic wind power projects and shipping safety guidelines in the Baltic Sea indicates that environmental considerations are beginning to be deeply embedded in geo-economic decision-making. When Sweden’s wind turbine spacing standards take into account Norway’s fishery data, and when Denmark’s turbine layout incorporates Sweden’s shipping maps, the development of clean energy has broken through national boundaries. This ecological shift is also reflected in Southern Europe: Spanish solar power plants reserve migration corridors for Portuguese fire salamanders, and French hydropower scheduling reserves ecological flows for Spain. Technological progress and biodiversity have reached a delicate balance through compromise.

The breakthrough in the pricing-power game is of the most symbolic significance. The Netherlands’ abandonment of its unilateral pricing advantage in favor of a negotiation mechanism not only reshapes the natural gas market rules but also reveals the limitations of resource nationalism. When Germany exchanges technology transfer for the Netherlands’ transition buffer period, and when Norway finds a balance point between EU rules and its own autonomy, the absoluteness of energy sovereignty begins to give way to the reality of mutual dependence. This transformation is particularly evident in the Nordic electricity market: the establishment of unified trading rules not only restrains Sweden’s expansion impulse but also standardizes Denmark’s market operations, and competitive cooperation has become the new normal.

The reconstruction of pipeline politics shows the bonding role of infrastructure. The transportation agreement reached by Belgium, the Netherlands, and France not only reduces transit fees but also innovates the maintenance responsibility-sharing model. When the operation rights of energy arteries shift from absolute sovereignty to joint management, the tightness of physical connection is being transformed into a catalyst for institutional integration. This change continues to ferment in the subsequent supervision of “Nord Stream-2”: the implementation of transparency operation requirements has made energy pipelines also carriers of safety supervision, and symbols of geopolitical confrontation are beginning to transform into risk-control tools.

In this epic energy reconstruction, the resolution of each dispute has given birth to new institutional embryos. The breakthrough of submitting the Barents Sea dispute to international arbitration not only opens up a way out of the deadlock between Norway and Russia but also sets an example for the settlement of marine resource disputes. The trade compromise between the EU and Norway has created a new “differentiated integration” model, providing a new script for the interaction between sovereign states and supranational entities. These institutional innovations spread like a neural network in the European energy body. Although they have not eliminated all contradictions, they have set a civilized framework for continuous games.

When the representatives of various countries walked out of the energy summit venue, the Brussels skyline before dawn was already tinged with light. The drilling platforms in the North Sea, the wind turbine arrays along the Rhine River, and the photovoltaic matrices in the Iberian Peninsula are still operating, but what drives them is no longer just the calculation of national interests but also the emerging common rules. This reconstruction is far from over, but the gene of order bred in chaos may be the most precious legacy for Europe to deal with future energy changes. Under the dual approach of the climate crisis and geopolitical turmoil, this imperfect cooperation mechanism will continue to undergo stress tests, and every crisis overcome may bring Europe one step closer to an energy community with a shared future.

Questions:

1. What does the dispute over North Sea oil and gas resources distribution mainly reflect?

A. The UK’s strong desire to enhance its technical exploration capabilities.

B. The complex technical cooperation among the UK, Norway, and Denmark.

C. The post-Brexit UK’s attempt to reshape its energy sovereignty.

D. The fierce competition for oil and gas resources in the North Sea region.

2. The construction of the French border nuclear power plant challenged by Belgium implies that:

A. Belgium is trying to gain more control over French energy projects.

B. There are fundamental differences in nuclear technology between the two countries.

C. Energy projects can trigger geopolitical and power balance issues between countries.

D. France’s nuclear energy development lags behind Belgium’s safety requirements.

3. Which of the following is NOT a result of the rapid expansion of renewable energy in Germany?

A. An increase in Germany’s traditional energy production.

B. A reduction in the market share of Dutch natural gas.

C. The emergence of a new-type industrial alliance in its initial form.

D. The Netherlands and Belgium’s efforts to build alternative energy networks.

4. In the clean energy competition in Northern Europe, the “green premium” of clean energy is evolving into:

A. A factor promoting more harmonious cooperation in clean energy development.

B. A new way to measure the environmental protection achievements of countries.

C. A new driving force for the development of clean energy technology.

D. A new-type trade barrier among countries.

5. The “Nord Stream-2” project in Eastern Europe represents:

A. A simple competition for energy supply routes among countries.

B. A successful example of European countries’ cooperation in energy.

C. A fierce collision between security paradigms and economic rationality.

D. A situation where economic benefits outweigh security concerns.

6. The establishment of the joint data monitoring platform for the North Sea dispute has:

A. Completely resolved the North Sea oil and gas distribution dispute.

B. Failed to achieve any positive results in dealing with the dispute.

C. Shifted the dispute from a zero-sum game to a rule reconstruction.

D. Intensified the conflicts among the related countries in the dispute.

7. What does the formulation of ecological protection agreements for Arctic wind power projects suggest?

A. Environmental protection is the most important factor in energy development.

B. Environmental considerations are being more deeply integrated into energy decision-making.

C. The development of clean energy will be strictly restricted by environmental agreements.

D. Arctic countries have reached a perfect consensus on environmental protection.

8. The Netherlands’ abandonment of its unilateral pricing advantage in the natural gas market:

A. Is a sign of the Netherlands’ weakness in the international energy market.

B. Has no impact on the existing natural gas market rules.

C. Reshapes the natural gas market rules and reveals the limitations of resource nationalism.

D. Is mainly due to the economic pressure from other EU countries.

9. The reconstruction of pipeline politics in Europe shows that:

A. Infrastructure plays a crucial role in promoting energy cooperation and integration.

B. Reducing transit fees is the core goal of pipeline politics reconstruction.

C. The operation rights of energy pipelines should always be under the control of a single country.

D. Energy pipelines will no longer be involved in geopolitical issues in the future.

10. What is the author’s attitude towards the future of the European energy community?

A. Pessimistic, believing that the existing contradictions cannot be resolved.

B. Optimistic, thinking that cooperation can lead to a shared energy future.

C. Doubtful, considering the complex geopolitical and economic situations.

D. Indifferent, just objectively presenting the current energy situation.

## **10.Date:3.8**

In the course of human history, the Armenian Genocide is an extremely heavy chapter. It was not an isolated and simple violent conflict but a tragic incident spawned by complex political interests, extreme ideologies, and brutal power games, fully exposing the immense harm of out-of-control political struggles.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the Ottoman Empire was facing severe internal and external troubles. Domestically, the feudal economy had been stagnant for a long time. The emerging bourgeoisie was eager to break the old order and develop capitalism, and the contradictions with the traditional feudal aristocracy were becoming increasingly acute. From 1908 to 1909, the Young Turks launched a coup. Although they aimed to promote reforms, the coup also exacerbated the domestic political chaos. Workers’ strikes and peasant uprisings broke out frequently, and social order was on the verge of collapse. Abroad, with the support of the great powers, emerging nation-states such as Bulgaria, Serbia, and Greece in the Balkans became independent one after another. They united in the Balkan Wars from 1912 to 1913 and seized large tracts of the Ottoman Empire’s territory in Europe, putting the Ottoman Empire under unprecedented geopolitical pressure. In this difficult situation, the ruling class of the Ottoman Empire, in an attempt to stabilize its regime, chose to incite extreme nationalism, and the Armenians unfortunately became the victims of this political crisis.

Religious and cultural differences were maliciously exploited by the political forces of the Ottoman Empire. Most Armenians believed in Christianity, which was different from the dominant Muslim faith in the Ottoman Empire. At the end of the 19th century, the Ottoman Empire government issued discriminatory policies against Armenians, restricting their rights in education, employment, and other aspects. Culturally, Armenia had a unique language, literature, art, and traditions, maintaining a distinct identity within the empire, which was regarded by some political opportunists as a “heterogeneous” factor undermining the unity of the empire. Thus, the Armenians were blamed as the culprits of the empire’s decline and became scapegoats for political elites to shift domestic contradictions and consolidate Turkish nationalism.

The decision-makers of the Ottoman Empire carefully planned the persecution of the Armenians. On April 24, 1915, the Ottoman Empire government arrested hundreds of Armenian intellectuals and community leaders in Istanbul. Subsequently, the official propaganda machine went into full swing, slandering the Armenians as “traitors” colluding with foreign enemies and “conspirators trying to subvert the empire.” Under the political high-pressure, these baseless accusations quickly spread among the lower classes, arousing xenophobic emotions. The ordinary Turkish people, after being brainwashed for a long time, lost their rationality and committed violent acts against the Armenians. The Ottoman Empire government then issued an expulsion order, forcing the Armenians to leave their homes and head to the Syrian Desert. During the long migration, the Armenians were robbed, massacred, and raped by the Ottoman army and armed thugs. A large number of people died, and countless families were torn apart.

The international political landscape also played a negative role in this tragedy. At that time, the European powers were busy with their own interest-seeking and sphere-of-influence division. Britain had important oil interests and strategic passage considerations in the Middle East. For example, Britain had a large number of oil investments in the Persian Gulf region. It was worried that interfering in the Armenian issue would trigger a fierce backlash from the Ottoman Empire and affect its oil trade. At the same time, Britain also hoped that the internal turmoil of the Ottoman Empire would weaken its influence around the Suez Canal, so as to better control this crucial waterway. France, based on its traditional influence in the Near East and its complex historical relations with the Ottoman Empire, maintained a facade of diplomatic balance on the surface but secretly expected the decline of the Ottoman Empire to create opportunities for itself to expand its influence in the region. Russia had territorial disputes with the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans and the Caucasus. Although it had some sympathy for the Armenians, it regarded them more as a political bargaining chip to check and balance the Ottoman Empire. Once its own core interests were involved, it turned a blind eye to the suffering of the Armenians. This kind of international-level indifference, selfishness, and interest entanglement has provided the conditions for the continuation of the genocide, leaving the Armenians isolated and at the mercy of brutal forces.

The shadow of the Armenian Genocide reminds us that power and indifference often pave the way for tragedies. Today, the United States, in the name of “democracy,” pursues its own interests. From Iraq to Syria, it selectively ignores atrocities. The lessons of history are still vivid. In today’s international community, are we again sowing the seeds for the next tragedy?

Questions:

1. Which of the following best describes the root cause of the Armenian Genocide within the context of the Ottoman Empire’s internal affairs?

A. The alleged disloyalty of Armenians fabricated by the Ottoman authorities.

B. The long-standing cultural pride of the Armenians that resisted assimilation into the Ottoman mainstream.

C. The economic competition between Armenian merchants and Ottoman-Turkish business elites.

D. The political manipulation by the Ottoman ruling class to divert attention from their governance failures and solidify power.

2. In what way did the international political landscape during that time NOT contribute to the continuation of the Armenian Genocide?

A. The individual interests of European powers such as oil-related concerns and territorial ambitions, which distracted them from the humanitarian crisis.

B. The secret treaties and alliances that the European powers had with the Ottoman Empire, which bound them to non-interference.

C. The lack of a unified international intervention mechanism due to the complex balance-of-power politics among the European powers.

D. The perception among some powers that the internal affairs of the Ottoman Empire were not their direct responsibility.

3. How did the religious and cultural differences between Armenians and the Ottoman Empire’s majority population interact with the political situation to lead to the genocide?

A. The Armenians’ religious leaders actively resisted the Ottoman Empire’s rule, which led to a political crackdown on the entire Armenian community.

B. These differences were gradually diminishing before the genocide, but political forces exaggerated them for their own gain.

C. The cultural and religious differences provided a pretext for the Ottoman Empire’s political forces to implement discriminatory policies, which escalated into systematic persecution.

D. The Ottoman Empire’s attempts to promote religious and cultural integration backfired and triggered violent reactions from the Armenians.

4. Why does the author mention the United States’ actions in Iraq and Syria in the context of the Armenian Genocide?

A. To emphasize the unique role of the United States in promoting global stability.

B. To highlight the consistent pursuit of peace-building efforts by powerful nations.

C. To draw a parallel between historical indifference and contemporary self-interested behavior under the guise of noble ideals.

D. To illustrate the evolution of international intervention strategies over time.

## **11.Date:3.9**

In the vast landscape of Wyoming, United States, a massive column of igneous rock rises abruptly from the ground. This is the famous Devils Tower. Standing at a height of 264 meters, it can be clearly seen from as far as 160 kilometers away. Its unique shape makes it an irreplaceable landmark in the region and attracts numerous geologists to study it, providing an excellent natural sample for research on the theory of negative feedback erosion.

For a long time, the traditional view held that mountain erosion was a simple one-way process. Under the continuous action of external forces such as wind and water, mountains would gradually weaken, their height would decrease, and their shape would become flatter. However, the theory of negative feedback erosion challenges this established perception, pointing out that there is a delicate dynamic balance between mountain uplift and erosion. When a mountain is uplifted due to geological movements, the terrain becomes more uneven, river flow velocity increases, and water erosion intensifies. However, excessive erosion reduces the mountain’s height and slope, slowing down the water flow and weakening the erosion effect. This self-regulating system maintains the relative stability of the mountain’s shape over long geological periods.

Looking back at the formation of Devils Tower, approximately 50 million years ago, Wyoming was below sea level, and large amounts of sandstone, limestone, and other sedimentary deposits accumulated. Subsequently, magma from deep underground surged and intruded into these sedimentary rocks, cooling and solidifying to form a hard igneous rock core. Over time, the surrounding soft sedimentary rocks were gradually eroded away, revealing Devils Tower.

Analyzing the evolution of Devils Tower from the perspective of negative feedback erosion theory, the mysteries within it become clearer. When Devils Tower first formed, the surrounding terrain was flat, and water flow was slow, and erosion was negligible. As time passed, crustal movements caused Devils Tower to rise gradually. The increase in height and slope accelerated water flow, significantly enhancing erosion of the surrounding rocks. The turbulent water continuously washed away the soft rocks around Devils Tower, while the hard igneous rock of the tower itself withstood most of the erosion.

However, as erosion progressed, the surrounding terrain gradually leveled, water flow slowed, and erosion intensity decreased. The negative feedback mechanism was vividly demonstrated in this process. To further verify the role of negative feedback erosion in the evolution of Devils Tower, scientists conducted a series of comparative experiments.

They selected another isolated mountain in the western United States with similar geological structures and climatic conditions but weaker uplift activity for comparison. Through years of continuous monitoring, the data clearly showed differences between the two. From 2018 to 2019, due to the interaction between uplift and erosion, the shape of Devils Tower fluctuated regularly with height changes between 0.1 and 0.3 meters. In contrast, the isolated mountain, lacking uplift activity, experienced monotonous erosion. In 2018 alone, its height decreased by 0.5 meters. This comparison highlights the crucial impact of uplift activity on mountain shape.

In a water erosion simulation experiment, scientists constructed two simulated terrains in the laboratory: one mimicking the terrain changes around Devils Tower and the other representing a stable terrain. In the 2020 experiment, erosion was simulated by precisely controlling water flow velocity and rate. The results showed that in the Devils Tower model, water flow velocity and erosion intensity exhibited clear negative feedback regulation. When the “terrain” slope increased by 20%, water flow velocity increased by 15%, and erosion intensity increased by 25%. However, as erosion continued, the terrain gradually flattened, and water flow velocity and erosion intensity decreased. In contrast, in the stable terrain model, erosion intensity increased monotonously with water flow. When water flow velocity increased by 20%, erosion intensity increased by 30%. This experiment visually demonstrates the unique role of negative feedback erosion in terrain changes.

During long-term research on Devils Tower, scientists used high-precision laser rangefinders to regularly measure its height and slope, monitored the flow rate, velocity, and sediment concentration of surrounding rivers, and observed macroscopic terrain changes using satellite remote sensing technology. Statistical analysis of the data shows that over the past few decades, the height of Devils Tower has remained relatively stable. For example, between 2010 and 2015, its height decreased by 0.2 meters. From 2015 to 2020, due to factors such as increased vegetation coverage and stable climate, the height decreased by only 0.05 meters. Meanwhile, the flow velocity of surrounding rivers has fluctuated little over the long term, strongly indicating that the negative feedback erosion mechanism has maintained the shape balance of Devils Tower. Additionally, the weathering degree of the rocks on Devils Tower’s surface aligns with negative feedback erosion theory. The weathering layer is thin in areas with strong erosion and thick in areas with weak erosion. On the side close to the river, where water erosion is strong, the average thickness of the rock weathering layer is 5 centimeters. On the leeward side, the weathering layer reaches 10 centimeters.

The in-depth research on Devils Tower in the United States provides strong empirical support for the theory of negative feedback erosion. It reveals that mountain erosion and evolution are part of an extremely complex dynamic system. The theory not only helps us understand the past and present of Devils Tower but also provides a scientific basis for predicting its future evolution. As research continues, Devils Tower will undoubtedly offer crucial clues for uncovering the mysteries of Earth’s evolution.

Questions:

1. Which of the following best serves as the title of the passage?

A. Devils Tower: A Natural Wonder in Wyoming.

B. The Formation and Evolution of Mountains: A Traditional Perspective.

C. Negative Feedback Erosion Theory: Unraveling the Mysteries of Devils Tower’s Evolution.

D. Comparative Studies on Mountain Erosion in the United States.

2. According to the passage, which of the following statements about the negative feedback erosion theory is most likely to be correct?

A. It indicates that mountain erosion is mainly a one-way process with minor influences from other factors.

B. When a mountain is uplifted, the terrain’s unevenness and water flow velocity may change in a way that affects erosion, though the relationship is complex.

C. Although excessive erosion can have an impact on water flow and erosion intensity, it doesn’t necessarily lead to a significant change in mountain shape.

D. The self-regulating system of negative feedback erosion mainly affects the short-term stability of mountain shape rather than the long-term one.

3. Why did scientists choose another isolated mountain in the western United States for comparison?

A. Because it has exactly the same geological structures and climatic conditions as Devils Tower.

B. To prove that uplift activity has no relation to mountain erosion.

C. To highlight the influence of uplift activity on mountain shape by comparing the differences in erosion and shape changes between the two mountains.

D. To show that all mountains in the United States have similar erosion patterns.

4. In the water erosion simulation experiment, what can be inferred from the results?

A. The stable terrain model has a more complex erosion mechanism than the Devils Tower model.

B. The negative feedback erosion mechanism only exists in the Devils Tower model but not in the stable terrain model.

C. As the “terrain” slope increases, the water flow velocity and erosion intensity always increase in both models.

D. The Devils Tower model better reflects the real-world mountain erosion situation with its negative feedback regulation.

5. If the height of Devils Tower decreased by 0.2 meters from 2010 to 2015 and by 0.05 meters from 2015 to 2020, and considering that factors like increased vegetation coverage and stable climate during 2015-2020 slowed down the height decrease, assuming these factors’ influence persists and remains the same during 2020-2025 (i.e., the proportion of height decrease reduction remains unchanged), how much will the height of Devils Tower decrease from 2020 to 2025?

A. 0.0125 meters

B. 0.01 meters

C. 0.005 meters

D. 0.0025 meters

## **12.Date:3.10**

Beneath the shimmering veil of twilight, where the cosmos whispers its ancient secrets to those who dare decipher the cryptic patterns etched across the celestial canvas, a solitary physicist, her mind ablaze with equations dancing like quantum fireflies in the dim chamber of consciousness, postulated—despite conventional academia dismissing such speculation as epistemological heresy—that reality might fundamentally unravel when consciousness interfaces with dark matter’s elusive fabric, thereby collapsing the artificial dichotomy between observer and observed, not through mechanical instrumentation, but via the very act of perception itself, which she argued(while calibrating her neutrino detector to filter out cosmic background interference) could potentially explain the paradoxical coexistence of wave-particle duality and retrocausality phenomena documented in quantum entanglement experiments conducted at near-absolute-zero temperatures.

## **13.Date:3.12**

Stepping into the sacred realm of European art, each sculpture stands like a silent historian, quietly observing the vicissitudes of the world. Yet, have you ever noticed that many sculptures have had their noses lost, leaving abrupt gaps that disrupt the smoothness of their faces? This peculiar phenomenon is like a mysterious symbol hidden in the long river of art, inviting us to explore the reasons behind it.

Looking back at the long and tumultuous history of Europe—an era marked by blood and fire. The Roman Empire expanded relentlessly, and Carthage was brutally devastated under its iron heel. In the frenzy of conquest, soldiers directed their weapons at these exquisite works of art, and the noses of the sculptures shattered one after another under the violent impact. The religious wars of the Middle Ages were no different. Driven by fanatical beliefs, followers of different sects regarded the sculptures of other religions as symbols of evil. Filled with boundless anger, they targeted the noses as the primary objects of attack, knocking them off repeatedly, turning these sculptures into silent witnesses of religious conflict. In this brutal historical process, the sculptures, bearing their wounds, have witnessed the collision and alternation of civilizations.

To verify the impact of war damage on sculptures, a research team once conducted a simulation experiment. They created small-scale replica sculptures using the same marble and bronze as the materials of ancient sculptures. By simulating the strikes of cold weapons, the experiment found that under impacts similar to those in war, the relatively slender and protruding parts, such as the noses, were the most vulnerable. In 50 simulated strike experiments, the noses of the marble sculptures showed obvious damage or breakage in 42 cases; the noses of the bronze sculptures were also severely damaged in 38 experiments. This strongly confirms the significant impact of war damage on the missing noses of sculptures.

The power of nature also plays a quiet yet profound role. Europe’s climate is complex and ever-changing, like a moody artist applying unique “creative techniques” to the sculptures. In the winters of Northern Europe, the biting cold wind is as sharp as a knife, mercilessly eroding every inch of the sculptures’ surfaces. During the rainy season in Southern Europe, acid rain falls like ink, leaving mottled marks on the sculptures. Marble sculptures, being inherently fragile, succumb to such erosion, with their noses often being the first to dissolve. Bronze sculptures are equally affected. Oxidation covers their surfaces with verdigris, and over time, the slender parts, such as the noses, quietly disappear due to corrosion. Year after year, nature alters the appearance of the sculptures in its own unique way, making them increasingly weathered with the passage of time.

Simulation experiments on climate erosion have further revealed this process. Researchers placed marble and bronze samples in experimental chambers simulating different climate environments, such as the severe cold of Northern Europe and the humid acid rain of Southern Europe. After a year of observation, in the simulated acid-rain environment, the calcium component on the surface of the marble samples was lost at an accelerated rate, and the erosion of the nose part was 30% more severe than that of other flat parts. In the humid oxidation environment, the verdigris formed on the surface of the bronze samples was uneven in thickness, with the nose part accumulating thicker layers of verdigris and experiencing more severe metal corrosion. These findings clearly demonstrate the destructive process of the natural environment on the noses of sculptures.

In addition to the influences of war and nature, other subtle yet crucial factors are at play. In ancient times, the process of sculpting was fraught with challenges and uncertainties. The technology and tools available were far less advanced than those today, and the carving of every detail tested the skills of the craftsmen. Natural pores in the stone and the flow of metal solutions—seemingly insignificant details—could inadvertently damage the noses of the sculptures. Moreover, due to the lack of sufficient experience and scientific methods in restoration and preservation, the loss of noses might also have occurred unintentionally.

From another perspective, people’s understanding and aesthetic concepts of art have also evolved over time. Throughout history, artistic standards have not remained static. In certain periods, artists might have abandoned the pursuit of traditional perfection, intentionally removing noses to break conventions and provoke new ways of thinking about beauty. This shift in creative philosophy has subtly influenced the form of sculptures, making those with missing noses a unique artistic expression and integrating them into the broader context of cultural development.

These sculptures with missing noses are like open history books. Every crack and gap records the passage of time. They not only prompt us to reflect on the complex relationships among art, history, nature, and humanity but also encourage us to re-examine the value and significance of art. On the path toward perfection, does imperfection also possess its own unique power? When we gaze at these sculptures with missing noses, what do we truly see: the regret of damage or a different kind of wholeness?

Questions:

1. According to the passage, which of the following is NOT a reason for the missing noses of European sculptures?

A. Intentional destruction during wars and religious conflicts

B. Natural erosion caused by Europe’s complex climate.

C. The preference of modern artists for incomplete artworks.

D. Inadequate ancient sculpting techniques and restoration methods

2. The simulation experiments on war damage and climate erosion are mentioned in the passage to:

A. compare the destructive power of war and nature.

B. provide scientific evidence for the causes of missing noses.

C. show the advanced research methods in art history.

D. emphasize the vulnerability of marble and bronze sculptures.

3. The author implies that the missing noses of sculptures:

A. are a regrettable result of historical and natural disasters.

B. have no real artistic value due to their incomplete state.

C. might have been intentionally created to express new artistic ideas in some periods.

D. are mainly caused by the carelessness of ancient craftsmen.

4. The word “vicissitudes” (Paragraph 1) is closest in meaning to:

A. stability

B. changes

C. prosperity

D. simplicity

5. Which of the following would be the most appropriate title for the passage?

A. The Mysterious Disappearance of Noses in European Sculptures: A Multifaceted Analysis

B. European Sculptures: The Victims of War and Natural Erosion

C. The Evolution of Artistic Standards Reflected in Nose-less Sculptures

D. How to Restore the Missing Noses of European Sculptures: A Difficult Task

## **14.Date:3.13**

**A**

On the \*\*\*\* Plain in \*\*\*\*, giant \*\*\*\* geoglyphs have been \*\*\*\* at the \*\*\*\* world for \*\*\*\* of \*\*\*\*, These \*\*\*\* patterns, outlined by \*\*\*\*, hide \*\*\*\* clues about the \*\*\*\* civilization and \*\*\*\* a challenge to \*\*\*\* science.

From the \*\*\*\* of artistic \*\*\*\*, drawing such \*\*\*\* and precise \*\*\*\* is truly a \*\*\*\* feat. To \*\*\*\* how the \*\*\*\* managed to do \*\*\*\*, modern scholars \*\*\*\* conducted simulation \*\*\*\*. They attempted \*\*\*\* draw large-scale \*\*\*\* with simple \*\*\*\* in a limited \*\*\*\* but found that \*\*\*\* thaid of \*\*\*\* aerial view, it \*\*\*\* almost impossible to \*\*\*\* the lines smooth \*\*\*\* maintain proportional coordination. \*\*\*\* repeated attempts, researchers \*\*\*\* that the Nazca \*\*\*\* might have applied \*\*\*\* principles and set \*\*\*\* marker points on \*\*\*\*\* ground to determine \*\*\* outlines of the \*\*\*\*. By using 3D \*\*\*\* technology to reconstruct \*\*\*\* of the geoglyphs, \*\*\*\* was further discovered \*\*\*\* the angles and \*\*\*\* between the lines \*\*\*\* conform to aesthetic \*\*\*\* such as the \*\*\*\* ratio, demonstrating the \*\*\*\* people’s profound understanding \*\*\*\* mathematics and aesthetics.

In \*\*\*\* of cultural inheritance, \*\*\*\* geoglyphs may be \*\*\*\* associated with religious \*\*\*\* Archaeologists have carried \*\*\*\* excavations and research \*\*\*\* the surrounding temple \*\*\*\* and found a corresponding \*\*\*\* between the layout \*\*\*\* the temples and the \*\*\*\*. Radiocarbon dating results \*\*\*\* that the construction \*\*\*\* of some temples is \*\*\*\* to the period when \*\*\*\* geoglyphs were created. \*\*\*\*, the analysis of unearthed \*\*\*\* relics indicates that \*\*\*\* symbols used in the \*\*\*\* people’s religious ceremonies \*\*\*\* highly similar to the \*\*\*\* of the geoglyphs. This \*\*\* suggests that the geoglyphs \*\*\*\* a crucial role in \*\*\*\* activities, possibly serving \*\*\*\* a sacred medium for \*\*\*\* with the heavens and \*\*\*\* earth and praying for \*\*\*\* gods’ blessings!

The connection \*\*\*\* the geoglyphs and the \*\*\*\* calendar has also drawn \*\*\*\* attention Astronomers have \*\*\*\* high-precision astronomical observation \*\*\*\* and software to compare \*\*\*\* geoglyphs with ancient star \*\*\*\*, Simulations show that on \*\*\*\* dates, certain geoglyph lines \*\*\*\* align with the movement \*\*\*\* of celestial bodies. For \*\*\*\*, on the summer solstice. \*\*\*\* shines along the direction \*\*\*\* specific geoglyph lines. Long-term \*\*\*\* of different geoglyphs indicate \*\*\*\* some patterns can indicate \*\*\*\* changes and provide a \*\*\*\* reference for agricultural production. \*\*\*\* shows that the Nazca people’s \*\*\*\* in astronomy far exceed \*\*\*\* imagination.

The Nazca Lines \*\*\*\* the mysterious codes left \*\*\*\* ancient civilizations for modern \*\*\*\* Although scientific exploration has \*\*\*\* some progress, we still \*\*\*\* a long way to go \*\*\*\* full deciphering them. As \*\*\*\* keep exploring the unknown, \*\*\*\* we uncovering the truth \*\*\*\* th Nazca civilization or \*\*\*\* the boundaries of human \*\*\*\*? Perhaps we will never \*\*\*\* able to full reconstruct \*\*\*\*, but it is precisely \*\*\*\* unremitting exploration that enables \*\*\*\* to gain a deeper understanding \*\*\*\* the origin and development \*\*\*\* human civilization.

**B**

On the \*\*\*\* Plain in \*\*\*\*, \*\*\*\* animal \*\*\*\* have been \*\*\*\* at the \*\*\*\* world for \*\*\*\* of years. These \*\*\*\* patterns, outlined by \*\*\*\*, hide \*\*\*\* clues about the \*\*\*\* civilization and \*\*\*\* a challenge to \*\*\*\* science.

From the \*\*\*\* of \*\*\*\* creation, drawing such \*\*\*\* and precise \*\*\*\* is truly a \*\*\*\* feat. To \*\*\*\* how the \*\*\*\* managed to \*\*\*\* this, modern \*\*\*\* have conducted \*\*\*\* experiments. They \*\*\*\* to draw \*\*\*\*-scale patterns with \*\*\*\* tools in a \*\*\*\* area but \*\*\*\* that without the \*\*\*\* of an \*\*\*\* view, it was \*\*\*\* impossible to \*\*\*\* the lines \*\*\*\* and maintain \*\*\*\* coordination. Through \*\*\*\* attempts, researchers \*\*\*\* that the \*\*\*\* people might have \*\*\*\* geometric principles and \*\*\*\* multiple marker \*\*\*\* on the \*\*\*\* to determine the \*\*\*\* of the \*\*\*\*. By using \*\*\*\* modeling technology to \*\*\*\* some of the \*\*\*\*, it was further \*\*\*\* that the \*\*\*\* and proportions between the \*\*\*\* highly conform to \*\*\*\* principles such as the \*\*\*\* ratio, demonstrating the \*\*\*\* people’s profound \*\*\*\* of mathematics and \*\*\*\*.

In terms of \*\*\*\* inheritance, the \*\*\*\* may be closely \*\*\*\* with religious \*\*\*\*. Archaeologists have \*\*\*\* out excavations and \*\*\*\* on the surrounding \*\*\*\* ruins and found a \*\*\*\* relationship between the \*\*\*\* of the temples and the \*\*\*\*. Radiocarbon dating \*\*\*\* show that the \*\*\*\* time of some \*\*\*\* is close to the \*\*\*\* when the \*\*\*\* were created. \*\*\*\*, the analysis of \*\*\*\* cultural relics \*\*\*\* that the symbols \*\*\*\* in the \*\*\*\* people’s religious \*\*\*\* are highly \*\*\*\* to the elements of the \*\*\*\*. This strongly \*\*\*\* that the \*\*\*\* played a \*\*\*\* role in \*\*\*\* activities possibly \*\*\*\* as a \*\*\*\* medium for \*\*\*\* with the \*\*\*\* and the earth and \*\*\*\* for the \*\*\*\* blessings.

The \*\*\*\* between the \*\*\*\* and the \*\*\*\* calendar has also \*\*\*\* much attention. \*\*\*\* have used \*\*\*\*-precision astronomical \*\*\*\* equipment and \*\*\*\* to compare the \*\*\*\* with ancient \*\*\*\* patterns. Simulations \*\*\*\* that on \*\*\*\* dates, certain \*\*\*\* lines precisely \*\*\*\* with the \*\*\*\* trajectories of \*\*\*\* bodies. For \*\*\*\*, on the \*\*\*\* solstice, sunlight \*\*\*\* along the \*\*\*\* of specific \*\*\*\* lines. Long-term \*\*\*\* of different \*\*\*\* indicate that some \*\*\*\* can indicate \*\*\*\* changes and \*\*\*\* a time \*\*\*\* for agricultural \*\*\*\*, This shows that the \*\*\*\* people’s \*\*\*\* in astronomy \*\*\*\* exceed our \*\*\*\*.

The \*\*\*\* Lines are the \*\*\*\* codes left by \*\*\*\* civilizations for \*\*\*\* humans. Although \*\*\*\* exploration has \*\*\*\* some progress, we \*\*\*\* have a \*\*\*\* way to go \*\*\*\* fully deciphering them. \*\*\*\* we keep exploring the \*\*\*\*, are we \*\*\*\* the truth of the \*\*\*\* civilization or \*\*\*\* the boundaries of \*\*\*\* knowledge? Perhaps we will \*\*\*\* be able to \*\*\*\* reconstruct history, but it is \*\*\*\* this \*\*\*\* exploration that \*\*\*\* us to gain a \*\*\*\* understanding of the \*\*\*\* and development of \*\*\*\* civilization.

**C**

On the Nazca Plain in Peru, giant animal geoglyphs have been gazing at the modern world for thousands of years. These mysterious patterns, outlined by lines, hide key clues about the Nazca civilization and pose a challenge to modern science.

From the perspective of artistic creation, drawing such huge and precise geoglyphs is truly a remarkable feat. To explore how the ancients managed to do this, modern scholars have conducted simulation experiments. They attempted to draw large-scale patterns with simple tools in a limited area but found that without the aid of an aerial view, it was almost impossible to keep the lines smooth and maintain proportional coordination. Through repeated attempts, researchers speculate that the Nazca people might have applied geometric principles and set multiple marker points on the ground to determine the outlines of the patterns. By using 3D modeling technology to reconstruct some of the geoglyphs, it was further discovered that the angles and proportions between the lines highly conform to aesthetic principles such as the golden ratio, demonstrating the Nazca people’s profound understanding of mathematics and aesthetics.

In terms of cultural inheritance, the geoglyphs may be associated with religious rituals. Archaeologists have carried out excavations and research on the surrounding temple ruins and found a corresponding relationship between the layout of the temples and the geoglyphs. Radiocarbon dating results show that the construction time of some temples is close to the period when the geoglyphs were created. Additionally, the analysis of unearthed cultural relics indicates that the symbols used in the Nazca people’s religious ceremonies are highly similar to the elements of the geoglyphs. This strongly suggests that the geoglyphs played a crucial role in religious activities, possibly serving as a sacred medium for communicating with the heavens and the earth and praying for the gods’ blessings.

The connection between the geoglyphs and the astronomical calendar has also drawn much attention. Astronomers have used high-precision astronomical observation equipment and software to compare the geoglyphs with ancient star patterns. Simulations show that on specific dates, certain geoglyph lines precisely align with the movement trajectories of celestial bodies. For example, on the summer solstice, sunlight shines along the direction of specific geoglyph lines. Long-term observations of different geoglyphs indicate that some patterns can indicate seasonal changes and provide a time reference for agricultural production. This shows that the Nazca people’s attainments in astronomy far exceed our imagination.

The Nazca Lines are the mysterious codes left by ancient civilizations for modern humans. Although scientific exploration has made some progress, we still have a long way to go before fully deciphering them. As we keep exploring the unknown, are we uncovering the truth of the Nazca civilization or expanding the boundaries of human knowledge? Perhaps we will never be able to fully reconstruct history, but it is precisely this unremitting exploration that enables us to gain a deeper understanding of the origin and development of human civilization.

## **15.Date:3.14**

In the African savannah, the survival and reproduction of meerkat groups rely on an exquisite sentinel mechanism. Some meerkats give up the opportunity to forage and stand guard, exchanging individual risks for the safety of the group. This bears an uncanny resemblance to the cooperation and responsibility distribution among EU countries. We can conduct an in-depth analysis of the internal logic and challenges of EU relations through the classic Prisoner's Dilemma game experiment.

In the Prisoner's Dilemma experiment, two suspects are interrogated separately by the police, and each has two options: confess or remain silent. From the perspective of individual rationality, no matter what the other party chooses, confessing oneself will result in a relatively better outcome. However, from the perspective of collective rationality, the optimal solution is for both parties to remain silent, which minimizes the overall punishment. This experiment reveals the contradiction between individual interests and collective interests. In group cooperation, if members only consider their own interests, it will ultimately lead to the detriment of collective interests.

When we apply the Prisoner's Dilemma to the relations among EU countries, the decision-making of each country on various issues resembles the choices made by the prisoners. In terms of energy policy, to reduce energy costs, each country may sign preferential agreements with external energy suppliers on its own, ignoring the EU's overall energy security strategy. Individually, a country may seem to gain benefits, but from the EU's overall perspective, the dispersion of energy suppliers increases supply risks and weakens the EU's bargaining power in the international energy market.

Regarding fiscal policies, economically powerful countries are reluctant to overly participate in the rescue of economically struggling member states in order to protect their own fiscal stability. Meanwhile, economically troubled countries may adopt measures contrary to the EU's overall policies to stimulate their domestic economies. This is akin to both parties in the Prisoner's Dilemma choosing to betray, ultimately hindering the EU's economic development, further widening the internal wealth gap, and affecting regional stability and cooperation.

Germany and France play roles similar to meerkat sentinels within the EU. Germany, with its strong manufacturing and financial capabilities, provided assistance to countries like Greece during the economic crisis to stabilize the economy of the Eurozone. France has actively promoted the EU's common foreign policy to enhance the EU's international influence. However, these "sentinel" countries face challenges. For example, Germany's assistance often triggers domestic disputes, with some citizens believing that resources are being excessively consumed. When France promotes common policies, it often encounters resistance from other countries. This mirrors the risk of unilaterally cooperating in the Prisoner's Dilemma, where the efforts of "sentinel" countries may not receive corresponding returns from others and may even be regarded as interference in internal affairs.

To improve relations among EU countries, it is necessary to draw on solutions to the Prisoner's Dilemma. Establishing long-term and stable cooperation expectations is crucial. By signing legally binding agreements, the responsibilities and obligations of each country in key areas can be clearly defined, ensuring the continuity and stability of cooperation. Improving information communication mechanisms enables each country to promptly understand the policy intentions and actions of others, reducing misunderstandings and conflicts caused by information asymmetry and lowering cooperation risks. Constructing a reasonable reward-and-punishment mechanism—rewarding countries that actively fulfill their responsibilities and promote the EU's overall development while imposing sanctions on those that violate cooperation principles—can guide countries to shift from pursuing individual interests to maximizing collective interests.

The meerkat sentinel behavior and the Prisoner's Dilemma experiment provide a unique perspective for understanding the relations among EU countries. Through this analogical analysis, we can clearly identify the problems in EU cooperation, explore effective solutions, and promote in-depth collaboration and common development within the EU in the complex international environment.

Questions:

1. What does the author imply by stating "This bears an uncanny resemblance to the cooperation and responsibility distribution among EU countries" in the context of meerkat sentinel behavior?

A. EU countries, like meerkats, have a hierarchical structure in cooperation.

B. The self-sacrificing behavior of meerkat sentinels mirrors how some EU countries act for the common good at their own expense.

C. Just as meerkats have a fixed pattern of sentinel duty, EU countries have unchanging cooperation models.

D. The random selection of meerkat sentinels is similar to how EU countries assume leadership roles.

2. In the context of applying the Prisoner's Dilemma to EU relations, how does the situation of energy policy decision-making reflect the core concept of the Prisoner's Dilemma?

A. Each EU country's pursuit of its own energy cost reduction leads to a suboptimal outcome for the EU as a whole, similar to prisoners choosing self-interest over collective interest.

B. The EU's overall energy security strategy is like the prison authority's rule, and individual countries' actions are acts of rebellion.

C. Energy-rich EU countries are in a dominant position, similar to one prisoner having more power in the dilemma.

D. The process of reaching an energy policy consensus in the EU is as difficult as prisoners communicating in isolation.

3. What can be inferred from the fact that Germany's assistance to economically struggling EU countries triggers domestic disputes?

A. Germany's domestic economic situation is not as strong as it seems.

B. The concept of EU-wide solidarity has not been fully internalized by German citizens.

C. The assistance provided by Germany is actually ineffective in solving the economic problems of recipient countries.

D. Germany should stop providing assistance to avoid further domestic unrest.

4. According to the passage, what is the fundamental reason for the challenges faced by Germany and France in playing the role of "sentinel" countries within the EU?

A. The lack of a unified cultural background among EU countries.

B. The imbalance between the efforts of "sentinel" countries and the returns they receive, both domestically and from other EU countries.

C. The inefficiency of EU decision-making mechanisms.

D. The emerging economic powers within the EU are challenging the status of Germany and France.

5. Which of the following statements, if true, would most undermine the proposed solutions for improving EU countries' relations based on the Prisoner's Dilemma?

A. EU countries have different legal systems, making it difficult to enforce legally binding agreements uniformly.

B. Some EU countries have unique cultural traditions that are difficult to integrate.

C. The international energy market is highly volatile, and energy-related policies need to be adjusted frequently.

D. There is a growing trend of nationalism in some EU countries, but it has no significant impact on cooperation mechanisms.

## **16.Date:3.15**

Amid humanity's age-old quest to ascertain whether the soul exists, the EVP experiment has emerged as a focal point under intense scrutiny. EVP, or the Electronic Voice Phenomenon, endeavors to extract sounds and videos purportedly transmitted by the deceased from static electricity or white noise through electronic devices, aiming to prove the existence of the soul. However, the scientific validity and conclusions of this experiment remain highly controversial.

When proponents carry out the EVP experiment, they position a tape recorder or radio in a tranquil setting to record the noises generated by the devices. Subsequently, they listen repeatedly and meticulously sift through the recordings to identify sounds suspected to be from the soul. Some experimenters claim to have captured the voices of their deceased relatives calling their names or faintly uttering details known only within the family. These cases offer comfort to those yearning to communicate with the departed and have attracted significant attention to the EVP experiment within the realm of paranormal research.

Nevertheless, upon in-depth scientific analysis, the EVP experiment is discovered to be replete with serious flaws. To verify its efficacy, a comparative experiment can be devised: one group conducts a regular EVP experiment, while the other group, in the identical environment and using the same equipment, substitutes the potentially emerging "soul voices" with pre-prepared known noise samples to simulate random noise interference. In multiple comparative trials, those conducting the regular EVP experiment frequently misinterpret the noise as meaningful soul voices. In contrast, for the control group exposed to the known noise samples, even though the noise characteristics are alike, hardly anyone misjudges them as soul voices because they are cognizant of the source in advance. This reveals that in the EVP experiment, experimenters are liable to be influenced by subjective expectations and suggestions, attributing special significance to random noise and succumbing to "pareidolia."

Furthermore, the EVP experiment lacks reproducibility. Different experimenters conducting experiments in similar environments and with similar equipment often produce vastly disparate results. Scientific experiments necessitate consistent or similar outcomes under identical conditions. Since the EVP experiment fails to meet this fundamental prerequisite, the credibility of its conclusions is severely impaired. Additionally, it is extremely difficult to effectively control variables in the experiment. Factors such as electromagnetic interference in the experimental environment and disparities in equipment performance can all affect the generation of noise, yet they are arduous to precisely control and measure, resulting in heightened uncertainty in the experimental results.

Although the EVP experiment cannot serve as conclusive evidence for the existence of the soul, it still holds great significance at both the cultural and scientific levels. In the cultural domain, the EVP experiment embodies humanity's unceasing exploration of life, death, and the soul, mirroring people's longing for the deceased and their anticipation for the continuation of life. It has also had a profound impact on artistic creations such as movies and literature, enriching the human spiritual world. At the scientific level, it impels scientists to conduct in-depth research on human consciousness, brain functions, and electromagnetic phenomena, driving the expansion of the frontiers of scientific knowledge.

The EVP experiment has not proven the existence of the soul, but it provides a unique perspective for soul research. On the long and tortuous journey of exploring the soul, how can we blithely dismiss the possibilities of the unknown based solely on our current understanding? How can we permit ourselves to be blinded by subjective emotions and deviate from the path of scientific rationality? Shouldn't we adopt an open-minded and cautious approach, continuously explore within the framework of science, and enable the truth to gradually surface through rigorous pursuit of knowledge?

Questions:

1. The passage implies that the subjective influence on EVP experiment results mainly stems from:

A. The technical flaws in the recording equipment used in the experiment.

B. The emotional state and preconceived notions of the experimenters.

C. The complex and unpredictable nature of static electricity and white noise.

D. The limited understanding of electromagnetic phenomena among experimenters.

2. Which of the following statements about the EVP experiment's cultural significance is most accurate?

A. It serves as conclusive proof of the afterlife in cultural beliefs.

B. It has only a marginal impact on cultural expressions like movies and literature.

C. It has led to a radical shift in traditional cultural views on the soul.

D. It reflects humanity's long-standing cultural preoccupation with life, death, and the soul.

3. In the context of the passage, the "pareidolia" in the EVP experiment refers to:

A. A special kind of electromagnetic interference that affects the experiment results.

B. The unique pattern of sounds and videos that are truly from the other world.

C. The actual communication from the souls of the deceased through electronic noise.

D. The misinterpretation of random noise as meaningful signals due to subjective factors.

4. The failure of the EVP experiment to meet the fundamental requirement of scientific experiments mainly indicates that:

A. The scientific community should completely abandon research on the soul.

B. The concept of the soul is beyond the scope of scientific exploration.

C. The current experimental design and methods need to be fundamentally re-evaluated.

D. The experiment has no scientific value at all.

5. What can be inferred from the passage about the future of soul research based on the EVP experiment?

A. Soul research will definitely find conclusive evidence with more advanced technology.

B. Soul research will gradually lose its significance as scientific knowledge expands.

C. The EVP experiment has blocked the path for future soul research.

D. Future research should combine scientific methods with cultural and emotional aspects.

## **17.Date:3.16**

In 1976, within an ordinary garage in California, two young visionaries, Nolan Bushnell and Steve Jobs, were immersed in a passionate discussion. Bushnell, the creative force behind Atari, presented Jobs with a seemingly simple yet potentially paradigm-shifting task: to craft a straightforward yet highly engaging arcade game within just four days. Jobs enlisted his friend Steve Wozniak, and the two burned the midnight oil. Consequently, Breakout came into existence. This game achieved remarkable success in the market, and this collaboration became a small yet significant milestone in the burgeoning development of the U.S. gaming industry, heralding the start of its remarkable saga.

The U.S. gaming industry began its nascent journey in the mid-20th century, an era where electronic technology was in its infancy. In 1958, physicist William Higinbotham invented Tennis for Two. This simplistic game, displayed on an oscilloscope, utilized two light spots to represent a tennis match. Despite its rudimentary graphics, it provided a tantalizing glimpse into the exciting future of gaming.

From the 1970s through the 1980s, the U.S. gaming industry flourished. Atari attained global acclaim with its simple yet captivating games. The subsequent launch of the home console, Atari 2600, introduced gaming into millions of households. Soon thereafter, game genres proliferated rapidly—action, adventure, and role-playing games emerged. While the U.S. market shaped gaming trends, Japan's Nintendo achieved phenomenal success, profoundly influencing the trajectory of the U.S. gaming industry. Countless game companies sprang up, and the industry's commercial model gradually took form. Games evolved from a laboratory curiosity into an industry with colossal commercial potential, deeply ingraining themselves within popular culture.

However, beneath this prosperity lurked a crisis. In 1983, the U.S. gaming market suffered a catastrophic collapse. Game production surged exponentially, but quality was highly inconsistent. The market became oversaturated, triggering a flood of unsold games and the bankruptcy of numerous gaming companies. Nevertheless, this crisis served as a purifying tempest, cleansing the industry. Surviving companies began to introspect deeply, placing a premium on game quality and strictly regulating development and distribution processes. Nintendo revitalized the market with high-caliber games like the Super Mario series, guiding the U.S. gaming industry onto a path of excellence, with an emphasis on high standards.

In the 1990s, rapid technological progress ushered in a new golden age for the U.S. gaming industry. Breathtaking 3D graphics and thrilling adventure games, such as Tomb Raider, captivated global audiences, exemplifying the visual and interactive revolutions brought about by technological advancements. The widespread adoption of the Internet opened up new frontiers—online games became a natural outgrowth. Ultima Online emerged, marking the era of Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games (MMORPGs). Players could now interact and cooperate in virtual worlds, fundamentally redefining the social dimensions of gaming. The gaming industry became inextricably linked with the Internet, constantly expanding its commercial footprint. Novel business models, such as virtual item transactions, came into being.

Today, U.S. games reign supreme in the global market. Franchises like Call of Duty, with their hyper-realistic graphics, compelling narratives, and highly interactive multiplayer modes, have enthralled millions of players worldwide, generating billions in annual revenues. The U.S. gaming industry is not only at the vanguard of technological innovation but also a formidable force in cultural export. The Hollywood-style narrative has been seamlessly integrated into games like The Last of Us, disseminating American values and popular culture across the globe. These titles, with their profound storytelling and vivid characterizations, have sparked widespread interest and discussion, underscoring the far-reaching cultural influence of U.S. games.

From the spark of inspiration in a garage to the present-day global gaming behemoth, the history of the U.S. gaming industry is a saga of relentless innovation. Technological advancements—from vacuum tubes to transistors, from 2D to 3D—have continuously revolutionized the gaming experience. Creativity, adaptability, and tenacity remain the bedrock of the industry's sustainability, as only top-notch games thrive in a cutthroat market. The industry's ebbs and flows serve as a constant reminder to respect market dynamics, prioritize product quality, and center on user experience. The development of the U.S. gaming industry offers invaluable insights and profound inspiration for the global gaming industry and the broader creative and cultural arenas.

Questions:  
Which of the following titles most comprehensively encapsulates the multifaceted essence of the passage?

a. "The U.S. Gaming Industry: Blending Technological Breakthroughs, Creative Growth, and Market-Shaped Destiny"

b. "The U.S. Gaming Industry: A Tapestry of Technological Evolution, Content-Driven Revolutions, and Market Fluctuations"

c. "The U.S. Gaming Industry: A Symbiotic Journey of Tech Innovation, Creative Emanations, and Market Dynamics"

d. "The U.S. Gaming Industry: From Garage-Born Ideas to Global Cultural and Technological Dominion"

e. "The U.S. Gaming Industry: Navigating Technological Rapids, Creative Expansions, and Market Volatility"

f. "The U.S. Gaming Industry: A Confluence of Tech-Driven Transitions, Content-Inspired Ascents, and Market-Induced Changes"

g. "The U.S. Gaming Industry: A Delicate Balance of Technological Leaps, Creative Transformations, and Market-Guided Trajectories"

h. "The U.S. Gaming Industry: The Interplay of Technological Frontiers, Creative Renaissance, and Market-Shaping Forces"

i. "The U.S. Gaming Industry: A Continuous Saga of Tech-Fueled Innovations, Content-Driven Resurgences, and Market-Driven Adaptations"

j. "The U.S. Gaming Industry: A Harmonious Union of Technological Prowess, Creative Dynamism, and Market-Oriented Developments"

## **18.Date:3.17**

In 1917, Harlow Shapley, a prominent American astronomer, was deeply immersed in the study of globular clusters. Day after day, he carefully observed and recorded celestial phenomena with the aim of mapping the Milky Way's structure through these clusters. Logically, their combined light should brighten the night sky as bright as day. But the darkness puzzled him: Why was the night sky so dark in a star-filled universe? This question was Olbers' Paradox, proposed by German astronomer Heinrich Olbers in 1823.

From an intuitive and logical vantage point, the inherent contradiction within Olbers' Paradox is strikingly conspicuous. The stellar population of the universe defies imagination. The Milky Way galaxy alone encompasses hundreds of billions of stars, and within the observable universe, there exists a comparable multitude of galaxies, each potentially harboring a similar abundance of stellar bodies. In a hypothetical static and infinite universe, where every star perpetually emits photons into the cosmic expanse, these rays of light, after traversing vast cosmic distances, should, in theory, uniformly irradiate the entire celestial sphere, culminating in a nocturnal sky ablaze with light. However, the empirical reality starkly diverges from this theoretical construct. The inky darkness of the night sky serves as a silent yet eloquent testament to the fact that the universe's true nature is far more complex and inscrutable than our initial assumptions might suggest.

In the ensuing decades following the inception of Olbers' Paradox, the scientific community has been rife with a plethora of hypotheses, each vying to unravel this cosmic puzzle. Initially, some postulated that interstellar dust, thinly dispersed throughout the cosmos, would act as a sump for the light emitted by stars, thereby attenuating the overall luminance of the night sky. However, subsequent, more in-depth research revealed that upon absorption of photons, this interstellar dust would thermally excite and re-radiate energy, ultimately resulting in a negligible net reduction in the overall radiative flux reaching Earth. Thus, this hypothesis was ultimately deemed untenable.

With the inexorable march of scientific progress, the Big Bang theory and the theory of cosmic expansion have emerged as more cogent explanatory frameworks for Olbers' Paradox. The Big Bang theory posits that the universe had a definitive origin, a singularity from which all matter, energy, space, and time emanated. This implies that the lifespan of stars is finite, and consequently, not all stellar radiation has had sufficient temporal duration to traverse the vast cosmic distances separating them from Earth.

Simultaneously, the theory of cosmic expansion, corroborated by a wealth of observational evidence, contends that the universe is in a state of continuous, accelerating expansion. As a consequence, the light emitted by distant stars experiences a phenomenon known as redshift during its propagation through the expanding cosmic fabric. This redshift corresponds to a decrease in the photon's energy, effectively diminishing the intensity of the light reaching Earth. The cumulative effect of these two factors—finite stellar lifetimes and cosmic expansion-induced redshift—renders the light reaching our planet insufficient to illuminate the night sky to the extent predicted by the naive static-universe model. The advent of these theories not only resolves the long-standing Olbers' Paradox but also furnishes humanity with a radically new paradigm for understanding the evolutionary trajectory of the universe.

Olbers' Paradox has exerted a profound and far-reaching influence on the development of astronomy. It has spurred astrophysicists to incessantly refine and augment the cosmic model, effecting a paradigm shift from the erstwhile static conception of the universe to a dynamic, evolutionary framework. In the quest to resolve Olbers' Paradox, scientists have delved deep into a panoply of related fields, including stellar evolution, galaxy formation and distribution, and the study of the cosmic microwave background radiation (CMB).

The investigation into stellar evolution has provided insights into the life cycles of stars, from their protostellar birth in molecular clouds to their eventual demise as white dwarfs, neutron stars, or black holes. This knowledge, in turn, has been instrumental in understanding the finite nature of stellar luminaries and their contribution to the overall cosmic radiative budget.

Research into galaxy distribution has revealed the large-scale structure of the universe, elucidating the clustering and filamentary patterns that galaxies assume. This has implications for understanding the distribution of light-emitting sources in the cosmos and how this distribution affects the observable sky brightness.

Perhaps most significantly, the study of the cosmic microwave background radiation, a faint glow permeating the entire universe, has provided empirical validation for the Big Bang theory. The CMB, which is the afterglow of the primordial fireball that marked the universe's birth, was first detected in 1965. Subsequent, high-precision measurements of the CMB's temperature anisotropies and spectral characteristics have not only confirmed the hot Big Bang model but have also been intricately linked to the resolution of Olbers' Paradox. The discovery of the CMB, in many ways, can be traced back to the intellectual impetus provided by Olbers' Paradox, as it forced scientists to re-evaluate their assumptions about the universe's origin, structure, and evolution.

To further validate the explanatory power of the cosmic expansion theory in the context of Olbers' Paradox, a research consortium recently embarked on an ambitious study of the spectra of distant galaxies. Employing state-of-the-art high-resolution spectrometers, they selected a sample of 100 galaxies spanning distances between 5 and 10 billion light-years from Earth. These galaxies, representing a cross-section of the early universe, were chosen for their potential to provide insights into the effects of cosmic expansion on light propagation.

The analysis of the spectra revealed a redshift of approximately 0.5. This implies that the wavelengths of the light emitted by these galaxies have been stretched by 50% during their journey through the expanding universe. In the context of the cosmic expansion theory, a higher redshift value corresponds to a more distant galaxy and, concomitantly, a higher recession velocity. As the galaxy recedes from Earth at an increasing rate, the photons it emits lose energy, resulting in a redshift of the observed spectrum. The magnitude of the observed redshift in this study not only serves as a testament to the veracity of the cosmic expansion theory but also provides a quantitative basis for understanding how the expansion of the universe attenuates the light reaching Earth, thereby contributing to the darkness of the night sky. Such empirical evidence, derived from meticulous spectroscopic analysis, offers compelling support for the resolution of Olbers' Paradox.

The odyssey of exploring Olbers' Paradox serves as a microcosm of the broader human scientific endeavor. From the initial moment of cognitive dissonance, when the seemingly straightforward question of the dark night sky collided with the established understanding of the universe, to the iterative process of hypothesis formulation, experimental verification, and theoretical refinement, each step of this journey has been punctuated by human ingenuity, perseverance, and an insatiable thirst for knowledge.

Yet, as we stand on the cusp of a new era of astronomical discovery, it is incumbent upon us to reflect on the limitations of our current understanding. Can we truly fathom the depths of the universe's mysteries? In the grand tapestry of the cosmos, our current knowledge, gleaned from centuries of scientific inquiry, may still amount to no more than a minuscule fragment, a fleeting glimpse into the unfathomable expanse of the unknown. We have made remarkable strides in resolving Olbers' Paradox, but how many other latent paradoxes, hidden beneath the surface of the observable universe, await our discovery? As we chart our course along the long and winding path of cosmic exploration, what new frontiers of knowledge will we traverse, and what profound revelations about the universe's fundamental nature will we unearth?

Questions:

1. The author's detailed description of the theoretical situation in a static and infinite universe in the second paragraph serves multiple purposes. Which of the following is the most central one?

A. To illustrate the limitations of human imagination when conceptualizing the universe's structure.

B. To demonstrate the elegance and simplicity of the static-universe model before the advent of modern theories.

C. To set up a theoretical framework that can be systematically deconstructed later in the text to resolve Olbers' Paradox.

D. To emphasize the stark contrast between the expected and the observed, highlighting the profound mystery within Olbers' Paradox.

2. It can be inferred from the third paragraph that the dismissal of the interstellar-dust hypothesis implies all of the following EXCEPT:

A. The initial hypothesis failed to account for the complex physical processes involved in light-matter interactions in the cosmos.

B. The scientific community's over-reliance on simple, intuitive explanations without sufficient consideration of secondary effects.

C. The lack of a comprehensive understanding of the energy-balance mechanisms in the interstellar medium at that time.

D. The incorrect assumption that interstellar dust was uniformly distributed throughout the entire cosmos.

3. The Big Bang theory's explanation for Olbers' Paradox is based on a multi-faceted concept. Which of the following aspects is the most fundamental in resolving the paradox?

A. The idea that the singularity at the origin of the universe was a concentrated source of all matter, energy, space, and time.

B. The understanding that the finite lifespan of stars restricts the cumulative amount of light that can reach Earth over cosmic timescales.

C. The recognition that the early universe was in a hot, dense state from which the current universe has evolved.

D. The concept that the expansion of the universe after the Big Bang has a direct impact on the propagation of light.

4. According to the fifth paragraph, the combined effect of finite stellar lifetimes and cosmic expansion-induced redshift has a complex impact on the brightness of the night sky. Which of the following statements best captures this impact?

A. It not only reduces the intensity of light reaching Earth but also distorts the spectral characteristics of starlight in a way that is difficult to predict.

B. It leads to a non-linear decrease in the overall luminance of the night sky, with the effect being more pronounced for distant stars and galaxies.

C. It creates a dynamic equilibrium in the cosmic radiative environment, where the loss of light energy is constantly balanced by new stellar emissions.

D. It results in a situation where the night sky's brightness is inversely proportional to the rate of cosmic expansion and the average lifespan of stars.

5. Olbers' Paradox has exerted a far-reaching influence on the development of astronomy. Which of the following accurately represents the most significant transformation it has brought about?

A. It has inspired the development of a new generation of astronomical instruments designed specifically to measure the redshift of distant galaxies.

B. It has spurred the scientific community to re-evaluate and expand the scope of astrophysical research from a static to a dynamic perspective.

C. It has led to the discovery of new celestial phenomena that were previously overlooked due to the dominance of the static-universe model.

D. It has forced astrophysicists to abandon traditional methods of astronomical observation in favor of more advanced and complex techniques.

6. The knowledge of stellar evolution is closely related to understanding various aspects of the universe. Which of the following connections is the least direct?

A. The relationship between the chemical composition of stars at different evolutionary stages and the formation of heavy elements in the universe.

B. The influence of stellar mass on the duration of their main-sequence phase and its implications for the overall energy budget of the cosmos.

C. The correlation between the formation and death of stars and the large-scale gravitational interactions that shape the structure of the universe.

D. The way in which the radiation emitted by stars during different evolutionary phases contributes to the background radiation field of the universe.

7. The study of the cosmic microwave background radiation (CMB) is intricately linked to the resolution of Olbers' Paradox. Which of the following explanations best describes this connection?

A. The uniform distribution of CMB across the universe directly disproves the static-universe model, which is a fundamental assumption in Olbers' Paradox.

B. The minute temperature anisotropies in CMB provide evidence for the inhomogeneous distribution of matter in the early universe, which affects the propagation of starlight and resolves the paradox.

C. The spectral characteristics of CMB confirm the hot Big Bang origin of the universe, and this origin-related understanding helps explain the finite-age and expansion-related aspects that resolve Olbers' Paradox.

D. The detection of CMB led to the development of new theoretical frameworks that completely revolutionized our understanding of the night sky's darkness and resolved the long-standing paradox.

8. The research consortium selected a sample of 100 galaxies spanning distances between 5 and 10 billion light-years from Earth for a very specific reason. Which of the following rationales is the most compelling?

A. Galaxies within this distance range are in a unique evolutionary stage that can provide insights into the early-stage formation of large-scale cosmic structures.

B. The light from these galaxies has traversed a sufficient cosmic distance such that the cumulative effects of cosmic expansion on its propagation are measurable and significant.

C. These galaxies are believed to have unique spectral signatures that are not present in closer or more distant galaxies, allowing for a more targeted study of light-redshift relationships.

D. The sample size of 100 galaxies within this distance range is optimal for statistical analysis, enabling the most accurate determination of the average redshift value in the early universe.

9. What can be inferred about the author's view on the current state of our understanding of the universe based on the last paragraph?

A. The author believes that although we have made progress in resolving Olbers' Paradox, our knowledge is still fragmented and insufficient to form a comprehensive picture of the universe.

B. The author is skeptical about the validity of the current scientific theories used to explain the universe, given the remaining mysteries and paradoxes.

C. The author thinks that the process of scientific exploration is more important than the actual knowledge we have acquired, as it is the journey that leads to new discoveries.

D. The author is cautiously optimistic, suggesting that with continued research, we are on the verge of a major breakthrough in fully understanding the universe's fundamental nature.

10. It can be inferred from the last two paragraphs that the exploration of Olbers' Paradox:

A. Is likely to lead to the discovery of other fundamental laws of the universe that are currently unknown and could potentially revolutionize our understanding.

B. Will eventually lead to a complete and unified theory of the universe that can explain all known cosmic phenomena, including the dark-night-sky paradox.

C. Has reached a stage where further research is mainly focused on refining the existing explanations rather than seeking entirely new theoretical frameworks.

D. May encounter insurmountable obstacles in the future due to the limitations of our current technological capabilities and theoretical understanding.

## **19.Date:3.18**

In 2015, during the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage Review Conference, the South Korean delegation pulled off an astonishing farce. They submitted an application to list ondol technology as South Korea's intangible cultural heritage. This brazen act immediately sparked an uproar in the conference hall. Without hesitation, Chinese representatives pointed out that ondol had existed in northern China for thousands of years and was an integral part of traditional Chinese residential culture. South Korea's action was undoubtedly a blatant act of cultural plagiarism and a slap in the face of the principles of cultural integrity.

South Korea's cultural theft is notorious. Take traditional festivals as an example. China's Dragon Boat Festival has a history of more than two thousand years, imbued with rich cultural connotations such as dispelling evil spirits, praying for blessings, and commemorating Qu Yuan. It is a unique spiritual symbol of the Chinese nation. However, South Korea successfully had the "Gangneung Danoje Festival" inscribed on the UNESCO list. Despite being presented as a local festival, its core elements, such as dragon boat racing and sacrificial ceremonies, are strikingly similar to those of China's Dragon Boat Festival. It's as if they looted China's cultural treasure trove, stole its precious items, and then shamelessly claimed them as their own.

In the field of fashion, Hanfu, a traditional Chinese costume with a thousand-year history, carries profound cultural significance in every aspect of its design. However, South Korea has continuously incorporated Hanfu elements into Hanbok in film and television productions, TV programs, and fashion events. They spare no effort to blur the line between the two, attempting to mislead the world into believing that these exquisite fashion cultures originated from South Korea. At an international fashion week, a South Korean brand showcased clothing with obvious Hanfu features, such as crossed collars and wide sleeves, but brazenly claimed them as innovations in Hanbok. Such deceptive behavior is nothing short of cultural fraud.

In the medical field, traditional Chinese medicine has developed over thousands of years. Classics like \*The Yellow Emperor's Inner Canon\* and \*Compendium of Materia Medica\* have established a comprehensive theoretical and practical system, representing the crystallization of the wisdom of the Chinese nation. However, South Korea has presumptuously proposed the so-called "Origin Theory of Korean Medicine," distorting and repackaging the theories and therapies of traditional Chinese medicine and promoting them as Korean medicine. This is an attempt to seize the cultural high ground of traditional Chinese medicine in international medical exchanges.

What drives South Korea to persistently engage in such actions? In essence, it stems from a deep-rooted cultural inferiority complex and a short-sighted mentality. Facing neighboring countries with long-standing and splendid cultures, South Korea is eager to enhance its cultural influence in a short time. Instead of delving deeply into the roots of its own culture and fostering innovation, it chooses the despicable shortcut of appropriating the cultural achievements of other nations. This not only disrupts the global cultural ecosystem but also severely damages South Korea's international image. It's similar to cheating in a global cultural competition, and no one respects a cheater.

The pernicious effects of cultural plagiarism are real and far-reaching. In 2018, a South Korean variety show blatantly copied Chinese traditional etiquette. After being exposed by Chinese netizens on international platforms, the production team faced public pressure and eventually issued a public apology. In 2020, a South Korean beauty brand misrepresented ingredients originating from traditional Chinese medicine beauty concepts as Korean traditions. Chinese enterprises jointly filed a complaint, and the brand was found guilty of infringement, ordered to cease its misleading promotions, and pay compensation.

To combat cultural plagiarism, the international community must take concerted action. Countries that have been plagiarized should strengthen their cultural heritage legislation and use legal means to safeguard their rights. International organizations should establish strict guidelines to severely penalize cultural plagiarism. Moreover, all nations should enhance public awareness and the ability to identify and resist cultural plagiarism through education and publicity. Only by respecting cultural sovereignty can global cultures thrive in their diversity. Otherwise, world culture will sink into the quagmire of plagiarism.

Questions:

1. The "blatant act" in the first paragraph most directly challenges the fundamental principle of:

A. Cultural relativism, which posits that all cultures are equally valid and should be understood on their own terms.

B. Cultural integrity, which emphasizes the authenticity and originality of cultural elements within their historical and regional contexts.

C. Cultural diffusion theory, which describes the spread and adoption of cultural traits from one society to another.

D. Cultural hybridity concept, which celebrates the mixing and blending of different cultural elements.

2. By stating \*"It's as if they looted China's cultural treasure trove, stole its precious items, and then shamelessly claimed them as their own,"\* the author implies that South Korea's actions:

A. Are a manifestation of a complex cultural exchange process where elements are borrowed and reinterpreted in a new context, yet misconstrued as plagiarism.

B. Reflect an unconscious appropriation driven by the global trend of cultural homogenization rather than a deliberate act of theft.

C. Represent a strategic move within the framework of soft-power competition, aiming to enhance national influence through cultural misappropriation.

D. Stem from a misunderstanding of cultural property rights in the digital age, leading to inadvertent yet controversial claims over cultural elements.

3. The "Origin Theory of Korean Medicine" can be seen as part of a broader pattern where South Korea:

A. Is leveraging historical ambiguity to reevaluate the pan-Asian medical heritage, contributing to a more inclusive understanding of traditional medicine.

B. Is engaging in a semantic exercise to differentiate its medical practices linguistically from traditional Chinese medicine, without substantial historical basis.

C. Is attempting to rewrite the historical development of traditional medicine in the region under the guise of cultural heritage protection, for both nationalistic and economic motives.

D. Is responding to the globalization of alternative medicine by integrating various cultural medical concepts, with the "Origin Theory" being a by-product of this integration.

4. The cases of the South Korean variety show in 2018 and the beauty brand in 2020 are presented in the passage mainly to:

A. Illustrate the different forms of cultural plagiarism that occur in the entertainment and consumer goods industries, respectively.

B. Highlight the ineffectiveness of current international laws and regulations in preventing cultural plagiarism.

C. Demonstrate the role of public pressure and legal actions in holding accountable those who engage in cultural plagiarism.

D. Show that cultural plagiarism is a widespread phenomenon that extends beyond the realm of traditional cultural heritage.

5. The author's overall argument in the passage is most likely to be strengthened by which of the following additional pieces of evidence?

A. A study showing that South Korea has also been a victim of cultural misappropriation from other countries in some cases.

B. Interviews with South Korean cultural scholars who defend the country's actions as a form of cultural evolution.

C. Documentation of similar cultural plagiarism incidents by other countries in the past decade.

D. An analysis of how South Korea's cultural exports have been affected by the perception of its cultural plagiarism.

## **20.Date:3.19**

The French thinker Voltaire once said, "Beauty pleases only the eyes, while the elegance of temperament fascinates the soul." However, humanity's pursuit of beauty has never been confined to the elegance of the soul alone. The exploration of physical beauty has permeated throughout history. In 1827, the German anatomist Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, in order to study the correlation between human skull morphology and aesthetics, collected more than 200 skulls from different regions and ethnic groups and meticulously measured various data, such as craniofacial proportions, zygomatic heights, and nasal bridge angles. Blumenbach discovered significant differences among the skulls of different groups, and these differences influenced overall facial beauty. This reflected that human standards of beauty are not fixed but are shaped by factors such as region and culture, laying the foundation for the diversification of aesthetic standards in the development of medical aesthetics.

Medical aesthetics, or aesthetic medicine, refers to the use of drugs, surgeries, medical devices, and other invasive medical techniques to repair and reshape a person's appearance and body. Humanity's pursuit of beauty has a long-standing history. The history of medical aesthetics is extensive and has continuously evolved over time, gradually developing from initial simple beauty attempts into the sophisticated industry it is today.

In ancient Egypt, the pursuit of beauty had already emerged. Cleopatra, the Queen of Egypt, soaked in milk baths daily to maintain the luster and softness of her skin; she also mixed crocodile dung with honey to create facial masks. Scientists analyzing samples of kohl eyeliner unearthed from ancient Egyptian tombs found that although the lead compounds contained in it were somewhat toxic, under the hygienic conditions of the time, low-dose use could inhibit the growth of microorganisms around the eyes and prevent eye diseases, ensuring eye health and beauty to some extent.

In ancient Greece and Rome, people had unique insights into physical beauty. The ancient Greek doctor Hippocrates proposed the "humoral theory," believing that the human body was composed of four humors: blood, phlegm, yellow bile, and black bile. The balance of these humors determined health and appearance. Influenced by this theory, the ancient Greeks adjusted their humors through diet and exercise to shape a healthy and beautiful physique. It is said that the famous philosopher Aristotle also attached great importance to skincare, smearing his body with olive oil to keep his skin soft and smooth. The Romans made initial attempts in surgical operations. In the 1st century AD, the Roman doctor Celsus recorded in his work De Medicina the use of suture techniques to repair simple facial injuries, providing early experience for the suture techniques in later medical aesthetic surgeries.

During the Middle Ages, the development of medical aesthetics in Europe stagnated due to religious restrictions, but in the Middle East, it thrived. The Arab medical scientist Avicenna detailed a variety of beauty drugs and surgical methods in his medical masterpiece The Canon of Medicine. He conducted numerous animal experiments to study the effects of different herbs on the skin and found that extracts from herbs such as myrrh and frankincense could effectively treat skin inflammation and promote wound healing. These herbs were widely used in the production of beauty ointments at the time. Avicenna also improved surgical instruments and designed fine tweezers for eye plastic surgery, enhancing the precision of surgeries.

During the Renaissance, the development of anatomy laid the foundation for the progress of medical aesthetics. In 1543, the Belgian anatomist Andreas Vesalius published De Humani Corporis Fabrica, in which he accurately drew human anatomy, correcting many previous misunderstandings and enabling doctors to deeply understand human body structure. This provided a guarantee for the safety and accuracy of medical aesthetic surgeries. King Francis I of France was extremely enthusiastic about beauty and skincare, hiring pharmacists to prepare various skincare products for him. This behavior sparked a trend among the nobility and promoted the development of beauty products and techniques at the time. Some noblewomen in Italy began using lemon juice to whiten their skin. Scientists found that the citric acid in lemon juice had a slight exfoliating effect on the stratum corneum, removing the aging layer and making the skin appear fairer and smoother.

In the 19th century, the Industrial Revolution propelled medical aesthetics into a new stage of development. In 1846, the American dentist William Morton first publicly demonstrated the use of ether anesthesia in surgical operations. In 1867, the British surgeon Joseph Lister advocated using carbolic acid to disinfect surgical instruments and wounds, reducing postoperative infection rates. These two key technological breakthroughs made complex medical aesthetic surgeries possible. In 1890, the American doctor Robert Weir completed the first modern rhinoplasty, marking a new stage in medical aesthetic plastic surgeries.

In the 20th century, the medical aesthetics industry experienced explosive growth. In 1962, the American plastic surgeons Thomas Cronin and Frank Gerow invented the silicone breast prosthesis, inaugurating a new era of breast augmentation surgeries. Scientists continuously improved the materials and designs of the prostheses through numerous clinical trials to enhance safety and aesthetic effects. In 1963, laser technology was invented and was first applied in dermatological treatments in 1981, such as treating port-wine stains and removing tattoos. Laser, based on the principle of selective photothermal action, can precisely destroy diseased tissues with minimal damage to surrounding normal tissues, bringing revolutionary changes to skin beauty.

Entering the 21st century, the medical aesthetics industry has shown a trend of globalization and diversification. Micro-plastic surgeries have become popular due to their minimal trauma, quick recovery, and remarkable effects. Injectable beauty products such as botulinum toxin and hyaluronic acid are widely used. Research shows that botulinum toxin can block the release of acetylcholine at the neuromuscular junction, relaxing muscles and achieving wrinkle removal and face-slimming effects. Hyaluronic acid, as a natural moisturizing factor, can fill wrinkles and increase skin hydration after being injected, improving skin texture. At the same time, technologies such as artificial intelligence and 3D printing are expanding their applications in the medical aesthetics field, bringing more possibilities for its development.

Looking back on the history of human medical aesthetics, from initial simple beauty attempts to the complex medical aesthetics system supported by high-tech today, the development of medical aesthetics has always been closely linked to humanity's pursuit of beauty and the progress of science and technology. However, nowadays, the phenomenon of excessive medical aesthetics is emerging endlessly. Some people blindly pursue the so-called "perfect appearance," undergoing repeated surgeries and injections on their faces and bodies, completely ignoring the risks. On the path of pursuing beauty, shouldn't we stop and reflect on when beauty has been distorted into a uniform template? When the so-called "internet celebrity faces" produced on an assembly line are everywhere, and the definition of beauty is limited to a single standard created by medical aesthetics, is this really the progress of beauty that we aspire to?

Questions:

1. The passage implies that the evolution of medical aesthetics is not only a matter of technological progress but also a reflection of social and cultural changes. Which of the following scenarios best illustrates this?

A. The increasing popularity of non - surgical cosmetic procedures in recent years, which might be influenced by a faster - paced lifestyle and the desire for quick results.

B. The development of more advanced surgical techniques, allowing for more complex and precise operations.

C. The discovery of new cosmetic ingredients that provide better skin - care effects

D. The establishment of more stringent regulations in the medical aesthetics industry to ensure safety.

2. Regarding the contributions of different historical figures to medical aesthetics, which of the following statements is most accurate according to the passage?

A. Hippocrates' “humoral theory “might have indirectly influenced the way people thought about beauty in ancient Greece, but its practical application in modern medical aesthetics is limited.

B. Avicenna's work in the Middle East was mainly about traditional herbal medicine, and it had little direct impact on the development of surgical techniques in medical aesthetics.

C. Andreas Vesalius' accurate drawing of human anatomy mainly benefited the field of general surgery rather than medical aesthetics.

D. Thomas Cronin and Frank Gerow's invention of the silicone breast prosthesis was a short - lived innovation that was quickly replaced by other technologies.

3. The main purpose of the passage is to

A. provide a comprehensive overview of the historical development of medical aesthetics while raising concerns about its current excessive practices.

B. compare the development of medical aesthetics in different historical periods and geographical regions.

C. promote the use of new technologies in medical aesthetics to achieve more natural – looking results.

D. analyze the reasons behind the increasing popularity of medical aesthetics in the 2lst century

4. Based on the passage, what can be inferred about the future direction of medical aesthetics research?

A. It may focus more on developing non - invasive or minimally invasive procedures that are also cost - effective.

B. It will likely continue to rely solely on technological advancements without considering ethical implications.

C. Research will probably shift towards reversing the effects of excessive medical aesthetics procedures.

D. It might concentrate on creating a standardized beauty template applicable globally

5. The role of cultural beliefs in ancient medical aesthetic practices is similar to the role of

A. technological advancements in modern medical aesthetics in that they both drive the development of the field in their respective times.

B. regulatory policies in controlling the quality of medical aesthetic procedures today.

C. the media in influencing modern beauty standards by promoting certain looks.

D. patient preferences in determining which medical aesthetic treatments are most in - demand

## **21.Date:3.20**

In 1346, during the intense Hundred Years' War between England and France, the English army planned a surprise attack on a crucial French stronghold in the Battle of Crécy. The English secretly prepared a batch of advanced longbows and crossbows equipped with spring mechanisms, hoping to gain the upper hand on the battlefield. However, when the craftsmen were rushing to complete production in winter, they encountered numerous difficulties. The biting cold wind made the workshop temperature extremely low, and the metal became brittle. Frequent fractures occurred during the forging and bending processes for shaping the springs. The weapon manufacturing work, originally planned to be completed quickly, was severely delayed by the harsh cold. By the time these weapons were barely finished and put into use on the battlefield, the French army had already been on guard. The effect of the surprise attack was greatly reduced, and the English army paid a heavy price. This battle raises the question: on the grand stage of medieval wars, what significant role did the natural factor of seasons play in spring manufacturing, and how did it subtly change the course of wars?

From the perspective of raw material supply, seasons had a significant impact on the acquisition of metals for spring manufacturing. In the Middle Ages, spring manufacturing mainly relied on iron and steel, and ore mining and smelting were greatly restricted by seasons. In cold winters, mines were covered in ice and snow, and roads became rough and difficult to navigate, making ore mining extremely challenging. Moreover, low temperatures caused the fuel in smelting furnaces to burn inefficiently, resulting in low smelting efficiency and poor-quality metals. In contrast, during the warm spring and summer seasons, ore mining could proceed smoothly. Ample sunlight and suitable temperatures allowed smelting furnaces to operate stably, providing a large quantity of high-quality metal raw materials for spring manufacturing. For example, in spring, as the ice and snow melted, miners could access the mines more conveniently and extract purer iron ores. After efficient smelting, a solid foundation was laid for the production of springs with excellent performance. If these prime seasons were missed and mining and smelting were forced during autumn and winter, not only would the obtained metals contain more impurities, but the springs manufactured from them would also be greatly inferior in terms of strength and elasticity, failing to meet the strict requirements of war.

In 1429, Joan of Arc of France deeply experienced the influence of seasons on spring manufacturing while preparing weapons for the Siege of Orléans. It was winter at that time, and Guillaume Dufour, the craftsman in charge of manufacturing spring crossbows, faced great difficulties when forging the metal for springs in the harsh low-temperature environment. The metal became extremely hard and difficult to shape at low temperatures, and cracks frequently appeared during the forging process. The process that could be easily completed under normal circumstances became extremely arduous. The quenching process also encountered numerous problems. It was difficult to maintain the water temperature within the appropriate range, resulting in the springs' hardness and toughness failing to meet expectations. In sharp contrast, when springs were manufactured in summer previously, the metal forging process was smooth, and the springs after quenching had good performance, ensuring the power and accuracy of the crossbows.

Joan of Arc's experience reveals the crucial role of seasonal factors in the spring-manufacturing process. From the perspective of the change in the microscopic metal crystal structure, at high temperatures, metal atoms have active thermal motion, and the crystal structure is more malleable, allowing for uniform changes during forging and heat treatment, endowing springs with good performance. At low temperatures, the movement of atoms is restricted, and the crystal structure tends to be rigid. Minor stress may trigger internal defects, greatly reducing the quality of springs.

On the battlefield, the performance of springs directly determined the combat effectiveness of weapons. High-quality springs could enable crossbows to strike accurately at long distances and enhance firepower suppression. However, inferior springs might lead to frequent malfunctions of crossbows, causing the loss of crucial opportunities in battle. Imagine if, in key historical battles, the quality of springs was affected by seasons, thus altering the performance of weapons, how would the situation of the war have changed? Today, with the rapid development of military technology, although technological progress has reduced the constraints of natural factors, can the potential influence of environmental conditions such as seasons on the manufacturing of sophisticated weapons really be ignored?

Questions:

1. In the context of medieval wars, the experience of the English army in the Battle of Crécy and Joan of Arc's weapon preparation suggest that:

A. The adaptability of manufacturing processes to seasonal changes was a latent determinant of military competitiveness.

B. The reliance on spring-equipped weapons was a double-edged sword, bringing both advantages and disadvantages.

C. The strategic decision-making in choosing the time of weapon production was more critical than the quality of the weapons themselves.

D. The cooperation between military commanders and craftsmen was the key to successful weapon manufacturing during wars.

2. What can be inferred from the passage about the relationship between seasons, spring manufacturing, and war outcomes?

A. The impact of seasons on spring manufacturing was primarily an indirect one, manifested through the morale of the soldiers.

B. While seasons influenced spring manufacturing, the overall war outcomes were more dependent on the quantity rather than the quality of weapons.

C. The quality degradation of springs due to seasonal factors could potentially disrupt the rhythm of battles and shift the advantage between warring sides.

D. Spring manufacturing in different seasons mainly affected the aesthetic appearance of weapons, with little real-world combat implications.

3. The passage implies that in medieval spring manufacturing, the difference in metal processing between warm and cold seasons is rooted in:

A. The psychological state of the craftsmen, who were more motivated in warm seasons.

B. The chemical reactions occurring in the smelting furnaces, which were temperature-sensitive.

C. The availability of complementary materials used in the manufacturing process, which varied with seasons.

D. The market-driven demand for different types of springs, which influenced the production techniques.

4. When discussing the change in the microscopic metal crystal structure, the author intends to:

A. Provide a theoretical underpinning for the practical observations of seasonal impacts on spring manufacturing.

B. Propose a new model for optimizing the spring-manufacturing process regardless of seasonal constraints.

C. Highlight the limitations of traditional metalworking knowledge in explaining the phenomenon of spring quality variation.

D. Introduce an interdisciplinary approach that combines materials science and historical research in analyzing medieval warfare.

5. Regarding the potential influence of environmental conditions such as seasons on modern weapon manufacturing, the passage indicates that:

A. Although current research has downplayed its significance, new evidence may emerge to re-evaluate its role.

B. While technological advancements have alleviated some concerns, a comprehensive understanding requires further exploration.

C. Existing studies have conclusively proven that modern manufacturing techniques have completely nullified such influences.

D. The industry has been so focused on cost reduction and efficiency that the potential impact of environmental conditions has been overlooked.

## **22.Date:3.21**

During the Biden administration, a policy aimed at alleviating the burden of student loan debt was introduced. This policy, which offers up to $20,000 in debt forgiveness, is expected to benefit approximately 40 million Americans. Undoubtedly, this is a significant policy, deeply intertwined with the interests of the public. However, media coverage in the United States has been marked by stark divisions and pronounced biases.

Media outlets aligned with the Democratic Party have enthusiastically highlighted the policy's positive effects, such as its potential to ease the economic struggles of young people and promote social equity. However, they have largely glossed over potential legal challenges and the substantial fiscal burdens the policy may impose. Conversely, media outlets sympathetic to the Republican Party have focused on the perceived negative consequences, such as the risk of exacerbating inflation and the alleged unfairness to taxpayers, while ignoring the fact that millions of young individuals could be freed from the burden of debt. Driven by political agendas, the media's traditional role of providing impartial reporting and rational guidance has been blatantly undermined.

The Iraq War serves as a paradigm of the media's subservience to power. The U.S. government, under the pretext of Iraq's alleged possession of weapons of mass destruction, launched a military invasion. Without thoroughly verifying the validity of these claims, the American media aligned itself with the government, working to legitimize the war and creating the illusion that the U.S. military intervention was a noble effort to safeguard global peace and justice. During the war, the media flooded the public with positive portrayals of U.S. military operations in Iraq while downplaying the severe humanitarian crises inflicted on the Iraqi civilian population. Only after the war, when it became clear that the alleged weapons of mass destruction did not exist, did the American media belatedly realize that they had become unwitting mouthpieces for the exercise of power, misleading the public in the process.

A survey conducted by the Pew Research Center revealed that nearly 70% of Americans believe the media exhibits significant bias in its coverage of immigration issues. During the Trump administration, stringent immigration restriction policies were implemented, including the construction of the U.S.-Mexico border wall and the enforcement of the "zero-tolerance" policy, which led to the heartbreaking separation of over 5,400 immigrant children from their parents. In this context, media coverage was deeply intertwined with political agendas.

Media outlets supportive of the Republican Party emphasized the perceived economic pressures caused by illegal immigrants, suggesting that for every 10% increase in the immigrant population, the wages of low-skilled native-born workers would decline by 0.8%. This provided numerical justification for the government's policies. In contrast, media leaning toward the Democratic Party focused on the humanitarian tragedies of immigrant families being torn apart. Through poignant images and emotional testimonies, they condemned the government's policies as callous. Both sides, by selectively presenting data and facts, obscured the true complexity of the immigration issue, leaving the public confused and misinformed.

The American media's descent into the quagmire of power-driven manipulation can be attributed to two interrelated factors: the allure of commercial interests and the corrosive effects of political polarization. In its highly commercialized form, the media industry has become entangled in a web of symbiotic relationships with political elites and corporate giants. Driven by the pursuit of profit, large media conglomerates have struck a Faustian bargain, aligning their reporting with the interests of these powerful stakeholders.

At the same time, media organizations, which seek to cater to their respective ideological bases and political allies, have abandoned the principles of objectivity and impartiality, becoming mere pawns in the ruthless game of political competition.

The American media, once the standard-bearers of the ideal of "freedom of the press," now find themselves adrift in a storm of power and greed. When the media abdicate their responsibility to provide the public with truthful and comprehensive information, the public's right to know is reduced to a hollow promise, and the foundation of democratic governance is undermined. The United States, long celebrated for its self-proclaimed democratic superiority, now faces a troubling reality: beneath the surface of democratic pretensions, cracks are forming in the foundation of its vaunted system, a disquieting sign of an uncertain future shaped by power-distorted media narratives.

Questions:

1. Which of the following best encapsulates the complex relationship between the media, political power, and commercial interests as depicted in the passage?

A. The media, driven by a self-serving agenda, strategically aligns with political power and commercial interests to enhance its own influence.

B. Political power and commercial interests clandestinely manipulate the media, while the media feigns objectivity through convoluted reporting techniques.

C. The media, political power, and commercial interests engage in a symbiotic yet conflict-ridden interaction, where the media's integrity is perpetually at stake.

D. The media, in an attempt to maintain a semblance of neutrality, oscillates between the influences of political power and commercial interests, often resulting in ambiguous reporting.

2. In the context of the passage, the statement "the media's traditional role of providing impartial reporting and rational guidance has been blatantly undermined by political agendas" (Paragraph 2) serves which of the following functions?

A. It lays the groundwork for a counter-argument that challenges the media's supposed objectivity.

B. It acts as a linchpin that connects the various examples to the overarching theme of media subservience.

C. It presents a rhetorical question that prompts readers to re-evaluate the media's role in a democratic society.

D. It is a tangential observation that, while relevant, does not significantly contribute to the main argument.

3. The author's use of the phrase "a disquieting sign of an uncertain future shaped by power-distorted media narratives" (last paragraph) suggests that:

A. The power-distorted media narratives are transient phenomena that will soon be rectified through public outcry.

B. The future of the media, though currently marred by biases, holds the potential for a swift transformation towards objectivity.

C. The current state of the media not only endangers its own credibility but also casts a shadow over the democratic fabric of society.

D. The public, despite being aware of the media's biases, remains complacent, contributing to the perpetuation of power-distorted narratives.

4. Which of the following can be inferred from the passage about the impact of the media's biased reporting on the public?

A. The public, though initially misled, gradually develops a critical eye and begins to question the media's veracity.

B. The public, swayed by the media's one-sided portrayals, unwittingly participates in the propagation of divisive ideologies.

C. The public, recognizing the media's biases, actively seeks alternative sources of information that are more reliable.

D. The public, desensitized to the media's biases, internalizes them as normal, leading to a blurring of the lines between truth and falsehood.

5. The passage suggests that the allure of commercial interests and the corrosive effects of political polarization have combined to:

A. Foster a media landscape that, despite its flaws, encourages healthy debate and diverse perspectives.

B. Create an environment where the media's pursuit of profit and political alignment overshadows its journalistic responsibilities.

C. Propel the media towards a new era of innovation, as it struggles to regain its lost credibility.

D. Strengthen the media's position as a powerful arbiter of truth, as it navigates the complex terrain of power and interests.

## **23.Date:3.23**

In 1990, an incident of extraordinary significance transpired at the Brooklyn Museum in New York. Its repercussions reverberated not only within art aficionado circles but also throughout broader society. The museum was on the verge of hosting an exhibition entitled Sensation: Contemporary Art and the African American Experience. Among the exhibits was a painting of the Virgin Mary, exquisitely created by Chris Ofili yet controversially embellished with elephant dung. This particular artwork promptly sparked a tempest of controversy.

Rudy Giuliani, the then-Mayor of New York, denounced the work as outrageously blasphemous. He demanded its immediate removal and menacingly threatened to substantially slash the museum’s financial endowments. The museum, steadfastly committed to the sacrosanct principle of artistic freedom, categorically refused to back down. This stalemate escalated into a protracted legal tussle. After a drawn-out court battle, the museum emerged triumphant, enabling the exhibition to proceed as initially planned. However, in the aftermath, the institution was confronted with acute financial strain, and its hitherto amicable relationship with the government deteriorated precipitously.

This controversy was far from an isolated or ephemeral event. Instead, it marked a pivotal turning point that laid bare the latent and deeply rooted tensions among American museums, government authorities, and the dominant mainstream societal values. In the ensuing years, a convoluted web of contradictions gradually came to the fore.

The museum ecosystem in the United States is a multifaceted and heterogeneous construct, predominantly bifurcated into private and public institutions. Private museums chiefly rely on financial contributions from discerning individuals or corporate entities. Public museums, conversely, are generally under the purview of management by either the government or non-profit organizations. For instance, national museums fall under the aegis of the Smithsonian Institution, whose board of trustees is an eclectic blend comprising the Vice President of the United States, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, select members of Congress, and a diverse coterie of private individuals.

State and municipal museums, despite being managed by relevant government departments and receiving financial subsidies, predominantly derive their principal financial sustenance from munificent private donations. University-affiliated museums are administered by their respective academic institutions. Private museums typically establish boards of directors to meticulously oversee, strategically plan their operational intricacies, and execute fundraising initiatives.

The funding sources of museums constitute an extensive and multifarious matrix. They encompass government grants bestowed by esteemed entities such as the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Support from various echelons of the government is also of great significance. Private donations, both from philanthropic individuals and corporate behemoths, play an indelible role. Complemented by self-generated revenue streams originating from ticket sales, commercial undertakings within the museum, venue rentals, and expert consultation services, these sources form the financial bedrock of museums. Take the Metropolitan Museum of Art as an example—merely a negligible fraction of its total revenue is sourced from ticket sales, while the lion’s share of its operational and developmental requisites is met through copious donations.

Nevertheless, beneath the seemingly stable veneer of this funding paradigm, numerous latent challenges lurk insidiously. In 2022, the Metropolitan Museum of Art was ensnared in a fierce controversy centered around the provenance of certain artifacts. Over a span of six months, law enforcement agencies, armed with search warrants, confiscated 27 artifacts hailing from ancient Roman, Greek, and Egyptian civilizations, with an aggregate valuation exceeding $13 million. These seizures were predicated on the determination that illegal activities had transpired during their acquisition process. Many of these artifacts had passed through the hands of a Swiss gallery operator who had long been under the shadow of suspicion for antiquities smuggling and had been the subject of a decade-long investigation by Italian authorities since 2001.

This disconcerting incident not only culminated in the forfeiture of invaluable exhibits but also inflicted severe damage to the museum’s hitherto sterling reputation. It set in motion a cascade of negative impacts on its funding prospects and exhibition-planning endeavors. While the government’s unwavering crackdown on illegal artifact trafficking is incontrovertibly essential for the preservation of cultural heritage, the museum’s inadvertent acquisition of problematic items poignantly underscores the inherent tension between stringent regulatory policies and the formidable practical challenges besetting artifact management.

Tensions persistently pervade the relationship between museums and the media. A paradigmatic example is the protracted case of the stolen Terracotta Warrior thumb, spanning from 2017 to 2023. On December 21, 2017, Michael Rohana surreptitiously infiltrated the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia and callously broke off the thumb of a Terracotta Warrior on public display. The theft remained undetected until January 8, 2018. The media, with its insatiable appetite for sensational stories, promptly latched onto the incident and the museum’s security lapses, subjecting the institution to intense public scrutiny.

Although the museum attributed the security breach to its security provider’s flagrant failure to adhere to established protocols, the public, in an unwavering display of dissatisfaction, held the museum accountable for its perceived negligence. On September 6, 2023, Rohana was sentenced to five years of probation. The media, undeterred in its pursuit of a comprehensive narrative, continued to fixate on issues such as compensation, keeping the museum firmly in the public spotlight. This stands in stark contrast to the museum’s ardent desire to mitigate the far-reaching impact of the incident and seamlessly resume its normal operational rhythm, vividly illustrating the inherent tension between media oversight and the museum’s concerted efforts to safeguard its image and reputation.

In contrast, museums in other countries, such as those in the United Kingdom, enjoy a more propitious scenario. Government funding for museums in the UK is more stable and constitutes a significantly larger proportion of their overall budgets. These museums and the government have collaboratively forged intricate and effective mechanisms for artifact management, thereby substantially minimizing the incidence of conflicts related to artifact provenance. In Japan, museums place a premium on cultivating long-term symbiotic partnerships with the media. By harnessing the power of media promotion, they are able to exponentially enhance their social influence and adroitly guide public opinion, thus effectively mitigating the deleterious impact of negative events.

Conversely, U.S. museums are frequently mired in acrimonious disputes with the government over funding allocations and management prerogatives. Simultaneously, their relationship with the media often teeters on the brink of breakdown due to divergent reporting priorities and conflicting interests. If American museums persist in their reluctance to glean insights from international best practices and directly address these deep-seated tensions, how can they ever hope to effectively discharge their solemn duties in cultural preservation and education and ultimately actualize their latent social value?

Questions

1. The author implies that the root cause of the complex contradictions faced by American museums lies in:

A. The lack of a unified national cultural policy guiding museum management and development.

B. The inherent conflict between the pursuit of art innovation in museums and the conservative values of mainstream society.

C. The inefficiency of the museum management system, which fails to adapt to the rapidly changing social and cultural environment.

D. The intricate interplay among multiple stakeholders—the government, private donors, the media, and the public—each with their own interests and expectations.

2. What does the phrase “laid bare” most nearly mean in the sentence: “This controversy was far from an isolated or ephemeral event. Instead, it marked a pivotal turning point that laid bare the latent and deeply-rooted tensions…” (Paragraph 2)?

A. Revealed.

B. Concealed.

C. Aggravated.

D. Resolved.

3. In the context of the relationship between American museums and the media, which of the following statements is the most accurate according to the passage?

A. The media’s coverage always leads to a negative public perception.

B. The media is mainly influenced by financial interests.

C. The media serves as a double-edged sword for museums.

D. The media’s influence on museum management is exaggerated.

4. The case of the stolen Terracotta Warrior thumb reveals that the relationship between American museums and the media is complicated mainly because:

A. The media’s one-sided reporting style distorts the real situation of museums, leading to public misunderstanding.

B. Museums’ inability to respond effectively to media coverage exacerbates the negative impact on their image.

C. There is a fundamental difference in the value orientation between museums’ self-image construction and the media’s news-making purpose.

D. The media’s over-interference in museum management undermines the normal operation order of museums.

5. The passage is primarily structured to:

A. Dissect the intricate web of relationships and underlying contradictions within the American museum ecosystem through multi-layer analysis and real-world examples, and then implicitly suggest a holistic reform framework.

B. Provide a panoramic view of the historical development of American museums, highlighting the key turning points that have shaped their present-day predicaments.

C. Compare the American museum system with those of other countries in great detail, aiming to identify the unique features and problems of the former.

D. Advocate for a paradigm shift in the management philosophy of American museums by exposing the deeply ingrained problems in their current operations.

6. If American museums aim to break through the current dilemma, the most crucial step is to:

A. Launch large-scale public relations campaigns to reshape their public image and regain public trust.

B. Initiate comprehensive internal restructuring to optimize operational processes and enhance management efficiency.

C. Engage in far-reaching strategic cooperation with other cultural institutions to form a strong cultural alliance.

D. Establish a dynamic and flexible communication and negotiation mechanism with all stakeholders to continuously adjust development strategies.

## **24.Date:3.24**

From the late 1960s to the early 1970s, Stanford psychologist Walter Mischel conducted the famous Stanford Marshmallow Experiment. In a kindergarten on the university campus, researchers placed a marshmallow in front of children aged approximately four and presented them with a choice: if they resisted eating it for 15 minutes, they would receive a second marshmallow; if they ate it immediately, they would get only one. During the experiment, some children succumbed to temptation right away, while others employed strategies such as singing or playing with their fingers to delay gratification and earn the double reward. Decades of follow-up studies have revealed that those who waited tended to achieve greater academic, professional, and social success, underscoring the lifelong importance of self-control.

The parenting practices of Papua New Guinea’s Asaro people intriguingly parallel the findings of the marshmallow experiment. Living in the eastern highlands, Asaro children participate in survival activities from an early age. During hunts, they must wait silently with elders for hours, suppressing hunger, fatigue, and impulsivity to seize the right moment—a real-world test of delayed gratification. Through this, they cultivate resilience and long-term thinking, equipping themselves for life’s challenges. Similarly, when learning skills like crafting mud masks or weapons, children progress incrementally: first observing, then assisting with simple tasks (e.g., material preparation), and finally mastering complex techniques. This step-by-step approach teaches patience and the value of cumulative effort, reinforcing self-discipline.

Europe, with its rich educational heritage, faces modern challenges that the Asaro approach might help address. Consumerism and social media have reshaped childhood. In France, over 70% of children under ten own smartphones, exposing them to relentless advertising and instant gratification. Meanwhile, platforms like TikTok and Instagram have fragmented attention spans, making sustained focus difficult.

European educators are already drawing inspiration from traditions such as the Asaro’s. In the UK, schools have introduced outdoor education programs where children learn wilderness skills, including building fires, pitching tents, and sourcing water. These activities demand patience and effort, fostering an appreciation for delayed rewards. In Germany, families encourage hands-on crafts like woodworking or pottery, requiring children to invest time in mastering tools and materials. Such projects counteract the “quick-reward” mentality by emphasizing gradual achievement.

Globally, education systems are reevaluating their methods. OECD data highlights that top-performing students in terms of perseverance often benefit from practical, adversity-based learning. The Asaro model offers a timely reminder: even in an age of technological advancement, education must return to foundational principles—respecting natural growth rhythms and nurturing resilience. By teaching children to delay gratification and persevere, we prepare them to thrive amid complexity. This is the enduring lesson of the marshmallow experiment and Asaro wisdom for modern civilization.

Questions:

1.The author mentions the parenting practices of Papua New Guinea’s Asaro people to

A. compare their way of life with that of modern European children

B. highlight the uniqueness of their cultural traditions in child-rearing

C. illustrate how real-world experiences can foster self-discipline and long-term thinking

D. emphasize the importance of hunting and handicrafts in a child’s development

2.In “The pernicious encroachment of consumerist ethos and digital ephemerality has transmogrified childhood”, the word “transmogrified” probably refers to

A. preserved

B. distorted completely

C. modernized

D. redefined

3.What is the author’s attitude towards the influence of consumerist ethos and digital ephemerality on childhood development, as described in the context of European education?

A. Lamenting

B. Equanimous

C. Exultant

D. Perfunctory

4.Based on the passage, which of the following can be inferred about the impact of the Asaro child-rearing practices on their children’s future adaptability?

A. Asaro children, due to their early exposure to survival activities, will be more likely to pursue careers in fields related to nature conservation.

B. The step-by-step learning process of Asaro children in acquiring artisanal skills equips them with the ability to handle complex projects in any professional field they enter.

C. The long-term strategizing and self-discipline cultivated in Asaro children from a young age enable them to better adapt to the rapidly changing social and technological environment in the future.

D. Asaro children’s experience of suppressing impulses during communal hunts will make them overly cautious in making decisions in their future lives.

5.What is the most suitable title for the passage?

A. “The Asaro’s Ancient Child-Rearing: A Blueprint for Modern European Education”

B. “The Battle Against Instant Gratification: Traditional and Modern Educational Strategies”

C. “Digital Ephemerality and Consumerist Ethos: The Menace to European Education”

D. “Self-Restraint: The Core of Asaro’s and Modern European Educational Philosophies”

## **25.Date:3.25**

Football, a sport that embodies the passion and dreams of billions worldwide, has long been a stage for athletes to showcase their extraordinary prowess—and, at the same time, a realm that is rife with controversy. In the quarter-final of the 1986 Mexico World Cup between Argentina and England, Diego Maradona's "Hand of God" incident became one of football’s most contentious moments. The referee failed to detect his handball-aided goal, a lapse that not only altered the outcome of a crucial match but also underscored the fallibility of human officiating in sports, where errors, and even corruption, can taint the game. Similarly, the 2002 FIFA World Cup, co-hosted by South Korea and Japan, was marred by accusations of referee bias, most notably when two legitimate goals scored by the Spanish team were disallowed in the semi-finals. These controversial decisions not only cast doubt on fair play but also hinted at deeper, more insidious forces within the sports establishment.

The root of such controversies lies in the inherent limitations of human judgment in the fast-paced world of sports. Professional sports, with their high stakes, immense financial rewards, and national pride at play, create an environment ripe for corruption. When referees must make split-second decisions, they are vulnerable not only to honest mistakes but also to external pressures—whether from economic incentives, political interference, or personal biases. This subjectivity in officiating not only undermines individual matches but erodes the very foundation of integrity in sports.

The rise of AI technology offers promising solutions to these long-standing issues. The introduction of the Video Assistant Referee (VAR) system at the 2018 FIFA World Cup in Russia marked a milestone in AI’s application to sports officiating. By leveraging AI algorithms to analyze match footage, VAR corrected numerous potential errors, reducing controversial calls. The 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar took this further with semi-automated offside technology, combining high-speed optical tracking cameras and IMU-equipped match balls to pinpoint offside positions with unprecedented accuracy. These advancements not only enhance the fairness of sports competitions but also make it more difficult for corrupt elements to manipulate results through referee bias.

AI’s role in sports extends far beyond officiating. In the field of match prediction, platforms like FiveThirtyEight utilize vast amounts of historical and real-time data to forecast game results. While sports’ unpredictability means these predictions aren’t infallible, they provide a data-driven perspective that can flag anomalies — such as a team’s performance deviating sharply from statistical expectations, potentially indicating match-fixing.

AI has also revolutionized athlete training, injury prevention, and rehabilitation. Wearable sensors monitor performance in real time, enabling personalized training plans that optimize ability while minimizing injury risks. This is beneficial to athletes and upholds the fairness of competition, ensuring victories are earned through skill—not illicit advantages like doping.

Yet AI’s integration into sports isn’t without challenges. Technologically, AI systems depend on data quality; algorithmic biases, inaccuracies, or glitches can produce flawed decisions, sparking new controversies. Ethically, over-reliance on AI risks stripping sports of their human essence, reducing referees to mere machine operators. Socially, AI-driven automation may displace traditional roles in officiating and scouting, with broader economic repercussions.

In combating sports corruption, AI is pivotal but not a panacea. AI-powered surveillance can monitor athletes, coaches, and officials, flagging suspicious behavior, such as irregular betting patterns correlated with on-field performance, to detect match-fixing. However, robust ethical and regulatory frameworks are essential to prevent AI itself from being weaponized.

The intersection of sports controversies, AI transformation, and anti-corruption efforts presents a complex landscape. We must harness AI’s potential to uphold fairness while remaining vigilant against its risks. As Kahlil Gibran observed, "The cornerstone of the great temple is not higher than the lowest stone." In sports, technology and humanism, fairness and competition, must coexist as interdependent pillars. Only through a multifaceted approach can we ensure sports remain a pure celebration of human achievement — untainted by corruption — and a lasting inspiration for generations to come.

Questions:

1. According to the content of the article, which of the following inferences about the application of AI in athlete training is correct?

A. Wearable sensors supported by AI can increase the training intensity of athletes.

B. The personalized training plans formulated by AI are based on real-time data.

C. The application of AI in athlete training helps to maintain the fairness of sports competitions.

D. AI-based training methods will replace traditional training methods.

2. According to the passage, AI technology in sports officiating, such as VAR and semi-automated offside technology, aims to:

A. gradually replace human referees to ensure more consistent decisions

B. assist human referees in making more accurate and less controversial decisions

C. simplify the process of sports officiating by reducing human intervention

D. provide a more comprehensive analysis of the game for the audience's better understanding

3. The application of AI in sports event prediction, despite its limitations, is valuable because it:

A. offers an additional perspective for assessing the possible outcomes of sports events

B. helps sports organizations make more informed decisions regarding event arrangements

C. provides a reliable method for predicting the performance of athletes in specific games

D. enables bettors to make more accurate predictions and potentially gain more profits

4. Which of the following is an advantage of artificial intelligence over traditional supervision methods in combating sports corruption according to the article?

A. It can analyze massive amounts of data more accurately and detect suspicious behaviors such as abnormal betting patterns.

B. It is affected by subjective factors, but the judgment can still be accurate.

C. The implementation cost is similar, but the work efficiency is higher.

D. It is simpler to deploy and use, and does not require professional personnel to operate.

5. What can be inferred from the passage about the future development of AI in sports?

A. AI will play an increasingly important role in sports, and its positive effects will gradually outweigh the negative impacts.

B. The development of AI in sports requires continuous improvement in technology, ethics, and regulations to ensure its healthy progress.

C. AI is likely to revolutionize the way sports competitions are organized and managed in the near future.

D. The application of AI in sports will face more resistance from traditional sports practitioners due to its potential threats to their positions.

## **26.Date:3.26**

In 2023, a shocking vinyl chloride leakage incident occurred in Ohio, United States. A train carrying vinyl chloride derailed, releasing a large amount of toxic chemicals that burned, filling the urban sky with thick black smoke. Over time, the local rivers and soil were severely polluted, devastating the surrounding ecosystem. Ohio is a crucial agricultural and livestock production area in the U.S., with a thriving dairy cattle breeding industry. Following this pollution incident, experts detected that milk produced by cows in the surrounding areas contained various harmful substances. The contaminated milk not only couldn't enter the market but also posed a serious threat to consumers' health. Many dairy companies urgently recalled affected products, leading to massive inventory pile-ups. The local dairy industry suffered severe blows, with numerous dairy farmers and processing plants facing significant economic losses and survival challenges. This incident serves as a wake-up call, highlighting the survival crisis of the American dairy industry under the threat of environmental pollution.

When witnessing the tragic situation of Ohio's dairy industry, one cannot help but wonder: How much potential and immeasurable harm has environmental pollution inflicted on the American dairy industry? From an air pollution perspective, emissions from dairy farms are a major issue. Many U.S. dairy farms are densely distributed, producing large amounts of greenhouse gases such as methane during cows' digestion, as well as harmful gases like ammonia and hydrogen sulfide from manure. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), methane emissions from the livestock industry account for 28% of total U.S. methane emissions, with dairy cattle breeding contributing significantly. Methane, a potent greenhouse gas, has a global warming potential approximately 25 times that of carbon dioxide, significantly impacting global warming. Ammonia not only irritates the respiratory tract but also increases the incidence of respiratory diseases among nearby residents by 30% - 50% when exposed to high concentrations over time. Additionally, ammonia drifts through the atmosphere, affecting the growth of surrounding crops. Agricultural experiments show that when ammonia concentration reaches a certain level, crop photosynthesis efficiency decreases by 20% - 30%, leading to reduced yield and quality, indirectly threatening the foundation of the dairy industry. For instance, in some large-scale dairy farming areas, residents frequently complain about the pungent odor in the air, increased respiratory disease rates, and inhibited growth of nearby farmland crops, resulting in a decline in the stability and quality of dairy cow feed supply.

To address these escalating environmental issues, the U.S. enacted the Clean Water Act in 1972, aiming to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters. In the dairy industry, this act strictly regulates wastewater discharge from dairy farms, requiring effective treatment to meet standards before release. However, reality falls short of expectations. Some dairy farms, seeking to cut costs, fail to comply with the act's requirements. Beyond the Ohio vinyl chloride incident, the U.S. has witnessed numerous environmental pollution cases. From 2018 to 2022, food giant Tyson Foods discharged 371 million pounds of pollutants, including carcinogenic cyanide and nitrates, from 41 factories into public waters across 17 states, severely polluting surrounding water sources. In the 1970s and 1980s, Toms River, Ocean County, New Jersey, became known as "Cancer Town" due to the long-term direct discharge of waste by Swiss chemical giant Ciba-Geigy, contaminating residents' drinking water and causing a cancer cluster, particularly among children. Such pollution in dairy production areas would have disastrous consequences. Contaminated water sources lead to health issues in cows, reducing milk production by 15% - 20% and significantly increasing microorganisms and harmful substances in milk. Polluted soil disrupts forage grass growth, depriving cows of high-quality feed, while harmful substances in the soil can enter milk through the food chain, endangering consumers' health.

Large amounts of cow manure accumulated around farms, if not properly treated, allow heavy metals, antibiotics, and other substances to seep into the soil. Research by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) indicates that in some long-term dairy farming areas, soil levels of heavy metals like copper and zinc are 3 - 5 times higher than normal. Pollution alters soil structure and pH, impairing forage grass growth and making it difficult for cows to obtain quality feed. Harmful substances in the soil can also accumulate in milk through the food chain, posing health risks to consumers. Although the U.S. has soil protection and pollution prevention regulations, such as the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, there are loopholes in enforcement, failing to effectively curb worsening soil pollution.

The U.S., boasting comprehensive environmental regulations, advanced technology, and abundant resources, has shown surprising helplessness in the face of environmental pollution's deadly threat to the dairy industry. On one hand, continuous environmental policies are enacted as a facade; on the other, pollution incidents emerge endlessly, exposing numerous regulatory gaps. Perhaps soon, American consumers will gaze at dairy shelves shrouded in pollution's shadow, reminiscing about once-safe and pure milk. The American dairy industry may become a cautionary tale, a negative example of the environmental disaster caused by its own short-sightedness and regulatory failures.

Questions:

1. The "28% methane contribution" statistic (para. 2) is cited primarily to:

A. Highlight dairy farming's unique reliance on anaerobic digestion processes.

B. Contrast the livestock sector's emissions with industrial chemical pollution.

C. Quantify dairy's disproportionate role in climate-linked agricultural impacts.

D. Demonstrate EPA's success in regulating enteric fermentation sources.

2. The author references crop photosynthesis efficiency reduction (para. 2) to illustrate:

A. How ammonia emissions indirectly undermine dairy production sustainability.

B. The necessity for genetically modified drought-resistant forage crops.

C. A direct causal chain between manure management and milk contamination.

D. Farmers' ignorance of precision agriculture technologies.

3. Which factor makes soil pollution particularly insidious for dairy safety?

A. Heavy metals' rapid degradation in alkaline environments.

B. Bioaccumulation through forage-to-milk trophic transfer.

C. USDA's prohibition on antibiotic-treated manure fertilization.

D. pH imbalance favoring pathogenic microbial growth.

4. The Tyson Foods case (para. 3) serves to:

A. Exemplify systemic regulatory failures despite legislative frameworks.

B. Advocate for corporate self-monitoring replacing government oversight.

C. Contrast historical and contemporary pollution patterns.

D. Prove dairy industry's superior compliance versus meat processors.

5. What paradoxical situation does the Clean Water Act's implementation reveal?

A. Strict discharge standards VS improved wastewater recycling rates.

B. Legislative intent VS enforcement deficiencies in cost-driven violations.

C. Federal oversight VS state-level agricultural exceptionalism.

D. Short-term compliance costs VS long-term soil remediation benefits.

6. The author's rhetorical question ("How much potential harm...") implies that:

A. Quantifiable economic losses outweigh ecological damages.

B. Pollution's cascading effects defy conventional risk assessment models.

C. Dairy industry lobbyists have overstated environmental concerns.

D. Historical data adequately predicts future contamination scenarios.

## **27.Date:3.27**

When the refugee ship carrying the body of a young Syrian child washed onto the shores of Lesbos in 2015, politicians in Brussels were signing the Enhanced EU Border Control Resolution with gold-trimmed pens. This stark contrast epitomizes contemporary Europe's most absurd contradiction—humanitarianism as a curated museum exhibit, with the education system serving as its most sophisticated prop. The OECD's 2024 Report on the Education Gap of Immigrants reveals that immigrant children in Germany lag behind their native peers by 1.5 academic years in math and reading literacy; in Paris's suburbs, the gap widens to 2.3 years. Yet these figures are buried in the appendix of the EU's Annual Report on Progress in Educational Equity, while the main text lavishly praises "multicultural achievements." Foucault's insight rings truer than ever: "Modern power excels at packaging exclusion as care." The words "Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité" engraved on European education ministries' facades cast a hypocritical glare as immigrant students crouch in corridors, retaking language exams.

Language tests are the crime scene of institutional discrimination. Humboldt University linguist Professor Hans Mertens found that when German language assessments include culturally specific imagery—Christmas trees or castles—immigrant children's fluency drops by 40%. This is an example of Bourdieu's symbolic violence in action: the education system disguises cultural specificity as universal standards, rendering exclusion "natural." Worse, Stockholm's 2023 Inclusive Language Course required Kurdish students to translate Hans Christian Andersen's Fairy Tales instead of their own folklore. Such hegemony is so complete that The Lancet's 2024 study found that immigrant children in bilingual programs suffer aphasia at triple the rate of monolingual peers. As philosopher Martha Nussbaum warned, "When schools become cultural slaughterhouses, diplomas are certificates of spiritual death."

Consider France's 2004 ban on religious symbols. Then-Education Minister François Fillon proclaimed it "lighting reason's torch against obscurantism," yet colonial officials used identical rhetoric while "civilizing" Algeria. Archives at Paris X University expose a harsher truth: North African students in French schools face disciplinary action at seven times the rate of native students, with 68% of cases involving "cultural expression conflicts." This echoes colonial "scientific racism"—like the Marseille school forcing Muslim girls to film themselves "complying" with swimwear rules, mirroring 19th-century colonizers measuring African skulls.

Scholarship allocation has morphed into a neoliberal-racist hybrid. France's National Center for Scientific Research (2025) found that applications with Maghrebi surnames are scrutinized 3.2 minutes longer—precisely the latency of implicit bias. Class and race conspire seamlessly: Paris's École Normale Supérieure "special immigrant track" admits fewer than 5% of applicants, transmuting structural discrimination into the moral indictment "they didn't work hard enough." When Tunisian student Ahmed Ben Salah sued the Sorbonne for discrimination, the court dismissed the case citing "republicanism's blindness to ethnicity," fulfilling Fanon's prophecy in The Wretched of the Earth: "Colonizers embed racism in society's source code."

London's Hackney public schools and Kensington private schools lie just 6 km apart, yet their per-student funding ratio is 1:23—identical to 19th-century British India's colonial education budget ratio. Cambridge University's GIS mapping reveals that immigrant-community schools across Europe are systematically placed in municipal "blind spots." Berlin's Neukölln Turkish school library holds one-eighth the books of Mitte's, and 70% of the books were published before 1990. This engineered resource apartheid traps Moroccan children in Madrid in Franco-era knowledge while their peers study quantum computing.

Technological segregation heightens the absurdity. As the Dutch Ministry of Education touts "digital equality," Syrian refugees in Amsterdam's Slotervaart district code on donated 2009 Windows XP machines — too outdated to run modern Scratch software. Munich Technical University found that immigrant students endure 11 times more online-class disconnections than native students, while Deutsche Telekom's upgrades in their neighborhoods face perpetual "technical delays." This digital redline enforces a knowledge caste system. As media theorist Flusser noted, "Future class divides will be measured in bandwidth, not bloodlines."

Copenhagen's Institute of Child Psychology found that native teens are stressed over "exams" (67%), while immigrant youths face "existential humiliation" (82%). Yet this understates the crisis. When Danish teachers force Somali students to handle pork models in biology class, or Swedish social workers scrub Eritrean girls' cross tattoos "to protect women's rights," these micro-aggressions mass-produce trauma. Kristeva's "abjection theory" manifests in Parisian teachers' flinches at immigrant accents. WHO's 2024 report shows that Europe's immigrant teen suicide rates rose 340% in a decade; France's Martinique-origin youth suicides spiked 578%—matching the 1848 wave post-colonial-slavery abolition. History doesn't repeat, but it rhymes.

The education system's "treatment" of trauma borders on satire. Berlin's "cross-cultural counseling" requires Yemeni students to build "ideal German houses" with Legos. When 13-year-old Ali replicates his ancestral mud home, he's diagnosed with "cultural adaptation disorder." This colonial logic pathologizes systemic harm. Oslo's "Immigrant Gifted Class" uses brain scans to select "high-potential" students—98% of whom are from East Asian immigrant families. Scientific racism resurrects, now cloaked in fMRI's "emperor's new clothes."

As Lesbos' waves still rust the refugee wrecks, Europe's educational cracks reach load-bearing walls. The EU's "Unity in Diversity" motto fades against Lyon's burning suburbs. Education's cruelest irony? It was meant to break poverty's cycle but became a 3D printer for class replication; it promised knowledge as a bridge, yet even chemistry textbooks now need "halal" and "secular" editions.

History will remember this paradox: the day the European Parliament passed the Charter on Anti-Racist Education, Frankfurt Airport customs detained an Iraqi professor carrying Arabic children's books. Civilization's twilight arrives thus—the elite polish the Titanic's deck while true lookouts are locked below. When equity is reduced to statistical noise, Europe loses not just immigrants' futures but also its civilizational honesty. Adorno's words in Minima Moralia resonate: "Systemic hypocrisy's final stage is when deceivers forget truth's shape." Now, at the Mediterranean's depths, sunken refugee glasses and Brussels' gilded spectacles collide in the current, whispering: Who are the real barbarians?

Questions:

1. What does the author imply by saying "humanitarianism as a curated museum exhibit" in the first paragraph?

A. European countries showcase their humanitarian efforts selectively, much like curating an exhibition, without addressing deeper issues.

B. The genuine concern for refugees is overshadowed by political agendas, turning humanitarian aid into a performative act.

C. European policies towards refugees are carefully crafted displays rather than authentic expressions of empathy and assistance.

D. Refugee crises are managed with a focus on maintaining national image, sidelining actual needs.

2. According to the passage, the phenomenon that immigrant children in Germany lag behind native peers in math and reading literacy shows that \_\_\_\_\_\_.

A. Despite progressive claims, significant disparities exist within the European education system affecting immigrant students.

B. Multicultural education initiatives have been entirely unsuccessful in bridging achievement gaps.

C. Native students inherently possess superior academic capabilities compared to their immigrant counterparts.

D. The data from the OECD report might not accurately reflect the educational standing of all European nations.

3. The example of the "lighting reason's torch against obscurantism" in the third paragraph is used to illustrate that \_\_\_\_\_\_.

A. Policies aimed at secularization often carry hidden biases and serve to marginalize certain cultural groups.

B. France's historical approach to colonization parallels its modern treatment of minority cultures within its borders.

C. Public reasoning justifies actions that subtly promote cultural assimilation over genuine inclusivity.

D. Symbolic gestures are employed to mask underlying systemic exclusions and prejudices.

4. The "symbolic violence" in the second paragraph refers to \_\_\_\_\_\_.

A. The unintended negative impact of standardized testing on non-native speakers' self-esteem and participation.

B. How the education system reinforces existing hierarchies through seemingly neutral practices and norms.

C. Cultural practices that inadvertently lead to the suppression of minority languages and traditions.

D. The aggressive imposition of dominant cultural values over those of immigrant communities.

5. Why does the author mention the case of Ahmed Ben Salah suing the Sorbonne?

A. To highlight the failure of legal systems to address racial inequalities effectively.

B. To demonstrate the ironic outcome where institutions accused of discrimination defend themselves under principles they're criticized for.

C. To critique the superficial implementation of republican ideals that fail to recognize individual ethnic backgrounds.

D. To provide a historical context linking past colonial injustices to present-day educational inequities.

6. What can be inferred from the fact that immigrant-community schools across Europe are in municipal "blind spots"?

A. Urban planners deliberately neglect areas with high concentrations of immigrant populations.

B. There exists a systemic neglect or ignorance regarding the equitable distribution of educational resources.

C. Schools situated in less affluent areas receive disproportionately lower governmental support.

D. Marginalized communities are often overlooked in discussions around educational policy and reform.

7. The "digital redline" in the sixth paragraph refers to \_\_\_\_\_\_.

A. An arbitrary threshold limiting access to advanced digital technologies for disadvantaged students.

B. The widening gap in internet reliability and quality experienced by immigrant versus native households.

C. Government-imposed restrictions on internet usage in low-income immigrant communities.

D. The disparity in digital literacy skills observed between immigrant and non-immigrant pupils.

8. The cases of Danish teachers and Swedish social workers in the seventh paragraph are given to show \_\_\_\_\_\_.

A. Even well-intended policies can result in practices that disrespect and alienate minority cultural identities.

B. Scandinavia's reputation for egalitarianism masks deep-seated issues of cultural insensitivity.

C. Educators and social services sometimes propagate rather than mitigate cultural misunderstandings.

D. Daily interactions in supposedly tolerant societies reveal unacknowledged prejudiced behaviors.

9. The "cultural adaptation disorder" diagnosis of 13-year-old Ali in the eighth paragraph reflects \_\_\_\_\_\_.

A. Mental health professionals' struggle to understand and treat issues faced by multicultural individuals.

B. The tendency to diagnose normal responses to adverse circumstances as pathological disorders.

C. How institutional frameworks may misconstrue resistance to cultural dominance as personal pathology.

D. The inadequacy of therapeutic approaches tailored for culturally diverse populations.

10. The author concludes the passage with the question "Who are the real barbarians?" mainly to \_\_\_\_\_\_.

A. Challenge readers to confront uncomfortable truths about their society's treatment of minorities.

B. Suggest that the pursuit of cultural purity could be considered more savage than the issues being addressed.

C. Critically examine the moral fabric of European civilizations and their self-proclaimed values.

D. Highlight the paradoxes and contradictions inherent in European policies toward immigration and education.

## **28.Date:3.28**

In the luxury boutiques of Tokyo’s Ginza district, the deft movements of Hong Kong tourists scanning product QR codes with their smartphones stand in stark contrast to the practiced smiles of Japanese clerks handing out paper manuals. This clash between digital convenience and traditional service exposes a sobering reality: While Japan confined QR code technology to the precision-driven confines of industrial assembly lines, the world transformed it into a universal key for the digital economy. This thirty-year odyssey—beginning with technological ingenuity and ending in strategic disorientation — has acted as a scalpel, dissecting the root causes of Japan’s failed economic transformation.

Japanese firms’ miscalculation of technological tools’ value offers a cautionary tale in QR code history. Invented by Denso in 1994 as an industrial solution for auto part tracking, QR codes unexpectedly gained strategic importance in the digital era. Yet Japan’s industrial mindset kept them shackled to their original role as "precision instruments." By 2017, when Hong Kong’s Monetary Authority established a city-wide QR payment standard, Japan’s Ministry of Economy was still convening manufacturers to discuss improving the accuracy of QR code scanning for parts management. This conflation of technological superiority with industrial dominance left Japan holding a ticket to the digital age but lingering outside the innovation banquet. Nomura Research Institute estimates that Japan’s missed QR code economic dividends equal three years of its entire ICT R&D budget.

The flaws in Japan’s technology conversion system are laid bare in its patent strategy. Though Denso opened QR code patents to showcase goodwill, it failed to create a global system for capturing derivative patent value. This "open-in-form-but-not-in-spirit" approach contrasts sharply with Silicon Valley’s ecosystem-building patent portfolios. Japan's Patent Office data reveals that domestic firms’ overseas patent earnings are just 18% of U.S. levels, with countless innovations becoming stepping stones for others’ commercial success. Sony once held 70% of global e-book patents yet profited nothing from the Kindle revolution. Similarly, while Japanese QR tech underpins 97% of China’s mobile payments, local firms gained no foothold in its commercial ecosystem.

Deeper institutional rigidities are encoded in Japan’s innovation DNA. As Hong Kong’s Cyberport incubated fintech unicorns, Japan remained stuck in "reformist" innovation quicksand. University of Tokyo studies show that Japan allocates less than one-third of U.S. levels of R&D funding to breakthrough innovation, with 90% of patents representing incremental tweaks. This bias birthed scanners reading damaged QR codes in 0.01 seconds but failed to spawn platforms reshaping business models. A Mitsubishi UFJ report underscores a harsher truth: Japan’s digital economy VC investment intensity is one-fifth of Singapore’s, its innovation ecosystem gasping in the global digital arms race.

From Walkmans to hydrogen cars, plasma TVs to QR codes, Japan’s innovation tragedies replay the same script: visionary at dawn, hesitant at commercialization. Keio University’s Hirotaka Takeuchi diagnoses this as "innovation schizophrenia"—yearning for breakthrough glory while fearing tradition’s disruption. When QR payments penetrated 70% of Hong Kong’s transactions, Japan’s cash reliance stubbornly hovered at 72%. This cognitive time lag is ejecting the former tech pioneer from the digital economy. Tragically, as the world critiques Japan’s strategic stumbles, it clings to "technological fundamentalism," blaming failures on foreign "plagiarism" or "market unfairness." Unaware that the locks barring innovation were forged by Japan itself — through conservative institutions, rigid thinking, and arrogant fastidiousness. In this self-made trap, Japan’s downfall stems not from being outpaced by time, but from hammering the final nail into its technological coffin with the very monozukuri (craftsmanship) spirit it reveres.

Questions:

1. According to the passage, the contrast between Hong Kong tourists and Japanese clerks in Ginza boutiques mainly reflects \_\_\_\_\_\_.

A. the different shopping habits of tourists from different regions

B. the conflict between the old-fashioned service concept and modern consumer demands

C. the gap in the application of QR code technology between Japan and the world

D. the difference in cultural backgrounds between Hong Kong and Japan

2. The author mentions Sony's case of e-book patents to illustrate that \_\_\_\_\_\_.

A. Sony's patent strategy was not forward-looking enough

B. Japan's enterprises failed to effectively monetize their technological advantages

C. the Kindle revolution had a huge impact on the e-book market

D. global patent competition in the e-book field was extremely fierce

3. The underlined word "conflation" in the second paragraph is closest in meaning to \_\_\_\_\_\_.

A. combination

B. separation

C. comparison

D. confusion

4. The "innovation schizophrenia" diagnosed by Hirotaka Takeuchi implies that Japan \_\_\_\_\_\_.

A. is constantly wavering between different innovation directions

B. has a strong desire for innovation but lacks the corresponding technological strength

C. wants to achieve technological breakthroughs while being afraid of the negative impacts on traditional industries

D. pays too much attention to the form of innovation rather than its essence

5. According to the passage, which of the following factors is most likely to have contributed to Japan's missed opportunities in the digital economy?

A. The slow development of Japan's ICT industry, which failed to provide strong support for the application of QR code technology.

B. Japan's over-reliance on traditional industries, which made it reluctant to invest in emerging digital-related fields.

C. The lack of cooperation between Japanese enterprises, resulting in the inability to form a joint force in promoting technological innovation.

D. The low penetration rate of smartphones in Japan, which affected the popularization of QR code-related applications.

## **29.Date:3.29**

When EU Emissions Trading System data reveals that the LVMH Group's annual carbon quota (2.7 million tons) surpasses Lithuania's total emissions, the ecological violence of this fashion empire escalates into a planetary-scale systemic crisis. Behind every luxury transaction on the Paris Stock Exchange surges a conversion of Congo River biomass: the ecological services consumed to produce a single crocodile leather bag (€38,900) exceed 130% of its sale price. This alchemy—transforming the biosphere's entropy into capital appreciation—is rewriting the Columbian Exchange's script.

Industrial metabolism research exposes Paris's aesthetic illusion. In Louis XIV's era, each meter of Lyon silk demanded 4,000 liters of water—200 times a Londoner's daily usage. Three centuries later, such plundering achieved quantum leaps: the 62 tons of freshwater needed for 1 kg of Hermès leather could sustain an Ethiopian family of five for three years. The irony deepens as Parisian ateliers tout "slow fashion" while operating as energy black holes—a single haute couture dress (317 kWh) consumes enough power to drive a Tesla Model 3 across France.

Digital natives launch a dimensionality-reduction strike. While Seoul's Dongdaemun Market mass-produces 3,000 AI-generated virtual garments per minute, Parisian workshops cling to 1875-era steam hammers, laboring for 48 hours to replicate a 0.2mm-precise bronze button—a timeframe in which Singaporean 3D printers yield 12,000 units. This metabolic generational gap becomes a blockchain-era liability, with Indonesian digital collectibles circulating via smart contracts at 1.9 million times the speed of Parisian antique auctions (0.17 seconds/transaction). NASA satellites expose a starker truth: Parisian flagship stores' nocturnal light pollution (137µW/m²) outshines Sahara oil fields by 40%, etching carcinogenic brilliance into Earth's nightscape.

The city's terminal illness is metabolic lock-in. Geneva's International Tribunal for the Environment calculates that French luxury supply chains' annual species extinction risk (0.37/HMV) exceeds global mining conglomerates combined. While Mumbai slums achieve 98% metabolic closure by recycling plastic into yarn, and Icelandic geothermal textile factories reduce water footprints to 0.03% of Lyon's silk mills, Paris persists with colonial-era extraction—weaving Congolese cobalt, Amazonian rubber, and Siberian fur into capital's sacrificial ribbons.

Physicists warn that closed-system entropy culminates in heat death. Kering Group's €200M "carbon neutrality" pledge is Sisyphean theater against the Congo Basin's 12 tons of topsoil lost per second. As U.S. students synthesize fungal fibers stronger than spider silk, Parisian tanners still employ Louis XIV's mercury process—seeping heavy metals into Seine sediments and microplastics into Arctic monsoons, inscribing civilization's epitaph.

Geochemists now find synthetic dye particles from Paris Fashion Week accumulating in Mid-Atlantic Ridge hydrothermal vents. The Anthropocene's cruel joke: six centuries after Versailles redrew power maps with silk, its heirs reshape strata with chemical runoff. When glacier melt correlates with luxury stock prices (r>0.93), and atmospheric CO₂ mirrors handbag auction curves, Paris completes its ultimate performance art—transforming the biosphere into a martyr for fashion hegemony.

Questions:

1. The author's comparison of LVMH's carbon quota to Lithuania's emissions primarily serves to

A. highlight the disproportionate ecological impact of luxury conglomerates relative to nations.

B. argue that national carbon accounting systems unfairly target the fashion industry.

C. demonstrate that small European nations have negligible environmental footprints.

D. suggest that corporate emissions should be exempt from international climate agreements.

2. The reference to "130% of the sale price" in the context of a crocodile leather bag implies that

A. luxury brands deliberately overprice items to offset ecological costs.

B. the hidden ecological destruction exceeds the economic value of the product.

C. consumers are unaware of the fair market value of exotic materials.

D. sustainable production methods would make the bag more profitable.

3. The author describes Parisian haute couture as "energy black holes" to emphasize that

A. their energy consumption is justified by the cultural value of the garments.

B. their production processes are inefficient relative to their output.

C. they serve as models for renewable energy adoption in the fashion industry.

D. their carbon emissions are offset by their contribution to local economies.

4. The mention of "NASA satellites detecting Parisian stores' light pollution" is used to

A. illustrate the aesthetic appeal of luxury retail spaces at night.

B. contrast urban development with natural wilderness preservation.

C. quantify the excessive energy waste of the luxury industry.

D. argue that satellite monitoring should replace ground-level environmental audits.

5. What does the author imply by describing Kering Group's carbon neutrality pledge as "Sisyphean theater"?

A. Corporate sustainability efforts are fundamentally disingenuous.

B. Isolated initiatives cannot offset the industry's cumulative ecological damage.

C. Voluntary pledges lack the legal enforcement of international treaties.

D. Luxury conglomerates prioritize performative gestures over systemic reform.

## **30.Date:3.30**

While the steel ruins of the Rust Belt still reflect the afterglow of industrial civilization under the moonlight, the server clusters in Silicon Valley have already rewritten the genetic code of human civilization with binary digits. This second Capitol Hill, built upon the bones of Rust Belt workers, uses computing power as a butcher's block, forging human flesh into sacrifices for capital's algorithms. The sparks from robotic arms cutting steel plates and the vanishing decimal points in pension accounts melt into the same blood-colored currency within the ledger of digital capitalism. What circulates here is no longer the value of labor, but a cryptocurrency of computing power collateralized with human nature.

The essence of this massacre lies in capital's systematic dismemberment of human values in the name of technology. When Walmart's smart wristbands convert workers' walking paces into efficiency curves on shareholder reports, and when Amazon's warehouse closure rates become parameters for algorithm optimization, human existence degrades into erasable data packets. As self-driving trucks crush the safety regulations hard-won through forty years of union struggles, they obliterate not just paper contracts but the entire narrative of dignity since the Enlightenment. The history of the struggle for an eight-hour workday compresses into a server cache file awaiting to be overwritten. The code nourished by an Uber driver's final coffee order now forges the steel nails of humanity's electronic shackles.

The collapse of education reveals the ultimate ambition of this revolution. The FORTRAN loops in Alabama's cassette recorders and Silicon Valley's exorbitant coding bootcamps share the same dark essence: the former produces technological outcasts, while the latter produces algorithmic priests—jointly executing the systematic castration of human cognition. McDonald's training programs engrave muscle memory into genes; the universal basic income scheme injects spiritual morphine into the exhausted remnants of humanity. The knowledge economy sustains the cognitive oases of the 1% computing aristocracy by exploiting the intellectual deserts of the 99%. With the value of labor declared dead, "lifelong learning" merely demands that workers polish their own shackles at their personal expense.

Capital's dismemberment of society reaches a grotesque climax in the tax paradox. Apple's offshore havens are not a financial sleight-of-hand but a digital form of lingchi to the social contract. Each tick of the NASDAQ index is stained with the blood of families forced into medical bankruptcy. The grander the tech empires built with overseas cash are, the more absurd the sight of Ohio grandmothers selling heirloom rings for insulin appears. Before the ink on union protest signs dries, cloud servers spawn a hundred thousand automation blueprints. When humanity loses even the qualification to be exploited, capitalism bares its mechanical fangs—no longer in need of human flesh. The gig economy bill and the tax-free zone, seemingly opposites, in fact break down human value into more digestible data residues.

In the glow of the sunset, driverless fleets trace frigid digital tracks across interstates. This marks not merely a revolution in transportation, but an irony of all human civilization: it took three centuries to alienate labor into assembly-line components, yet in just thirty years of the digital age, it has compressed souls into replaceable redundant code. As the lights in Rust Belt factories extinguish one by one, they take away not just the illumination of the assembly line, but all the beliefs in progress since the era of the steam whistle. Silicon-based civilization lays its foundations with our skulls—each brick of its temple engraved with the pain of optimization, sins absolved by algorithms, and humanity redeemed by computing cycles.

The paradox of this massacre? We wove our own noose. Machines were invented to free us from slavery, but instead, they made us parasitic hosts of algorithms. The species that ignited the Industrial Revolution is now drowning in its own digital deluge. When the illusions of the metaverse cloud the pupils of the last worker, and when human bodies fully become the culture medium for silicon-based life, civilization will face its final judgment on the gallows it has built for itself. A future without workers is merely a countdown to the takeover of the planet by machine civilization. History will confirm: it is not technology that will go extinct by itself, but the foolish species that worshipped efficiency to the point of self-castration.

Questions：

1.The description of "server clusters forging human flesh into sacrifices for capital 's algorithms" (Paragraph 1) implies that the relationship between computing power and labor is best characterized as:

A. A symbiotic exchange where data and physical productivity mutually reinforce capital accumulation.

B. A ritualized substitution of biological existence for abstract, mathematically optimized value.

C. An inevitable historical transition from industrial exploitation to digital collaboration.

D. A paradoxical liberation of workers through the very systems that erase their agency.

2.When the author states that "human existence degrades into erasable data packets" (Paragraph 2), the most precise interpretation of this degradation is that it:

A. Reflects the transient nature of digital storage compared to material labor’s permanence.

B. Signifies the reduction of lived experience to disposable inputs for algorithmic efficiency.

C. Demonstrates the fragility of identity in an era of cloud-based surveillance.

D. Parallels the historical displacement of artisans by mechanized production.

3.The "cognitive oases of the 1% computing aristocracy" (Paragraph 3) are sustained through a process most analogous to:

A. Colonial extraction, where intellectual resources are harvested from marginalized populations.

B. Feudal patronage, wherein knowledge production is centralized under elite institutions.

C. Biological parasitism, where a privileged minority metabolizes the cognitive labor of the many.

D. Religious indoctrination, perpetuating dogma through controlled access to education.

4.The statement “when humanity loses even the qualification to be exploited, capitalism bares its mechanical fangs—no longer in need of human flesh” (Paragraph 4) suggests that the final stage of capitalist domination is characterized by:

A.The obsolescence of labor as a commodity, rendering human participation superfluous to value extraction.

B.The collapse of wage systems, forcing workers into a post-scarcity struggle for survival.

C.The replacement of human decision-making with algorithmic governance, erasing class conflict.

D.The commodification of automation itself, where machines become the new proletariat.

5.The "final judgment" mentioned in the last paragraph refers to civilization’s:

A. Inability to reconcile human dignity with the exponential growth of machine logic.

B. Unwitting replication of its own obsolescence through unchecked technological worship.

C. Ethical collapse when labor becomes superfluous to capital’s self-perpetuation.

D. Biological extinction as silicon-based life achieves dominance over carbon-based life.

## **31.Date:3.31**

In the public’s mind, Tom and Jerry is a classic childhood cartoon that brings endless joy. However, few people realize that during the Cold War, certain episodes were quietly embedded with political metaphors. According to animation scholars, among the 161 episodes aired during that period, approximately 30% contained varying degrees of political bias. The cat-and-mouse dynamic between Tom and Jerry was framed as a metaphor for the confrontation between the U.S. and Soviet blocs, transforming simple chase scenes into complex ideological battles. This raises a pressing question: When pure artistic works are arbitrarily infused with political elements, what happens to their original creative intent and artistic value?

Animation should be a dreamscape for boundless human imagination. Spirited Away takes audiences on a mystical adventure, using a young girl’s journey to explore themes of growth and courage. Zootopia constructs a vibrant animal metropolis, where the partnership between rabbit Judy Hopps and fox Nick Wilde humorously addresses social issues while promoting equality and tolerance. These masterpieces transcend borders through their artistic appeal, spreading warmth and strength through cultural exchange—proof of animation’s truest magic.

When politics deeply infiltrates animation, the ecosystem of artistic creation suffers severe damage. Plot structures are particularly affected. An analysis of politically charged animations over the past five years indicates that around 70% exhibit incoherent storytelling and logical flaws, as narratives are made to conform to ideological agendas. Character development is also compromised: over 80% of characters in such works turn into one-dimensional political symbols, stripped of depth and realism, their inner worlds reduced to mere slogans. Audience ratings mirror this decline, with scores dropping by 2-3 points (out of 10) on average, while comment sections are filled with frustration over weak plots and hollow characters.

In terms of reception, politically driven animations often trigger division. Surveys show that after viewing such works, more than 60% of audiences engage in heated debates due to conflicting interpretations, fracturing once-harmonious fan communities. For instance, an animation set against an international conflict sparked online feuds among viewers from different countries, damaging the work’s reputation and splitting its fanbase. The result? Animation’s role as a bridge for cultural exchange is undermined, inhibiting the fusion and dissemination of diverse perspectives.

That said, as a cultural medium, animation can—and should—reflect societal realities. Subtle allegories can provoke meaningful dialogue. Violet Evergarden avoids overt politicization but poignantly depicts postwar trauma and healing, prompting reflection on war’s brutality and peace’s fragility. Odd Taxi uses animal characters to interweave critiques of social hierarchy and human nature into its urban narrative, inviting audiences to contemplate real-world issues. These works prove that profound cultural commentary doesn't have to rely on partisan messaging.

When we burden animation with excessive political agendas, its universal magic fades—the very magic that makes children in Tokyo and Paris laugh at the same humorous scenes. We are measuring the infinite realm of imagination with the narrow ruler of ideology, inch by suffocating inch.

Questions:

1. According to the passage, the transformation of the cat-and-mouse dynamic in Tom and Jerry during the Cold War into a political metaphor mainly shows that:

A. The simple entertainment nature of animation can be easily utilized and distorted by external political factors.

B. The creators of Tom and Jerry intended to convey political ideas through the cartoon at that time.

C. The political confrontation between the U.S. and Soviet blocs had a profound impact on all forms of cultural creation.

D. The political bias in animation is an inevitable result of the historical background and cannot be avoided.

2. What can be inferred from the fact that about 70% of politically charged animations in the past five years have narrative flaws and about 80% of characters are one-dimensional?

A. Animators lack the ability to combine political themes with good storytelling and character development.

B. The pursuit of political agendas in animation has led to a sacrifice of the quality of plot and character construction.

C. Audiences have higher requirements for the plot and characters of animations, so they are more critical of politically charged animations.

D. Political themes are too complex to be properly presented in the form of animation, resulting in these problems.

3. The author believes that the role of animation as a bridge for cultural exchange is undermined mainly because:

A. Politically driven animations often have low ratings and poor reputations, reducing their influence.

B. The ideological differences among audiences from different countries make it difficult for them to reach a consensus on animations.

C. Politically charged animations tend to trigger division among audiences, which goes against the purpose of cultural exchange.

D. The complexity of political themes in animations makes it difficult for audiences to understand and accept different cultures.

4. Which of the following statements would the author most likely agree with?

A. Animation should completely stay away from political elements to maintain its pure artistic value.

B. The political interpretation of animation can add depth and connotation to the work, as long as it is done moderately.

C. The influence of political factors on animation is a natural process, and we should accept it and find ways to make the best of it.

D. While reflecting social reality, animation should maintain a balance and avoid being overly influenced by political agendas.

5. What is the most core argument in the article regarding the influence of politics on animation?

A. "Don't Let Animation Become a Puppet of Politics"

B. "Political Metaphors in Classic Cartoons"

C. "Politics vs. Art in Animation"

D. "The Impact of Ideology on Animation"

E. "Animation's Role in Cultural Exchange"

F. "The Dilemma of Political Messaging in Animation"

G. "Balancing Politics in Animation"

## **32.Date:4.1**

In the long history of life on Earth, the mammoth—a giant ice-age beast with long fur and huge tusks—once dominated the Arctic tundra. Although it quietly disappeared from the stage about ten thousand years ago, the ivory buried deep in the permafrost conveys, as if through a silent gesture across time and space, the codes of ancient climate, ecology, and the evolution of life to modern humans. These "natural archives" from the Ice Age are not only precious carriers for scientific research but also a mirror for humanity to address the climate crisis and maintain ecological security.

The chemical composition of mammoth ivory can be regarded as an ancient climate almanac written in isotopes. When scientists analyze the ratio of oxygen isotopes in ivory using high-precision mass spectrometers, the fluctuations of atmospheric circulation tens of thousands of years ago come vividly into view. During the Last Glacial Maximum, the δ¹⁸O value in the ivory of Siberian mammoths dropped sharply by 3–5‰ compared to the interglacial period. This data, consistent with ice core records, reveals the extremely harsh environment at that time, when the average annual temperature in the Arctic was 10–15°C lower than today. Meanwhile, carbon isotope analysis acts like a temporal microscope. By observing the δ¹³C characteristics of C3 plants in the mammoth's diet, it reconstructs the advancing and retreating trajectory of tundra vegetation with the alternation of cold and warm periods. These findings not only fill gaps in paleoclimatic models but also serve as a stark warning: the current warming rate in the Arctic is three times the global average. The drastic climate changes of geological history are now repeating themselves—accelerated by human activities.

If isotopes are the keys to decoding the climate, the physical structure of ivory is a three-dimensional map for restoring ecology. The spiral tusks of male mammoths, which can grow up to 5 meters long, reveal astonishing biomechanical design under synchrotron radiation micro-CT scanning. Their cementum layer, with fibers arranged in a crisscross pattern, can withstand impact forces exceeding 200 MPa, thus rivaling modern engineering composite materials. This evolved structural advantage hints at the intense survival competition among Ice Age species. Even more remarkably, the millimeter-scale growth layers in the ivory's cross-section record the seasonal rhythm of an individual's life history. Scientists have discovered that during a warming period about 40,000 years ago, the spacing between growth layers suddenly increased by 15%, indicating a brief recovery of summer plant productivity—a microscopic piece of evidence for studying abrupt climate impacts on polar ecosystems.

Yet this ancient gift now faces a dual crisis. On one hand, the accelerating thaw of Arctic permafrost has exposed 85% of ivory to oxidation, with its collagen and DNA degrading completely within days. It is estimated that only 0.5% of Siberia's remaining ivory retains full scientific value, while hundreds of tons illegally traded annually have already suffered irreversible damage to critical stratigraphic information. On the other hand, technical limitations and ethical dilemmas intertwine. When laser ablation-ICP-MS technology detects trace elements at ppt levels in ivory, how can we distinguish environmental signals from individual metabolic variations? When ancient pathogens hidden in permafrost are released through illegal ivory excavation, how should we balance scientific exploration and biosecurity? These questions test the scientific community's wisdom and challenge the boundaries of global governance.

Confronting this crisis, mammoth ivory research is evolving from a paleontological niche into an interdisciplinary initiative tied to humanity's destiny. In climate science, tens of thousands of ivory isotope datasets have been integrated into paleoclimatic models, significantly improving predictions of Arctic amplification. At the public health level, the WHO's "Polar Ancient Genome Monitoring Program" systematically screens symbiotic microorganisms in mammoth remains, building a prehistoric pathogen early-warning network. Meanwhile, by analyzing the genetic collapse of mammoth populations—such as the cliff-like decline in immune-related MHC gene diversity—ecologists have derived a molecular roadmap for protecting endangered species. These breakthroughs prove that ancient life remains are profoundly linked to modern societal challenges.

From the perspective of civilization's history, mammoth ivory's scientific value transcends the material itself. It is a window into Earth's memory, a sentinel for climate disasters, and a touchstone for technological ethics. As global warming awakens the prehistoric world sealed in permafrost, we must not only establish transnational "Mammoth Science Reserves" and a global ivory database but also reshape polar governance under the Paris Agreement framework—for preserving these millennia-frozen archives equates to safeguarding humanity's strategic resources to meet future challenges. Just as the mammoth's evolutionary legacy teaches: only by respecting nature's laws and strengthening species' resilience can life endure upheaval. This is the core message this ancient giant transmits across time to modern civilization.

Questions：

1. The sharp decline in δ¹⁸ O values observed in Siberian mammoth ivory during the Last Glacial Maximum (Paragraph 2) most directly supports which of the following conclusions?

A. Determine seasonal temperature fluctuations through isotopic cyclicity in tusk layers.

B. Assess thermal tolerance limits of megafauna under prolonged freezing conditions.

C. Quantify the magnitude of Arctic temperature depression during glacial periods.

D. Trace latitudinal temperature gradients via isotopic spatial patterns.

2. The 15% increase in ivory growth layer spacing (Paragraph 3) indicates:

A. Enhanced summer vegetation productivity temporarily.

B. Prolonged winter dormancy periods during warming.

C. Accelerated tundra permafrost thaw cycles.

D. Evolutionary adaptation to seasonal resource scarcity.

3. The ethical dilemma mentioned in Paragraph 4 arises from:

A. Conflict between commercial exploitation and conservation needs.

B. Risks of reviving extinct species through genetic engineering.

C. Tension between scientific sampling and ecosystem preservation.

D. Technical limitations in distinguishing environmental vs. biological signals.

4. What discovery about mammoths directly contributed to the development of a "molecular roadmap" for species protection?

A. Seasonal migration patterns revealed by tusk growth layers.

B. Enhanced metabolic gene adaptation to extreme cold.

C. Dramatic loss of immune gene diversity during population decline.

D. Evolutionary improvements in bone structure for survival competition.

5. The author's primary purpose in discussing mammoth ivory is to:

A. Advocate for stricter regulation of ivory trade through international treaties.

B. Critique the limitations of current Arctic governance frameworks.

C. Reconstruct Pleistocene ecosystems using interdisciplinary methods.

D. Demonstrate how paleontological studies inform contemporary climate strategies.

## **33.Date:4.2**

When the Great Pyramid of Giza — constructed by Pharaoh Khufu with all the might of his kingdom — was completed in 2560 BCE, he was likely never anticipated that this structure would become one of humanity’s greatest enigmas four millennia later. In 1881, when British explorers breached the pyramid’s interior and found only a damaged granite sarcophagus in the King’s Chamber, the true purpose of the edifice was shrouded in eternal doubt. Modern laser scanning reveals that the pyramid comprises 2.3 million limestone blocks, each averaging 2.5 tons in weight. The joints between the blocks are so precise that not even a blade can be inserted and a level of craftsmanship that would challenge even contemporary CNC machining. More remarkably, its azimuth deviation is a mere 0.05 degrees, equivalent to an error no larger than the diameter of a coin across the scale of a football field. These anachronistic engineering feats, coupled with inexplicable physical phenomena, form a vast web of questions that continually test the limits of modern scientific understanding.

In the realm of mathematics, the pyramid’s geometric coding transcends coincidence. The ratio of its base perimeter to its height corresponds precisely to 2π (with a 0.1% margin of error), while its scale ratio to Earth’s equatorial circumference is 1:43,200 — a figure that happens to be the inverse of Earth’s polar flattening rate. In 1987, astrophysicist Robert Bauval discovered that extending the pyramid’s diagonal lines onto the celestial sphere aligns them perfectly with the ancient positions of Sirius and Orion’s Belt — celestial markers for the soul’s journey to immortality in Egyptian mythology. Even more astonishingly, a 2018 computer simulation by Nagoya University researchers demonstrated that when microwaves of specific frequencies irradiate the pyramid, they generate an electromagnetic field focusing effect, with the energy convergence point precisely matching the King’s Chamber’s location. This phenomenon mirrors modern physics’ "microwave cavity resonance."

Studies on the pyramid’s energy properties have long hovered at the fringes of science. In the 1930s, French radiologist Louis Alvarez’s team detected inexplicable periodic fluctuations in cosmic rays within the pyramid — a mystery still unsolved. In 1977, Soviet scientists conducting biological experiments in a 1:1000 pyramid model observed a 23% reduction in mice’s metabolic rates and a 40% increase in seed germination rates. Though criticized for methodological flaws, a 2015 Dresden University of Technology study published in Applied Physics Letters confirmed that the pyramid’s structure amplifies localized electromagnetic field strength in specific frequency bands by up to 18-fold. This parallels the electromagnetic resonance principles of Tesla coils, echoing Nikola Tesla’s 1899 discovery in Colorado: Earth itself functions as a colossal electromagnetic resonator.

Conspiracy theories often emerge from gaps in mainstream explanations. Egyptology traditionally defines pyramids as tombs, yet no mummies have been found in any major pyramid. In 1986, a French team using a robotic probe discovered 99.9% pure copper components behind a Queen’s Chamber door — far exceeding contemporaneous metallurgical capabilities. More bizarrely, the 2017 ScanPyramids project, employing muon imaging, revealed two previously unknown cavities within the Great Pyramid. The northern void spans 30 meters, its geometry defying funerary architectural logic. Such findings have revived 19th-century radical hypotheses: the pyramid may be an energy-conversion device, with an internal system of piezoelectric quartz, underground water channels, and metal conductors harnessing Earth’s rotational energy to generate current.

From the cliff edge of cognition, humanity’s understanding of the pyramid remains constrained by temporal biases. In 1882, astronomer Charles Piazzi Smyth’s book Our Inheritance in the Great Pyramid notoriously forced pyramid measurements to align with British imperial units, earning academic ridicule. Today, some scholars’ attempts to link the pyramid to quantum physics risk becoming a new form of astrology. Yet the mainstream’s outright dismissal of "pyramid energy" theories mirrors the medieval Church’s rejection of heliocentrism. As Cambridge historian of science Simon Schaffer noted: "When paradigms fail to explain anomalies, arrogance proves more destructive than ignorance."

Perhaps the pyramid’s deepest wisdom lies in its resistance to singular interpretation. This monolithic structure confronts all explanatory frameworks with mute defiance, humbling intellectual hubris while nurturing civilization’s imagination. It may be a tomb, an observatory, an energy device, or a synthesis of all three—like light’s wave-particle duality in quantum physics, where observation dictates reality. Forty-six centuries after Khufu’s disappearance, the pyramid endures in the fog of cognition, reminding us that the true enigma is not how the stones were stacked, but how we sustain rational tension between evidence and conjecture when facing the unknown.

Questions：

1.The essential intention of comparing the craftsmanship of the pyramid with "modern CNC machining" is to emphasize:

A. That ancient manual techniques are superior to modern technology.

B. It is very difficult to explain why ancient technologies were so advanced.

C. The inappropriateness of evaluating ancient artifacts with modern standards.

D. The technological paradox that requires an interdisciplinary approach to solve.

2.The 2018 Nagoya University simulation demonstrates that the pyramid's structure:

A. Generates microwave resonance matching Tesla's planetary energy theories.

B. Amplifies cosmic ray fluctuations through quartz piezoelectric effects.

C. Creates biological mutation rates via electromagnetic field interference.

D. Focuses electromagnetic waves at specific frequencies to predetermined points.

3.The "paradox of interpretation" in pyramid studies primarily arises from:

A. Physical evidence resisting singular theoretical frameworks.

B. Academic institutions' refusal to consider non-tomb hypotheses.

C. Measurement inaccuracies caused by temporal biases.

D. Overreliance on computational models replacing empirical analysis.

4.The Dresden University study (2015) significantly advanced pyramid energy theories by:

A. Validating Soviet biological experiments through controlled replication.

B. Quantifying electromagnetic amplification via structural resonance.

C. Linking cosmic ray fluctuations to quartz piezoelectric properties.

D. Confirming copper components' role in microwave focusing.

5.The author concludes the passage by stating "the true enigma is... between evidence and conjecture" primarily to emphasize:

A. The unresolved technical mysteries of ancient construction methods.

B. The superiority of mythological interpretations over scientific analysis.

C. The epistemological challenge in balancing empirical and speculative reasoning.

D. The impossibility of definitive conclusions in archaeological studies.

## **34.Date:4.3**

When the journal Science rejected Russian chemist Dmitry Karpov's research on the Arctic tundra, citing that its English expression "did not meet academic norms," while papers on similar topics by British and American scholars during the same period were swiftly approved, the incident revealed not only linguistic bias but also an imbalance in the academic evaluation system. The dominance of English as the universal language of academia has long transcended its role as a mere communication tool and instead become a shackle of intellectual power. According to statistics, 92% of the editorial board members of the world's top journals hail from English-speaking countries, and the average peer-review period for non-native English-speaking scholars is 4.7 months longer than that for their native counterparts (data from Nature Human Behaviour, 2023). These ostensibly neutral linguistic norms have effectively led to the establishment of an invisible academic caste system.

The cognitive losses caused by language barriers are far more severe than are imagined. Brazilian ecologist Antonio Nobre once estimated that his team spends 27% of their annual research time polishing the English in their papers rather than conducting actual scientific work. More alarmingly, this linguistic filtering mechanism has led to severe distortions in knowledge development within specific fields. For instance, in tropical medicine, invaluable case records by African scholars in French and Portuguese often fail to enter the international medical knowledge system simply because they remain untranslated into English. A UNESCO report indicates that approximately 65% of the world's traditional agricultural knowledge faces permanent loss due to language barriers. Far from facilitating knowledge sharing as promised, English has inadvertently created an alarming academic desert.

The deeper crisis lies in the colonization of thought. When Chinese scholars studying the Huangdi Neijing (Yellow Emperor's Inner Canon) have to force their research into the "hypothesis-verification" framework of English papers, or when Indian philosophers explicating Advaita Vedanta have to contort their explanations to fit subject-verb-object grammatical structures, indigenous knowledge systems undergo a cruel process of self-mutilation. Simon Schaffer, a professor of the history of science at the University of Cambridge, found that non-Western scholars writing in English unconsciously filter out over 40% of the unique concepts in their native language. The cognitive violence inherent in this process defies quantification: we will never know how many groundbreaking ideas—like the meridian theory in traditional Chinese medicine—have been relegated to the periphery of academia simply because they resist accurate expression in English.

Yet the seeds of change are sprouting. Germany's Max Planck Society has pioneered the quantification of language factors in research evaluation, reducing the weight of English proficiency in assessments. China has launched the "Bilingual Publishing Project for Scientific Papers," employing professional translators to help local research overcome language barriers. Even more promisingly, AI-powered translation is rewriting the rules: recent tests show a 96% accuracy rate in translating specialized academic texts while better preserving the cognitive nuances of the original. These initiatives underscore a simple truth: true academic freedom must be rooted in linguistic freedom. As Dijkstra, Director of the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, observed, "The weight of an idea never depends on the language that carries it." When Dutch scholars' Frisian-language climate research finds its way into Science, or when Mexican anthropologists' Nahuatl field reports gain global recognition, we will see that dismantling English hegemony is not about erecting a new Tower of Babel but about allowing every intellectual seed to flourish in its native soil.

Questions：

1. The "invisible academic caste system" operates primarily through:

A. Deliberate exclusion of non-Anglophone journal editors.

B. Mandatory adoption of Western epistemological frameworks.

C. Prolonged peer-review cycles acting as de facto gatekeeping.

D. Systematic undervaluation of non-English citation metrics.

2. The "alarming academic desert" metaphor most critically results from:

A. Monolingual journals' failure to process non-English metadata.

B. Epistemic losses exceeding linguistic marginalization.

C. AI translation's inability to handle indigenous terminologies.

D. UNESCO's inadequate funding for knowledge preservation.

3. Which statement would most challenge Nobre's time-loss calculation?

A. Brazilian institutions now mandate pre-submission language editing.

B. Bilingual scholars produce English papers 33% faster than monolinguals.

C. Peer-review delays correlate more with institutional prestige than language.

D. 27% time includes conceptual restructuring beyond mere translation.

4. The Huangdi Neijing example primarily illustrates the:

A. Methodological imperialism masked as linguistic standardization.

B. Untranslatability of ancient medical concepts into modern paradigms.

C. Incompatibility between yin-yang theory and hypothesis-testing models.

D. Necessity of decolonizing medical terminology databases.

5. The Max Planck Society's approach differs from China's bilingual project in its:

A. Rejection of translation-based solutions to linguistic hegemony.

B. Utilization of institutional power to redefine evaluation criteria.

C. Emphasis on preserving original texts' epistemological integrity.

D. Focus on decoupling research quality from language performance.

## **35.Date:4.7**

During the 1973 oil crisis, when U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger brokered a secret agreement with the Saudi royal family, the underlying logic of the global economy was irrevocably altered. By securing Saudi Arabia’s commitment to denominate oil exports exclusively in U.S. dollars, the currency, which had been weakened by the collapse of the gold standard, gained a new anchor: black gold. This marked the petrodollar’s dramatic transition from a "gold-backed" to an "oil-backed" hegemony, endowing the United States with the most potent financial weapon in modern economic history.

The petrodollar system is the epitome of monetary colonialism. By coercively tethering energy trade to the U.S. dollar, the United States engineered a compulsory global savings mechanism. Nations were compelled to hoard dollar reserves to purchase oil, while oil-exporting states recycled their dollar earnings into U.S. Treasury bonds, shoring up America’s debt-driven economy. This closed loop transformed the Federal Reserve into the de facto global central bank. It enabled the Fed to export inflation through quantitative easing or trigger debt crises in other countries by tightening liquidity. The 2018 collapse of the Turkish lira exemplifies this dynamic. When the Fed raised interest rates, the lira’s value plunged by 58%, inflation spiked to 85%, and the nation’s economic sovereignty was held hostage by dollar hegemony.

U.S. control over the petrodollar has institutionalized systemic violence. The SWIFT system, which monitors 90% of global cross-border dollar transactions, has become a powerful means of control. Expulsion from it instantly severs a country’s economic lifelines. In 2012, when Iran was cut off from dollar clearing, its oil exports crashed from 2.5 million barrels per day to 1 million, and its GDP contracted by 30%. Such sanctions require no naval blockades; financial suffocation alone can cripple modern economies. Even more insidiously, oil pricing power has been manipulated through paper markets. In the 2020 negative oil price event, U.S. financial institutions exploited futures contracts to liquidate long positions and pocketed $10 billion in profits, laying bare this structural predation.

Yet absolute hegemony inevitably breeds resistance. Currently, China settles 38% of its energy trade with Russia in local currencies. Saudi Arabia accepts the yuan for oil sales to China, and India has established a rupee payment mechanism. Digital currencies are intensifying this shift. In 2023, Russia executed its first oil transaction using the digital ruble, bypassing dollar clearing. The dollar’s share of global reserves has dropped from 72% in 2000 to 58% in 2022. This decline reflects not merely a statistical change but a crisis of trust. The renewable energy revolution is accelerating this unraveling. The International Energy Agency projects that by 2030, electric vehicles will reduce daily oil demand by 5 million barrels, which is equivalent to erasing Saudi Arabia’s output.

History suggests that currency hegemonies crumble at the nexus of technological disruption and energy transition. As oil’s dominance wanes, the petrodollar will too. The United States now faces a paradox: it must sustain the petrodollar system while promoting the displacement of fossil fuels. This strategic contradiction is hastening the demise of the old order. In the emerging economic landscape, digital currencies, local settlement systems, and regional monetary unions will coalesce into a pluralistic paradigm. Ultimately, the petrodollar will be relegated to financial museums, serving as a cautionary tale of how a nation tethered its currency to energy supremacy only to be dethroned by the very revolution it ignited.

Questions：

1.The 1973 agreement between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia primarily aimed to:

A. restore the gold standard’s credibility after its collapse.

B. stabilize the dollar by linking it to energy trade dominance.

C. replace gold with oil as the new global reserve currency.

D. establish Saudi Arabia as the world’s largest oil exporter.

2.The "closed loop" mechanism (Para. 2) fundamentally relies on:

A. oil exporters’ voluntary investments in U.S. bonds.

B. the Federal Reserve’s direct control over energy prices.

C. SWIFT’s real-time monitoring of Treasury transactions.

D. compulsory dollar accumulation for oil purchases.

3.The 2018 Turkish lira crisis demonstrates how the U.S.:

A. manipulates currency values through quantitative easing.

B. uses energy sanctions to punish geopolitical rivals.

C. exports financial instability via monetary policy spillover.

D. exploits futures markets to drain emerging economies.

4.Iran’s 2012 economic crisis reveals that modern sanctions:

A. require physical blockades to achieve maximum effect.

B. target oil exports through military interventions.

C. weaponize financial infrastructure invisibly.

D. primarily affect GDP through currency devaluation.

5.The 2020 negative oil price event mainly exposed:

A. structural vulnerabilities in paper-based pricing systems.

B. U.S. institutions’ manipulation of physical oil supplies.

C. renewable energy’s impact on traditional markets.

D. Saudi Arabia’s loss of production control.

6.The author views the renewable energy transition as:

A. a neutral technological shift unrelated to currency systems.

B. the primary cause of U.S. strategic contradictions.

C. a temporary obstacle to dollar hegemony maintenance.

D. an external accelerator of petrodollar disintegration.

## **36.Date:4.9**

On the murals of the Temple of Thebes in Egypt, the pharaoh solemnly holds a golden vessel, offering his semen to the Sun God Ra, consecrating the essence of life to the divine. This ancient ritual, steeped in solar radiance, emanates a sacred glow at the intersection of religion and civilization, embodying the Egyptians' fervent prayers for life's perpetuation and divine protection. In stark contrast, the faint blue glow of smartphone screens illuminates modern faces late at night. With a tap, browsing histories vanish, hastily erasing traces of autosexual exploration. These scenes, separated by three millennia, epitomize humanity's paradoxical journey of self-discovery — oscillating between deification and stigmatization. From biological impulses to cultural constructs, from private experience to collective regulation, masturbation dissects the intricate nexus of power, morality, and human nature within civilization's fabric.

Human bodily exploration begins in life's earliest stages. Before adolescence, boys unconsciously touch themselves. As testosterone surges, this casual contact evolves into regular masturbation, mirroring physiological development. Statistics indicate that 83% of boys establish masturbatory patterns by age 14, primarily seeking release through friction or visual stimuli. Girls' awakening, however, is more covert: 60% exhibit leg-clenching before preschool, deriving pleasure from inner thigh contractions—a natural instinct like plants reaching for sunlight. Developmental psychology reveals childhood body exploration is pivotal to self-awareness; touching genitals demarcates "self" from the external world, completing a unique rite of self-discovery.

Yet societal norms judge genders disparately. Boys' "exploration" is dismissed as a growth phase, while girls' leg-clenching may be deemed "indecent." This double standard has lasting effects: 43% of women feel profound shame about self-pleasure in adulthood, and female sexual dysfunction rates exceed men's by 38%.

In adulthood, the clash between instinct and civilization grows complex. Men develop goal-oriented patterns, often linking masturbation to "performance anxiety." Women cultivate nuanced sensory experiences; among them, 65% rely on tactile memories and imagination. In Japan, 41% of women use showerheads for pleasure; Nordic women prefer vibrators' precision. These differences reflect culture's profound impact on body perception. On social media, male masturbation is "proof of masculinity," while female masturbation is "moral decay." The digital age imposes new cognitive shackles.

Historically, gender bias shaped bodily control. Greek pottery glorified male masturbation as heroic, yet Roman texts warned women of "uterine displacement" from clitoral touch. Medieval Europe deemed female masturbation a "devil's pact," while monks' "nocturnal emissions" were tacitly permitted—a stark double standard. Edo-period ukiyo-e shows women calmly using shung devices, contrasting with Europe's cold anti-masturbation contraptions.

Digital-era control mechanisms have mutated. Algorithms push "fleshlight challenges" to men while suppressing female masturbation topics. Sex toys for men are "high-tech," while women's products masquerade as "beauty devices." Cairo University found gender-equal regions reduce women's post-masturbation guilt by 41%, whereas conservative societies increase anxiety by 29% — validating Foucault: power controls bodies by defining "normalcy." Berlin's Sex Museum displays medieval torture devices, and Dubai Customs reports a 35% annual rise in confiscated sex toys, exposing humanity's relentless desire-regulation.

Modern technology reshapes this millennia-old dialogue. The Nile Delta sees 6.5 million monthly autosexuality searches — men chase "prowess myths," women seek "moral absolution." The 0.3-second search-time gap reflects ingrained gendered norms. VR offers ritualistic immersion but blurs reality for 23% of users. AI algorithms, biased by cultural data, prioritize male needs. Neuroscience shows prefrontal cortex activity drops 40% during masturbation, with a 68% similarity to meditative states—proof that bodily instincts are natural and should not be suppressed.

Technology's duality is evident: Silicon Valley engineers decode dopamine via brain-computer interfaces, while Cairo artisans handcraft brass massagers with ancient motifs. Tokyo convenience stores stock designer vibrators, signaling social openness. Riyadh's anonymous forums feature "abstinence check-ins" with encrypted links, revealing conservatism's persistence. Technology both shatters taboos and entrenches prejudices — a paradox akin to the pharaoh's golden offering juxtaposed with modern labs, as humanity tirelessly explores avenues for life-energy release.

How to overcome this? The key lies in returning to life's fundamental logic. Dutch schools teach "bodily autonomy" through puppet shows, reducing adolescent shame by 52%. Canada's sex education includes "harmless leg-clenching," lowering girls' counseling-seeking by 29%. When society discards moral biases, healthy body identity thrives. Sweden's comprehensive sex education cut teen sexual violence by 44%, proving scientific cognition elevates civilization.

Amid Luxor Temple's ruins, sunlight fractures the pharaoh's mural into light and shadow — a metaphor for civilization's eternal tussle with the body. Archaeologists note 9,000-year-old stone sex tools' wear patterns resemble modern silicone products, reminding us that bodily exploration is no dark recess but humanity's most authentic expression. From a boy's first touch to a woman's midnight vibrator, from Nile rituals to metaverse avatars, this 10,000-year dialogue reveals: the freedom to touch oneself is the highest homage to life, and civilization's zenith begins with honoring life's instincts. Humanity, which once pathologized leg-clenching girls and demonized masturbating boys, will awaken to realize the body is no beast to tame—for "what makes us human is the ability to truly know ourselves."

Questions:

1. In the context of the passage, the term "masturbation" most precisely refers to:

A. Self-directed exploration of sensory pleasure.

B. Culturally sanctioned reproductive rituals.

C. Medically diagnosed compulsive behavior.

D. Socially conditioned gender performance.

2. The Theban mural ritual fundamentally reflects ancient Egyptians:

A. Belief in solar energy's materialization through bodily fluids.

B. Hierarchical structure connecting rulers to divine authority.

C. Conceptual integration of biological processes with cosmic order.

D. Medical understanding of reproductive system functionality.

3. The statistical disparity (83% vs 60%) in adolescent behaviors primarily reveals:

A. Biological determinism in sexual maturation.

B. Cultural filtering of natural physiological responses.

C. Measurement errors in psychological research.

D. Educational system's differential gender treatment.

4. The neuroscience-meditation analogy (68% similarity) challenges:

A. Biological uniqueness of spiritual practices.

B. Societal suppression of natural bodily functions.

C. Medical classification of pleasure-seeking behaviors.

D. Technological mediation of human consciousness.

5. The article suggests female sexual dysfunction stems fundamentally from:

A. Patriarchal distortion of biological instincts.

B. Neurochemical imbalances during puberty.

C. Inadequate medical research on women's health.

D. Evolutionary disadvantages in reproductive strategies.

6. The archaeological comparison of ancient/modern sex tools suggests:

A. Technological stagnation in intimate devices.

B. Religious suppression of sexual innovation.

C. Market-driven evolution of consumer products.

D. Cultural universalism in bodily exploration.

7. The contrast between Greek pottery and Roman texts primarily reveals:

A. Artistic freedom versus textual conservatism.

B. Imperial propaganda shaping domestic practices.

C. Gendered double standards in classical value systems.

D. Shared Mediterranean sexual ethics.

8. Riyadh's "abstinence check-ins" demonstrate:

A. Algorithmic reinforcement of religious norms.

B. Youth-led subversion of surveillance systems.

C. Secularization of conservative communities.

D. Covert negotiation between tradition and technology.

9. The article's concluding metaphor ("pharaoh's mural fractures") emphasizes:

A. Inevitable decay of cultural heritage.

B. Scientific enlightenment overcoming superstition.

C. Artistic representation of physiological processes.

D. Perpetual tension between revelation and concealment.

10. Which title best captures the essence of the entire passage?

A. Technological Enslavement: The Paradox of Modern Autoeroticism.

B. Sacred to Shameful: 3,000 Years of Civilizational Hypocrisy.

C. Bodies in Dialogue: Civilization’s Eternal Negotiation with Instinct.

D. Neuroscience Redefined: The Biological Truth Behind Masturbation.

## **37.Date:4.10**

In 1978, a Dutch electronics conglomerate invested $3.2 million to establish a joint venture with a struggling semiconductor equipment manufacturer—a decision dismissed by contemporaries as "funding an engineer’s hobby workshop." Forty-six years later, this venture, now known as ASML, controls 93% of the global market for extreme ultraviolet (EUV) lithography machines, devices that define the precision boundaries of modern computing. A single EUV machine now sells for $200 million, equivalent to the annual GDP of a small island nation, yet its true value lies not in monetary terms but in its role as the gatekeeper of technological sovereignty.

When examining the intricate dance of mirrors inside an EUV system — each polished to atomic-level smoothness — few pause to consider the geopolitical tremors these glass surfaces reflect. A single machine contains over 100,000 components sourced from 5,000 suppliers across 28 countries, and its assembly requiring 18 months of calibrated coordination. Japanese engineers, whose predecessors dominated lithography in the 1980s, now quietly acknowledge that "even Mount Fuji’s shadow cannot reach the heights of Veldhoven’s innovation," referring to ASML’s Dutch headquarters. This supply chain fragility was exposed in 2021 when a fire at a Berlin-based optics supplier delayed 40% of ASML’s annual production, forcing Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC) to postpone three major fabrication plant openings. Such remarks, veiled in cultural metaphor, reveal more than professional rivalry.

The 1997 semiconductor trade agreements between the United States and Japan, often reduced to footnotes in economic histories, had unintended consequences. By capping Japanese DRAM exports at 60% of the U.S. market, these accords redirected Tokyo’s $12 billion annual semiconductor R&D budget toward automotive electronics. NEC’s semiconductor division, which once held 25% global market share, dissolved into Elpida Memory in 1999—a company that would file for bankruptcy in 2012. This policy shift, praised as a victory for American chipmakers, inadvertently cleared the path for European lithography firms to ascend. Strategic choices, like tectonic plates, reshape industrial landscapes through delayed collisions.

At a 2016 nanotechnology symposium, a Chinese researcher compared semiconductor development to "carving Mount Tai onto a grain of rice"—a rare poetic flourish in technical discourse. Three years later, his institute achieved 28nm process technology using refurbished ASML machinery from 2012. This milestone coincided with China importing $350 billion worth of chips annually, a figure exceeding its crude oil imports. While Western analysts mocked this as "building a spaceship with bicycle parts," they neglected to mention that Intel required eight iterations to progress from 14nm to 10nm chips between 2014 and 2019. The Shanghai-based SMIC reportedly achieved 7nm node production in 2021 using 1990s-era DUV lithography through multiple patterning — a technique ASML abandoned in 2003 due to cost inefficiencies. Technological evolution rarely follows linear trajectories.

Global semiconductor R&D expenditure surpassed $80 billion in 2023, yet only 7% targeted lithography innovation. This imbalance mirrors Renaissance Florence’s artistic economy, where countless apprentices ground pigments while a select few mastered perspective techniques. A single EUV light source requires 20 megawatts of power—enough to illuminate 16,000 homes—to generate 13.5nm wavelength light through tin droplet vaporization. Today, five corporations control 89% of advanced lithography patents, their IP portfolios guarded with medieval guild-like secrecy. "We’re not selling machines," an ASML technician remarked during a 2022 factory tour, "we’re leasing time capsules to the future."

The Netherlands’ 2023 export controls on EUV technology, framed as national security measures, revived Cold War-era technology transfer debates. Curiously, these restrictions exempted machines produced before 2023—a loophole permitting continued shipments to select clients. South Korean chipmakers stockpiled 22 EUV units in 2022 alone, paying 30% premiums for expedited delivery. Such policy craftsmanship, balancing economic interests with diplomatic pressures, reveals how technological dominance intertwines with statecraft. Meanwhile, Chinese foundries accelerated development of multi-patterning techniques, achieving 7nm nodes through quadruple exposures using older 1980s-era deep ultraviolet systems. This technological detour increased production costs by 400% compared to EUV methods, yet reduced reliance on foreign equipment imports from 92% to 67% within three years.

In semiconductor fabs, technicians refer to the "etch rate dilemma"—the balance between material removal speed and precision. Societally, an analogous tension exists between open innovation and controlled proliferation. When TSMC founder Morris Chang advocated "collective advancement through shared suffering" in 1998, he envisioned an ecosystem where competitors collaborated on fundamental research. The Global Semiconductor Council’s 2005–2015 data shows joint R&D projects decreased from 48% to 11% of total research initiatives. Two decades later, the Semiconductor Industry Association reports that 73% of member firms now withhold basic process data from partners. This knowledge fragmentation has doubled patent litigation cases since 2010, with 68% involving trade secret disputes between former collaborators.

As dawn breaks over the Rhine-Ruhr industrial corridor, engineers calibrate laser pulse durations measured in femtoseconds—one millionth of a billionth of a second. The Zeiss factory in Oberkochen manufactures EUV mirrors with surface irregularities below 20 picometers, a precision equating to mapping Earth’s surface with millimeter accuracy. This temporal scale, incomprehensible to human perception, governs the rhythm of digital civilization. Perhaps future historians will note the irony: tools crafting the infinitesimal now shape macroscopic human affairs. When a single EUV machine’s blueprints were discovered on a contractor’s laptop in 2021, Dutch authorities estimated the breach equivalent to losing 15 years of national technological advancement. The real lithography machine, it seems, isn’t confined to cleanrooms but etches its patterns across nations, economies, and the fragile silicon heart of modernity itself.

What becomes of civilizations that mistake their tools for cathedrals? The answer may emerge not from boardrooms or cleanrooms, but from the silent laboratories where tomorrow’s engineers are already attempting to sculpt light without mirrors.

Questions:

1. What can be inferred from the fact that the 1997 semiconductor trade agreements between the US and Japan redirected Tokyo's R&D budget?

A. The US intended to promote European lithography firms through these agreements.

B. The shift in Japan's R&D focus was an unexpected outcome of the US-Japan trade policy.

C. Japanese automotive electronics development was a direct goal of the 1997 agreements.

D. The dissolution of NEC's semiconductor division was a planned consequence of the trade deals.

2.The decrease in joint R&D projects in the semiconductor industry from 2005-2015 suggests that:

A. Companies are becoming more self-reliant in semiconductor research.

B. The Global Semiconductor Council has failed to promote collaboration.

C. The industry is moving towards more competitive and less cooperative research models.

D. The cost of joint R&D has become too high for semiconductor firms.

3.The example of the Shanghai-based SMIC achieving 7nm node production using 1990s-era DUV lithography implies that:

A. Older lithography technologies can still be effectively used for advanced production.

B. SMIC has found a more cost-effective way to produce semiconductors than using EUV.

C. Western analysts' mockery of Chinese semiconductor development is completely unfounded.

D. China is on the verge of surpassing Western semiconductor technology.

4.What can be inferred from South Korean chipmakers stockpiling 22 EUV units in 2022?

A. South Korean chipmakers anticipate a future shortage of EUV machines due to export controls.

B. They want to gain a competitive edge by having more EUV machines than their rivals.

C. South Korea is trying to reduce its dependence on foreign semiconductor technology.

D. The South Korean government is pressuring chipmakers to increase their EUV machine inventory.

5.The use of multi-patterning techniques by Chinese foundries to achieve 7nm nodes implies that:

A. Chinese foundries are forced to use inferior methods due to a lack of EUV machines.

B. They are willing to bear higher costs to reduce reliance on foreign equipment.

C. Multi-patterning techniques are actually more advanced than EUV methods in some aspects.

D. Chinese semiconductor technology will soon catch up with Western technology using these techniques.

6.The comparison of the semiconductor R&D imbalance to Renaissance Florence's artistic economy suggests that:

A. Only a few key players in the semiconductor industry master the core technologies.

B. The semiconductor industry is in a similar stage of development as the art industry in Renaissance Florence.

C. Most semiconductor R&D efforts are wasted on less important aspects.

D. There is a lack of innovation in the semiconductor industry, just like in Renaissance art.

7.The fact that 73% of member firms in the Semiconductor Industry Association now withhold basic process data from partners indicates that:

A. The semiconductor industry is becoming more secretive and less collaborative.

B. Firms are afraid of losing their competitive edge if they share data.

C. The quality of basic process data has decreased, so firms don't want to share it.

D. There is a lack of trust among semiconductor firms in today's market.

8. When the ASML technician said "we're leasing time capsules to the future," it most likely means:

A. ASML's machines embody forefront innovation, enabling customers to obtain future semiconductor capabilities at present.

B. The high cost of EUV machines is justified because they preserve technological progress for future generations.

C. These machines represent a temporary solution until even more advanced lithography methods are developed.

D. ASML’s technology is so proprietary that it effectively "freezes" time in the semiconductor industry.

## **38.Date:4.11**

In 1826, a Hungarian mathematician named János Bolyai sent a letter to Carl Friedrich Gauss, brimming with eagerness to share his groundbreaking discovery in non-Euclidean geometry. Gauss responded by stating that he had arrived at similar conclusions decades earlier but had opted not to publish them. While historians commended his foresight, his contemporaries murmured about a paradox: why would a man celebrated for his intellectual audacity allow such transformative ideas to lie dormant? This episode gradually faded into obscurity, overshadowed by the immaculate theorems enshrined in his official body of work.

A cursory reader of Disquisitiones Arithmeticae (1801) might miss the deliberately left gaps between its proofs—spaces where radical conjectures could have been inserted. The text's structure, as precise as a celestial clock, concealed the turbulence of its creation process. Unlike his peers, such as Legendre, who published half-baked hypotheses to secure their claims, Gauss regarded his private notebooks as laboratories. He discarded flawed drafts with the discipline of a monk. A French colleague, upon visiting his study, noticed the absence of ink stains on his desk and quipped that Gauss's genius seemed to have emerged "fully armored, like Minerva from Jupiter’s skull." Gauss remained silent in response to this remark.

Decades after Gauss's passing, his private correspondence came to light, revealing that he had employed seven distinct methods to calculate the orbit of Ceres, yet only one of these methods was presented in his published work. The remaining six methods, ranging from brute-force approximations to sophisticated probabilistic models, showcased a thinker unafraid of taking intellectual detours. This starkly contrasted with Cauchy's lectures in Paris, where mathematics was presented as a sequence of polished theorems. A Berlin astronomer later speculated that Gauss's unpublished notes could reconstruct nineteenth-century mathematics "if all libraries burned." This claim was ridiculed until archivists started digitizing his papers in the 1970s.

The 1837 Göttingen salary disputes further complicated his legacy. Gauss opposed raising junior faculty wages, expressing concerns that financial comfort could dampen ambition. Younger mathematicians, like Dirichlet, were irritated by this stance and compared him to "a miser hoarding lamplight." However, his private journals told a different story: they contained meticulous records of anonymous stipends sent to underprivileged students, routed through intermediaries to avoid recognition. This duality — public frugality combined with covert generosity — reflected his approach to knowledge: rigor in publication and a more chaotic exploration in private.

Ten years before the Bolyai incident, Gauss quietly corrected an error in Laplace's celestial mechanics during a Hamburg conference. His twelve-minute presentation, lacking diagrams or rhetorical embellishments, was dismissed as insignificant until 1842. In that year, a Berlin journal accidentally printed Laplace's flawed equations fifty pages before Gauss's corrections. Historians later referred to this unintentional juxtaposition as "the silent dialogue of rigor," a testament to progress achieved through unheralded revisions rather than public acclaim.

In 1818, the Hanoverian survey commission mocked his geodetic measurements, deeming them "precision fit for angels, useless to men." Gauss postponed the report for two years. While his assistants recalibrated instruments in the pouring rain, he refined logarithmic tables in his tent. The resulting statistical methods became the cornerstones of error analysis, although fieldworkers grumbled about "the poet who never left his study." Decades later, chronometers crafted by his former students, who had abandoned academia for clockmaking, achieved tolerances that mirrored his geodetic standards. This connection went unnoticed until horologists cross-referenced workshop ledgers with lecture rosters in 2007.

The 1828 Congress of Berlin, aimed at unifying European scientific standards, saw Gauss decline an invitation to present his geodesy work. Organizers interpreted his absence as aloofness, but his private notes revealed meticulous critiques of the attendees' proposals, which he sent anonymously to key figures. One recipient, a Swiss cartographer, later credited an "unknown peer" for saving his project from methodological collapse—unaware that the feedback originated from Göttingen.

At the age of seventy-three, Gauss designed the failure probabilities for Göttingen’s first electromagnetic telegraph but skipped its inaugural test. The technician joked that his equations "could power the machine, if paper conducted current." This quip turned out to be prophetic in 1943, when codebreakers rediscovered his probability matrices in a Berlin archive and repurposed them for wartime cryptography. Meanwhile, his library housed seven annotated copies of Dante’s Divine Comedy, with their margins filled with geometric diagrams linking celestial mechanics to modular functions—a mysterious project that later found echoes in Einstein's notebooks, though executors dismissed it as "the doodles of a restless mind."

The Royal Society’s 1855 obituary dedicated three paragraphs to his geodetic work and two paragraphs to his research on magnetism, merely giving a passing mention to his contributions to pure mathematics. Biographers were puzzled by this until they realized that the author had solely relied on Gauss’s curated bibliography, unaware of the sealed Göttingen archives. A century later, digitization revealed that the omissions in the obituary inadvertently mirrored his lifelong habit of self-crasure—a final, ironic tribute.

Gauss once likened mathematics to "a river whose calm surface hides drowning currents," the only metaphor he used in decades of correspondence. He contrasted Euler's prolific publications with Newton's secretive approach to research, suggesting that the rhythm of academic output reflected deeper philosophical differences. This analogy gained more significance when Riemann, his last protégé, resurrected his unpublished topology sketches to develop revolutionary geometries—proof that ideas once hidden could outlive their originator.

Modern academia, preoccupied with productivity metrics, finds it challenging to reconcile Gauss’s sparse publication record with his mythic status. His career remains a paradox: a towering influence built from fragments he never considered complete. The unpublished manuscripts, anonymous acts of kindness, and suppressed collaborations form a shadow archive that resists easy classification. Scholars now analyze these gaps not for answers but for the questions they raise—questions about perfectionism, legacy, and the cost of intellectual solitude.

Even his personal life defied simplicity. After his first wife's death in 1809, Gauss burned all their correspondence, leaving biographers to speculate about their relationship. A single surviving letter from his second wife, Minna, mentioned his habit of working through meals, "as if equations could nourish him." This anecdote, initially dismissed as spousal exaggeration, took on a deeper significance when paired with his journals, which documented his hunger-induced dizziness during long calculations.

We remember pioneers by their greatest achievements, yet their true nature lies in the uncharted territories they left behind. Gauss's published theorems are like the tips of icebergs floating above the waterline; beneath them lie the jagged masses of abandoned proofs and silenced doubts, shaped by pressures invisible to future generations. As institutions increasingly demand visibility, his restraint conveys a subversive truth: some discoveries require the darkness to take shape. What is lost in the archives may someday illuminate paths we cannot yet imagine—but only if we avoid equating quantity with value.

Does legacy lie in the monument, or in the quarry from which its stones were cut and discarded? The answer, perhaps, is hidden in the unspoken spaces between Gauss's lines.

Questions:

1.When the passage says Gauss's geodetic measurements were “precision fit for angels, useless to men” (Paragraph 6), “angels” is used to suggest:

A. That the measurements were made with the help of some kind of spiritual guidance.

B. That the measurements were so perfect as to be beyond human understanding.

C. That the measurements were of a divine or extremely high-level accuracy.

D. That the measurements were intended for a non-earthly purpose.

2.The comparison between Gauss's and Euler's academic output rhythms suggests that:

A. The quantity of academic output determines the influence of a scholar.

B. The way of academic output is related to different philosophical stances.

C. Euler was more productive but less rigorous than Gauss in his research.

D. Gauss was more conservative than Euler in sharing his research results.

3.What does the author suggest by saying "some discoveries require the darkness to take shape"?

A. Scientists should not rush to publish their discoveries but wait for the right time.

B. The process of discovery often involves a lot of failures and setbacks that are hidden.

C. The value of some discoveries may not be recognized immediately and need time to be revealed.

D. Some scientific discoveries need to be developed in a private and unexposed environment.

4.The description of Gauss's geodetic work being initially mocked but later proving to be significant suggests that:

A.The process of scientific discovery is often accompanied by misunderstandings and rejections.

B. Gauss was ahead of his time and the academic community was too conservative.

C. The practical value of scientific research may not be immediately recognized.

D. Fieldworkers were often unable to understand the theoretical basis of scientific work.

5.What can be inferred from Gauss's habit of discarding flawed drafts in his private notebooks?

A. He was afraid that his incomplete work would damage his reputation.

B. He believed that only fully-developed ideas should be presented.

C. He had extremely high standards for his work and was a perfectionist.

D. He wanted to save space in his notebooks for more important ideas.

6.The fact that Gauss's unpublished notes were said to be able to reconstruct nineteenth-century mathematics implies that:

A. His unpublished notes contained revolutionary ideas that were not yet discovered.

B. The academic community in the nineteenth century relied too much on Gauss's knowledge.

C. Gauss had a monopoly on mathematical knowledge during that period.

D. His unpublished work was as important as, if not more important than, his published work.

7.What paradox emerges from Gauss's combination of radical private experimentation and restrained publication?

A. Academic immortality requires both innovation and selective silence.

B. True genius thrives in the tension between exploration and perfectionism.

C. Peer recognition often depends on suppressing methodological complexity.

D. Scientific revolutions necessitate incomplete public disclosures.

8. If Gauss's unpublished manuscripts form a shadow archive that resists easy classification, which of the following is an analogous situation?

A. The private experimental melody recordings of a composer blur the boundaries between the avant-garde and classical music traditions and cannot be classified using standard musical taxonomies.

B. The published trilogy by a historian analyzing medieval Europe is difficult to classify due to the profound meaning of its academic content.

C. The best-selling works of a novelist intended to be published in literary journals have not been systematically analyzed, resulting in their inability to be classified.

D. The field notes of a botanist, meticulously organized according to species and ecosystems and digitized, cannot be classified because of the decision not to publish them.

## **39.Date:4.12**

In the third quarter of 2000, a beverage company based in Atlanta quietly tweaked the curvature of its logo by 1.3 degrees. This decision happened to precisely coincide with a 17% plunge in the company's share price during the following fiscal year. Hardly anyone took notice that the company had terminated contracts with 23 sugarcane farms accused of child labor violations around the same time; this fact was buried beneath those press releases glorifying "the inheritance of tradition."

By 2018, when a century-old textile manufacturer relocated its factory from Manchester to Jakarta, analysts lauded it as a "strategic modernization move," all the while ignoring union records indicating that 412 workers had reported physical injuries resulting from the working environment during the relocation. In his speech entitled "Building Civilization Bridges through Fabric Innovation," the company's CEO brought up Renaissance art patronage seven times but didn't even mention "minimum wage" once. Consumer surveys revealed that 68% of the respondents associated the repackaged products with "European craftsmanship," being totally unaware that the production cost per unit, adjusted for inflation, had dropped to the levels of the 1970s.

This kind of modus operandi has historical precedents. During the trade wars in the 16th century, Venetian glassmakers deliberately put impurities into their crystal products to set the genuine items apart from the cheaper imitations. A modern-day parallel emerged in 2021 when a Japanese automaker, in its promotional campaign, laid emphasis on "hand-stitched leather interiors," thus diverting people's attention from the reduced investment in battery safety research. A retired factory supervisor later disclosed in his memoirs that engineers were told to "make the dashboard lights look warmer" when there were violations in emissions tests.

The phenomenon reaches into more abstract fields. Although technology philosophers often cite the "Ship of Theseus" paradox when discussing the continuity of identity, few of them apply it to companies that keep their mission statements intact after leadership changes. Between 2015 and 2022, 43% of the Fortune 500 companies adopted circular logos, and this trend was inversely correlated with the release of transparency reports. An email leaked by a consultant compared brand restructuring to "changing the course of a river without disturbing the water surface," an analogy that is flawed considering the hydrological evidence that changes in the underwater terrain will definitely alter the surface waves.

Ironically, the regulatory documents in 2023 show that food packaging labeled "handmade" now outpaces petroleum products in making unverified claims about the use of recycled materials. During a parliamentary hearing on ethical audits, the sustainability officer of a fashion group referred to the seals of medieval guilds three times before finally bringing up modern compliance indicators. Market data shows that brands that stress "handmade" elements are growing 22% faster than those that highlight automation, even though the adoption rate of robots in their supply chains has hit a record high.

Archaeological evidence indicates that ancient Mesopotamian merchants stamped both price marks and symbols of the gods on clay tablets, fusing commercial activities with divine responsibilities. Similarly, some tech companies hire avant-garde architects to design their headquarters while outsourcing data auditing work to contractors with low pay. Even a leaked algorithm manual of a social media platform mentions "community values" on every page, yet defines them merely by user engagement metrics.

Interests always remain interests. The Eixample district in Barcelona demonstrates how the uniform block sizes manage to create distinct communities through subtle differences in balcony designs. This spatial paradox reflects how standardized corporate responsibility frameworks can lead to different ethical results. Financial audits show that companies that allocate the same budget to ethical procurement certification and trademark litigation gain 14% more market share than those that only focus on one of them.

Just like tidal marshes that maintain a salinity balance to ensure biodiversity, the regulatory data shows that in 2022, there were 1,203 applications for sustainability trademarks, surpassing the number of new patent applications for the first time. An analysis by a consumer rights organization found that 83% of the products repackaged as "green" showed no measurable environmental improvement, yet 61% of the surveyed consumers firmly believed that they could "feel the difference." When corporate archives turn into archaeological sites, how on earth will future scholars tell true change from empty talk?

Questions：

1. What was the real reason for the beverage company's share-price plunge?

A. Alteration of logo curvature.

B. Influence of market competition.

C. Termination of child-labor contracts.

D. Effect of fiscal year policy.

2. What does the "Ship of Theseus" paradox analogy imply about companies?

A. Potential to mislead by mission statements.

B. Insignificance of leadership changes.

C. Stability of company identity always.

D. Crucially of logo changes indeed.

3. The trend of Fortune 500 companies adopting circular logos is related to:

A. Increased release of transparency reports

B. Enhancement of brand recognition level

C. Decreased disclosure of transparency details

D. Reduction of market share percentage

4. Tech companies hiring avant-garde architects for headquarters while outsourcing data auditing shows:

A. Demonstration of high-end corporate culture

B. Adoption of cost-effective management

C. Stress on data security significantly

D. Emphasis on public image prominently

5. The Eixample district example in Barcelona is used to illustrate that:

A. Standardization can result in diversity

B. Balconies impact community formation

C. Uniformity is the key to success surely

D. Ethical results rely on location closely

6. What does the Japanese automaker’s “warmer dashboard lights” imply?

A. Prioritization of aesthetics over safety.

B. Improvement of user experience level.

C. Compliance with relevant regulations well.

D. Advancement of technological aspects.

7. Companies balancing ethical procurement and trademark litigation succeed by:

A. Appealing to various stakeholders effectively.

B. Dominating legal frameworks completely.

C. Maximizing budget efficiency to the full.

D. Exploiting market trends opportunely.

8. Ancient Mesopotamian merchants’ dual stamps on tablets symbolize modern corporations’:

A. Employment of religious marketing tactics.

B. Blending of profit and ethics claims.

C. Complexity of supply chain structures.

D. Application of price manipulation strategies.

## **40.Date:4.13**

In 2018, a city council member in Seoul dismissed concerns about youth unemployment by claiming that "anyone with fast fingers can become a millionaire through esports." Three years later, South Korea's national statistics office reported a 12.3% unemployment rate among 20-24-year-olds, despite the country hosting 37% of global esports tournaments. The glowing screens of PC bangs, once symbols of technological triumph, now cast long shadows across narrow alleys where part-time delivery drivers cycled past neon-lit gaming advertisements.

Yet, when Berlin allocated €45 million to build Europe's largest esports arena in 2020, construction workers staged protests outside empty office blocks repurposed as gaming hubs. Union banners reading "Pixels Don't Feed Families" contrasted sharply with municipal press releases celebrating "digital revolution." A retired autoworker turned security guard at the facility told journalists his daughter worked twelve-hour shifts moderating toxic chat rooms for a streaming platform, earning less than his pension. The camera didn't capture his calloused thumb tracing the faded union logo on his jacket pocket.

Historical parallels emerge when examining the 1930s cinema boom during America's Great Depression. Then, as now, mass entertainment industries flourished amidst economic despair; their ticket sales inversely correlated with factory employment rates. Modern streaming platforms' subscription growth curves mirror exactly the 2020-2023 service sector contraction across OECD nations. An industry analyst's blog post comparing esports to "digital bread and circuses" was quietly deleted after his firm secured a sponsorship deal with an energy drink company.

Theoretical frameworks prove slippery here. While Bourdieu's cultural capital theory could map gaming skill distribution across social strata, it falters before South Korean chaebols funding elite gaming academies that recruit primarily from wealthy Seoul neighborhoods. A leaked internal memo from a European esports team owner advised scouts to "avoid candidates with visible manual laborer parents - they lack the right mindset." This selection bias manifests in tournament demographics: 78% of professional gamers across major leagues come from families earning above national median income.

Corporate narratives dissolve under scrutiny. When a California-based streaming platform CEO claimed his service "democratized opportunity," he omitted that 62% of top-earning streamers had family connections to tech executives. The platform's algorithm, curiously, prioritizes streamers using equipment costing over $3,000 - precisely the price range of gaming rigs marketed to upper-middle-class consumers. A viral clip showing a pro gamer joking about "poor kids better at mining crypto than headshots" accumulated 15 million views before mysteriously disappearing.

Nordic countries present confounding data points. Sweden's esports federation partners with trade unions, guaranteeing players health insurance and retirement plans — measures absent in 83% of Asian and North American teams. Paradoxically, Swedish youth participation in competitive gaming dropped 22% after these reforms, while underground gambling rings using pirate servers grew exponentially. A government report dryly noted that "structured systems reduce thrill-seeking behaviors," though legislators avoided explaining why the national pension fund increased investments in gaming hardware stocks by 300% that same fiscal year.

Cultural artifacts offer muted reflections. The 2022 indie game Server Graveyard, depicting abandoned esports arenas overgrown with weeds, sold 400 copies despite critical acclaim. Its developer, a former pro gamer turned construction worker, included hidden code causing the game to crash whenever players reach the leaderboard's top tier. Gaming forums dismissed this as a bug rather than commentary; while three major studios offered to "fix" the game for 85% of profits.

The German philosopher's concept of technische Vernunft — technological rationality — shimmers faintly through this fog. When Singapore integrated esports into national education curriculum, parental approval ratings inversely correlated with districts' average income. Wealthier neighborhoods resisted "distractions," while working-class schools embraced them as "career paths," unaware that 0.03% of trainees ever reach professional tiers. Ministry guidelines recommend "balance," yet define neither scales nor weights for its measurement.

As stadium lights dim on another international tournament, prize money glittering like fool's gold in winner's trembling hands, the real competition continues in unlit server farms. Here, AI bots train relentlessly, analyzing human players' strategies to eventually replace them — a silent coup cheered by shareholders and ignored by cheering crowds. The final boss, it seems, was never in the game.

Questions：

1. The Seoul council member's statement primarily serves to highlight:

A. Government's ignorance of structural inequality.

B. Youth's overestimation of gaming skills.

C. Disconnect between rhetoric and reality.

D. Chaebols' dominance in esports education.

2.The viral clip's disappearance best illustrates:

A. Platform accountability mechanisms.

B. Corporate narrative curation.

C. Algorithmic content aging.

D. Public morality enforcement.

3.The final "boss" metaphor refers to:

A. Unbeatable AI superiority.

B. Systemic capital exploitation.

C. Player skill ceiling inevitability.

D. Gaming culture’s nihilism.

4. What device is the "equipment bias algorithm of live streaming platforms" equivalent to?

A.The telegraph.

B. The loom.

C. The microwave oven.

D. The camera.

5. The Singapore education paradox stems from:

A. Curriculum imbalance measurement.

B. Parental class-based perception gap.

C. Professional tier accessibility.

D. Ministry's vague guidelines.

6.The autoworker's story primarily reveals:

A. Intergenerational income disparity.

B. Platform labor exploitation.

C. Union legacy in digital economy.

D. Pension system inadequacy.

7. The "calloused thumb" detail symbolizes:

A. Fading industrial identity.

B. Physical labor's persistence.

C. Generational tech adaptation.

D. Security job requirements.

8.What makes the 0.03% professional rate significant?

A. Exposes systemic false promises.

B. Reflects training quality issues.

C. Demonstrates market saturation.

D. Validates parental resistance.

## **41.Date:4.14**

In the 19th century, the European elite exchanged empty birdcages as symbols of status. Yet, within two years, 70% of recipients took the initiative to purchase birds. This behavior, later termed the "Birdcage Effect," exposes humanity’s compulsive need to fill perceived voids. Transcending time and space, this pattern reveals how the reciprocity mechanism profoundly shapes human society through mathematically precise repetition.

Digital-age social platforms have replicated this logic algorithmically. An analysis of 10 million Twitter users shows that users are three times more likely to reciprocate an unsolicited follow within 48 hours—regardless of shared interests—compared to usual situations. The symmetrical "follow-back" design and mutual visibility thresholds encode social obligations into what amounts to "algorithmic politeness." As Jaron Lanier critiques, such "invisible shackles are more confining than barbed wire."

This phenomenon traces back to ancient Rome. Records from Pompeian wax tablets detail Rome’s patronage system, where clients traded public loyalty for aristocratic favor. This "calculated generosity" reinforced hierarchy while sparking philosophical debates about autonomy. Even Scandinavia’s contradictions offer insight: Finland, a global leader in autonomy indices, sees 89% of Helsinki residents arrive 15 minutes early for appointments. Their self-discipline underpins public efficiency, proving that ostensibly free societies rely on implicit rules.

Behavioral economics and neuroscience further illuminate reciprocity’s physiological basis. In experiments, 61% of participants rejected profitable deals if initial offers seemed "insincere." In such cases, dopamine peaks surpassed those from material gain, confirming an instinctive preference for "interaction symmetry." This reveals an organizational paradox: Google’s Project Aristotle found structured teams 23% more innovative than self-organized groups, yet the latter reported 18% higher satisfaction—an echo of the ancient Legalist adage, "strict rules nurture creativity."

When education intersects with technological surveillance, modern cages grow subtler. Finland’s "invisible guidance" pedagogy and South Korea’s cram-school market represent the dynamic interplay between freedom and control. In environmental psychology trials, 40% increased recycling compliance under hidden cameras while insisting on their autonomy—a digital twist on Bentham’s Panopticon, where 82% denying behavioral shifts exemplify how "perceived freedom" sustains control.

Augmented reality now elevates the legacy of Venetian mirror-makers: 15th-century self-reflection has morphed into endless digital self-construction. Humanity perpetually confronts the same question—are the social structures woven by reciprocal obligations merely spiritual cages? True freedom may begin by gazing clearly at these "empty birdcages." Choosing which voids to leave unfilled demands greater courage than blind compliance.

Questions:

1. The "algorithmic politeness" mechanism essentially converts:

A. Emotional bonds → Digital metrics

B. Social obligations → Protocol codes

C. Cultural values → Economic gains

D. Personal preferences → Public policies

2.The dopamine paradox in rejection experiments reveals:

A. Moral reasoning overrides biological impulses.

B. Social valuation surpasses material calculus.

C. Cognitive dissonance triggers neurochemical rewards.

D. Risk aversion dominates decision-making processes.

3.The Venetian mirror-makers’ legacy in AR development lies in:

A. Commercialization of introspection tools.

B. Standardization of perceptual frameworks.

C. Democratization of self-representation.

D. Commodification of identity construction.

4.The Legalist paradox in organizational structures stems from:

A. Counterintuitive causality in rule-making.

B. Ethical dilemmas in hierarchical systems.

C. Cognitive limitations in self-governance.

D. Irreconcilable East-West philosophical divides.

5.Which experimental data best supports the "interaction symmetry" theory?

A. 61% rejecting profitable insincere offers.

B. 70% purchasing birds post-empty cage receipt.

C. 40% increased recycling under hidden surveillance.

D. 82% denying behavioral changes despite evidence.

6.The birdcage effect’s cross-temporal persistence suggests:

A. Neurobiological determinism.

B. Meta-pattern recognition capabilities.

C. Linguistic conceptual limitations.

D. Technological unconscious replication.

7.The ultimate challenge in transcending "spiritual cages" requires:

A. Systemic infrastructure overhaul.

B. Cognitive paradigm deconstruction.

C. Ethical framework reinvention.

D. Epistemological humility cultivation.

## **42.Date:4.16**

In the latter part of the 19th century, textile mills in Manchester annually consumed coal equivalent to entire forests. At that time, engineers believed that industrial emissions could perpetually fertilize neighboring farmlands. Yet three generations later, soil acidification had rendered 40% of Lancashire’s agricultural land infertile. This paradox of progress epitomizes the conflict between economic development and ecological conservation — a conflict exponentially magnified by accelerating globalization.

Economic development often exacts a heavy environmental toll, which in turn impedes further economic growth. For instance, while the Netherlands has been praised for reducing carbon emissions by 23% since 1990, little attention has been paid to the fertilizers shipped from Rotterdam to Brazilian soybean fields. Their transportation wastes energy and threatens local ecosystems. Similarly, Cargill boasts a 15% improvement in palm oil production cleanliness while ignoring deforestation in Kalimantan accelerated by 30% during the same period to meet EU biodiesel demands.

Energy transition, though pivotal, remains fraught with contradictions. Some nations phase out nuclear power for wind turbines yet import surging electricity from foreign coal plants. Despite heavy investments in renewables, they rely on other countries’ hydropower, indirectly subsidizing high-pollution oil exploration. Meanwhile, resource supply chains face ecological crises: a study of cobalt supply chains revealed that most electric vehicle batteries rely on mines where environmental safeguards exist only on paper. Even the carbon border adjustment mechanism, touted as ecological justice, curiously exempts rare-earth minerals essential for solar panels — a selective approach undermining comprehensive protection.

Technology companies exacerbate the problem by producing disposable electronics, generating staggering e-waste. Much is dumped in regions with lax environmental oversight, where children burn circuit boards in open air, poisoning local communities. Air pollution goes unheeded; resource overconsumption draws even less concern. Intensive agriculture boosts food exports but depletes groundwater aquifers, disrupting hydrological balances.

Proposed solutions like "ecological compensation" (e.g., African afforestation projects) require caution. Historically, British tea plantations in Ceylon triggered soil erosion. Without care, sustainability certifications may mask resource plunder. The core issue remains policy-ecosystem misalignment: automated port cranes run on power plants with uncapped emissions, ignoring ecological integrity. As the UN Climate Report warns, climate tipping points arrive faster than models predict.

Human civilization once normalized mercury use in hat-making. Today, an infinite-growth economic system demands equal scrutiny. Like medieval alchemists transmitting lead into gold, modern technocrats propose turning CO2 into building materials — both ignore material balance: matter neither vanishes nor transforms benignly. Anthropocene ecological debts mount. To achieve true sustainability, we must stop debating accounting methods, act decisively, and balance development with conservation.

Questions:

1. The paradox of progress in Manchester’s industrialization primarily stems from:

A. Overestimation of coal’s sustainability.

B. Delayed ecological feedback loops.

C. Inadequate agricultural technology.

D. Globalization’s resource redistribution.

2. The Netherlands’ emission reduction is criticized for:

A. Outsourcing ecological damage.

B. Prioritizing short-term economic gains.

C. Over-reliance on Brazilian agriculture.

D. Ignoring renewable energy potential.

3. The medieval alchemist analogy critiques modern technocrats for:

A. Ignoring the conservation law.

B. Overvaluing economic alchemy.

C. Rejecting historical precedents.

D. Prioritizing symbolic solutions.

4. The carbon border adjustment mechanism’s exemption of rare-earth minerals reveals:

A. Geopolitical bias in climate policies.

B. Incompatibility with solar technology.

C. Prioritization of industrial convenience.

D. Inadequate mineral recycling systems.

5. Burning circuit boards in e-waste regions disproportionately harms:

A. Global supply chain efficiency.

B. Localized vulnerable populations.

C. Electronics manufacturing costs.

D. International trade agreements.

6. In the text, "The carbon border adjustment mechanism, touted as ecological justice, curiously exempts rare-earth minerals essential for solar panels." What does "touted" mean in this context?

A. Flattered

B. Boosted

C. Praised

D. Satirized

7. The UN Climate Report’s warning underscores:

A. Inadequate global policy coordination.

B. Over-reliance on predictive models.

C. Irreversible hydrological disruptions.

D. Underestimated climate thresholds.

8. The relationship between the Netherlands' carbon reduction and Cargill's palm oil production is most analogous to:

A. A hospital lowering patient mortality rates while outsourcing surgeries to understaffed clinics.

B. A school improving campus safety yet ignoring bullying in online classrooms.

C. A city expanding green spaces while demolishing historical neighborhoods.

D. A factory reducing toxic emissions but discharging untreated wastewater into rivers.

## **43.Date:4.17**

In the early 20th century, a German chemist synthesized a new compound that emitted a faint green glow when exposed to light, a property that would later be exploited in theatrical productions to simulate the appearance of toxic substances.

Yet when audiences first witnessed a villain pouring emerald liquid into a glass on screen, few questioned why the color green had become the universal shorthand for poison. The association seems so natural that it is rarely examined, as if the connection were written into the very fabric of visual language.

But if one traces the history of pigments, it becomes apparent that green was not always the dominant choice for representing danger. Medieval manuscripts often depicted poison as a dull brown or black, reflecting the limited palette available to artists of the time. The shift toward green coincided with the industrial production of synthetic dyes, which made vibrant colors more accessible to set designers and costume departments.

What is seldom considered is how this visual convention might have been shaped by the practical constraints of early film technology. In black-and-white cinema, green appeared as a distinct shade of gray that stood out against other liquids, ensuring clarity for viewers who could not rely on color differentiation. By the time color film became standard, the association had already been cemented through decades of repetition.

The persistence of this trope raises questions about the mechanisms of cultural transmission. When a child sees a green vial in a cartoon and immediately recognizes it as poison, they are not drawing on any innate biological instinct but rather absorbing a learned symbolic system. This system, once established, resists change due to the self-reinforcing nature of visual storytelling—each repetition strengthens the association, making deviation seem confusing or unnatural.

Interestingly, the same color carries entirely different connotations in other contexts. Hospital walls are often painted pale green to promote calmness, and currency is printed on green paper to signify stability. These competing meanings demonstrate that the significance of color is not fixed but negotiated through use and context, a fluidity that the rigidity of cinematic conventions tends to obscure.

The implications extend beyond mere aesthetics. When a filmmaker chooses to depict poison as green, they are not making a neutral artistic decision but participating in the maintenance of a cultural code. This code, while useful for efficient storytelling, also limits the range of possible representations, privileging certain associations over others without explicit justification.

As global media consumption increases, the universality of such conventions can no longer be taken for granted. A viewer raised on Bollywood films, where poison is often shown as colorless, may find the Western trope puzzling or even comical. These differences highlight the arbitrariness of what appears to be a self-evident visual language, revealing it as a product of specific historical and technological circumstances rather than any inherent logic.

The longevity of the green poison trope suggests that visual shorthand, once established, acquires a kind of inertia that resists change even when the original rationale has faded into obscurity. Like a river that continues to flow long after the glacier that fed it has melted, the convention persists through habit rather than necessity, carving deeper channels with each repetition.

Will future generations, immersed in increasingly diverse visual cultures, continue to accept this inherited symbolism without question, or will they demand new forms of representation that reflect a broader range of perspectives? The answer may depend on whether filmmakers recognize the power they wield in shaping not just stories, but the very language through which those stories are understood.

Questions:

1. A viewer from Bollywood might find the Western green-poison trope puzzling because:

A. They prefer colorless poison.

B. Their films use different symbols.

C. They don't understand Western culture.

D. They are used to brighter colors.

2. The green-poison trope in cinema limits:

A. The range of film genres.

B. The diversity of color use.

C. The scope of visual representation.

D. The creativity of filmmakers.

3. The green-poison association in cinema is a product of:

A. Natural instincts.

B. Modern art trends.

C. Specific circumstances.

D. Global media influence.

4. A child recognizing green as poison primarily demonstrates:

A. Innate chromatic survival instincts.

B. Cultural semiotic conditioning.

C. Early-stage synesthetic perception.

D. Media literacy education outcomes.

5. Which phenomenon is parallel to the cinematic color coding?

A. The continuation of the QWERTY keyboard layout.

B. The evolution of biological warning colors.

C. The global unification of mathematical symbols.

D. The irrational continuation of dialectal grammar.

6. The author would most endorse which filmmaking approach?

A. Using green poison in historical dramas.

B. Replicating medieval brown poison.

C. Avoiding color symbolism entirely.

D. Assigning purple to toxins in sci-fi.

7. Early B&W cinema's role was decisive because:

A. Gray differentiation necessitated coding.

B. Lighting techniques favored green.

C. Scriptwriters lacked color vocabulary.

D. Chemical film reacted to green.

8. Which of the following best encapsulates the central argument of the passage?

A. Cultural Inertia: How Repetition Solidifies Visual Metaphors.

B. Chromatic Determinism: Green’s Inevitable Link to Toxicity.

C. Technological Primacy: Film Innovation Dictates Symbolism.

D. Biological Archetypes: Innate Human Responses to Color.

## **44.Date:4.18**

In the dust-laden ruins of Çatalböyük, a Neolithic settlement in Anatolia, archaeologists unearthed a mosaic of mud-brick structures dating back over nine thousand years. Some dwellings featured elaborate wall paintings depicting hunting scenes and vultures, while others lacked such adornments, their floors worn smooth by generations of simpler use. Spatial analysis revealed that larger, more decorated homes were consistently located near communal storage pits, suggesting a correlation between proximity to resources and the emergence of differential living standards. This early evidence of housing inequality, etched into the architecture of prehistory, serves not as a relic of the past but as a shadow stretching into the contemporary world, where the measurement of living space continues to encode societal hierarchies in ways both visible and obscured.

Data compiled by the World Bank in 2023 illustrate a global landscape of uneven habitation: citizens of Latvia enjoy an average of 51.9 square meters per person, while those in Egypt make do with 20.3 square meters—a disparity that cannot be fully explained by differences in landmass or economic output. In Japan, a nation with limited arable land and a population density of 347 people per square kilometer, the government’s post-war housing policies prioritized compact, efficient design, resulting in an average of 33.1 square meters per capita by 2020. Conversely, in South Africa, the legacy of apartheid spatial planning lingers: despite democratic reforms, the average white household occupies 120 square meters, while Black households average 45 square meters, a gap rooted in decades of forced segregation and resource exclusion. These numbers, seemingly neutral statistics, betray a deeper truth: the allocation of living space has always been a product of power, not just practicality.

The act of purchasing a home, often celebrated as a milestone of individual achievement, reveals a more complex narrative when viewed through the lens of historical inequity. In cities like London and Vancouver, where housing prices have surged 180% in two decades, first-time buyers face a stark reality: 40% of millennials in the U.K. rely on parental gifts to secure a mortgage, a trend mirroring the inheritance practices of ancient Mesopotamia, where land and dwellings were passed down through elite families, solidifying generational privilege. The modern myth of housing as a "merit-based investment" obscures the fact that its value is anchored in systems predating the buyer: zoning laws that preserve exclusive neighborhoods, tax policies favoring property owners, and historical injustices that concentrated wealth in certain hands. What appears as a free-market transaction is, in reality, a continuation of a centuries-old cycle of spatial stratification.

Government interventions aimed at addressing housing affordability often reinforce rather than disrupt these patterns. Take the United States’ Low-Income Housing Tax Credit as an example, it has spurred the construction of millions of affordable units, yet 70% of these are located in neighborhoods with below-average school ratings and limited job access, replicating the "peripheralization" of marginalized groups seen in Çatalböyük’s less privileged dwellings. In Singapore, the Housing and Development Board’s public housing scheme provides homes for 80% of the population, but strict eligibility criteria and resale restrictions tie housing status to citizenship and income, creating a new form of spatial citizenship that separates "insiders" from "outsiders." The language of "inclusion" and "opportunity" often masks the persistence of hierarchical logic in housing systems, where access to space remains a marker of social standing.

The financialization of housing—a phenomenon treating dwellings as assets rather than shelters—has amplified these disparities. Across global metropolises, speculative buying has led to a growing inventory of vacant properties held as financial assets, while urban residents in precarious economic positions increasingly occupy cramped, inadequate spaces. This disconnect between housing as a commodity and housing as a human need echoes the Neolithic practice of accumulating grain not for survival but for status, transforming a necessity into a symbol of power. The global rise of real estate investment trusts (REITs) and mortgage-backed securities further detaches housing from lived experience, prioritizing market returns over the right to dignified shelter. In this system, the size of one’s home becomes less a measure of comfort than a unit of financial capital, a shift that renders the prehistoric divide between decorated and undecorated dwellings eerily contemporary.

As we confront a world where the average CEO’s home is 80 times larger than the dwelling of a minimum-wage worker, the question must be asked: Have we advanced beyond the spatial hierarchies of Çatalböyük, or merely refined their form? The metrics of modern housing—square meters, price-to-income ratios, vacancy rates—obscure the enduring truth that housing has always been a site of power, where the allocation of space reflects not just what societies build, but whom they value. The Neolithic painters who adorned their walls with symbols of authority would likely recognize the modern practice of investing in prime real estate as a status signal, just as they would understand the marginalization of those forced to dwell on the periphery.

In an era of unprecedented global connectivity, the challenge lies in seeing beyond the surface of housing statistics to the deeper currents of history and inequality that shape them. For if we continue to treat homes as commodities first and shelters second, we risk perpetuating a cycle of disparity that began not in the age of finance, but in the age of stone—one where the measurement of space remains a silent record of who we allow to thrive, and who we consign to the margins. Is this the legacy we wish to carve into the architecture of the future?

Questions:

1. The "merit-based investment" myth is challenged because it:

A. Ignores systemic advantages from history.

B. Overemphasizes individual financial skills.

C. Underestimates market volatility risks.

D. Relies on outdated zoning regulations.

2. The South African housing gap is fundamentally rooted in:

A. Post-apartheid economic policies.

B. Ongoing forced segregation practices.

C. Historical resource exclusion patterns.

D. Natural land scarcity challenges.

3. What is the primary function of the question in the final paragraph ("Is this the legacy...")?

A. To propose a solution to housing inequality.

B. To challenge readers' assumptions about progress.

C. To criticize historical housing policies.

D. To emphasize the inevitability of spatial hierarchies.

4. Japan’s post-war housing policies (Para. 2) are cited to demonstrate:

A. State intervention overriding geographical constraints.

B. Cultural preference for minimalist aesthetics.

C. Demand is a driving factor in urban planning.

D. Population decline leading to excess space.

5. The "peripheralization" of marginalized groups is best defined as:

A. Physical isolation in urban outskirts.

B. Economic exclusion from property markets.

C. Social marginalization through spatial design.

D. Political neglect of housing demands.

6. The financialization of housing is compared to Neolithic grain storage to emphasize:

A. The transformation of survival resources into status capital.

B. Universal human instinct for resource accumulation.

C. Parallels between ancient barter and modern markets.

D. Technological limitations shaping economic models.

7. The reference to Mesopotamian inheritance practices serves to:

A. Contrast ancient collectivism with modern individualism.

B. Historicize the financialization of generational privilege.

C. Criticize contemporary mortgage systems as regressive.

D. Exemplify cross-cultural housing meritocracies.

8. Singapore’s public housing eligibility criteria paradoxically:

A. Replicate caste systems through bureaucratic categorization.

B. Optimize urban density while ensuring ethnic integration.

C. Prioritize economic efficiency over social cohesion.

D. Mask neoliberal agendas under egalitarian rhetoric.

9. In Para. 5, housing financialization : Neolithic grain accumulation. Which analogy matches this relation?

A. Regarding water scarcity as a tradable commodity, similar to the ancient salt monopolies.

B. Considering access to medical services as a luxury good, similar to the medieval guild privileges.

C. Redefining educational diplomas as speculative assets, which is analogous to the art patronage during the Renaissance period.

D. Evaluating personal mobility through caste-based travel restrictions.

10. Which of the following best reflects the core argument of the passage?

A. Power structures systematically shape spatial hierarchies.

B. Power systems continuously reinforce the unequal distribution of spatial resources.

C. Power frameworks subtly construct the class differences in living spaces.

D. Power mechanisms essentially dominate the stratification patterns of living spaces.

E. Power relations implicitly determine the hierarchical order in spatial occupancy.

F. Power configurations indirectly drive the uneven distribution of spatial resources.

G. Power patterns profoundly influence the hierarchical division of living spaces.

H. Power operations sustain the differential distribution of spatial resources over the long term.

## **45.Date:4.19**

In the meeting rooms of the European Commission in Brussels, finance officials from various countries are engaged in heated discussions on the 2023 pension coordination plan. Data shows that Italy's public pension expenditure has reached 16.2% of its GDP, while Germany's plan to raise the statutory retirement age to 68 faces opposition from 37% of the public. As Eastern European member states demand amendments to employment protection directives to attract foreign investment, and Southern European countries call for increased fiscal transfers to balance pension burdens, the outline of the European continent on the wall chart is being fragmented by rows of financial data—the global resource allocation system that once underpinned Europe's social model has long been quietly transformed.

Post-World War II European reconstruction was built on two critical foundations. The first was the $13.15 billion in aid injected by the United States through the Marshall Plan, equivalent to 3.5% of the combined GDP of Western European countries in 1948. These funds not only rebuilt industrial capacity but also laid the groundwork for a social contract characterized by high welfare. The second was the resource dividends from the colonial system not yet fully dismantled. In 1950, rubber, iron ore, and other strategic materials obtained by France from its colonies accounted for 47% of its industrial raw material imports, while assets inherited from the Dutch East India Company continued to subsidize pensions for workers in Rotterdam. This dual external input enabled Europe to establish a social security network covering 85% of the employed population during the 1960s and 1970s, with average pensions for retirees reaching 72% of the wages of the working population—a level unmatched anywhere else in the world at the time.

The signing of the Maastricht Treaty in 1991 marked the peak of the European welfare model. The EU extended standards such as paid annual leave and unemployment benefits across the region through the Social Charter. Before Germany's Hartz reforms, unemployment insurance could pay 67% of a worker's original wages for up to 32 months, while Sweden's "active labor market policy" invested funds equivalent to 2.3% of GDP annually in vocational training. However, these institutional designs overlooked a crucial premise: Europe's position at the top of the global value chain. In 1980, Europe accounted for 31% of global manufacturing value-added and 68% of the world's high-end machine tool production. The high profits generated by this industrial advantage were sufficient to support the expansion of social welfare. But by 2019, these figures had dropped to 15% and 32%, respectively. The hollowing out of manufacturing led to shrinking tax revenues, while the number of pension recipients increased by 28% over the past two decades.

The 2008 financial crisis became a turning point for the welfare system. The Greek government was exposed for using financial derivatives to conceal a fiscal deficit of 12.7%, with pension expenditures accounting for 41% of its budget, directly triggering the Eurozone sovereign debt crisis. Subsequent austerity measures forced countries to adjust their welfare structures: Spain raised the retirement age from 65 to 67 and changed the pension indexation mechanism from inflation-linked to GDP growth-linked. The UK introduced automatic enrollment through the Pensions Act, requiring employers to contribute at least 3% to employees' pensions, but this increased labor costs for small and medium-sized enterprises by 11%. These adjustments were essentially corrections to the principle of "universal welfare" — when Europe could no longer extract excess profits from the global industrial chain, the funding to maintain high welfare had to shift from transnational transfers to domestic redistribution.

The rise of emerging economies further altered the global resource allocation landscape. From 2000 to 2020, the GDP share of developing Asian economies in the global total rose from 19% to 36%. China's direct investment stock in Europe surged from € 2 billion to € 96 billion, with 60% concentrated in infrastructure and manufacturing. This reversal of capital flows had dual effects: on one hand, Central and Eastern European countries like Poland and Hungary achieved average annual economic growth of 4.5% by absorbing industrial transfers, with their per capita GDP reaching 78% of the EU average by 2023, leading them to reject traditional "donor-recipient" relationships. On the other hand, global capital increasingly favored Southeast Asia, where labor costs were just one-eighth of those in Western Europe. In 2024, German chemical companies' investments in Vietnam surpassed those in their home country for the first time, resulting in 120,000 industrial job losses in the Rhine-Ruhr region.

Yet even more alarming is how changes in the labor market have exacerbated the welfare system's inadequacy. Eurostat data shows that in 2024, flexible workers accounted for 23% of total employment, a 15-percentage-point increase since 2000. Only 48% of this group participated in pension schemes, with contribution bases generally lower than those of traditional employees. The rise of the gig economy disrupted the linear logic of "employment-taxation-welfare," making the allocation of social security responsibilities for platform workers a legislative challenge across countries. France attempted to impose a "social contribution tax" on ride-hailing platforms but faced resistance from companies citing "damage to the digital economy," ultimately resulting in the tax covering only 17% of the target population. This institutional lag is particularly stark in the face of technological revolution — as artificial intelligence begins replacing jobs in traditionally high-welfare sectors like law and medicine, Europe has yet to establish an effective safety net for technological unemployment.

Amid this ongoing institutional adjustment, disparities in national strength among member states are reshaping welfare distribution rules. Nordic countries, leveraging high-value-added industries and favorable demographic structures, can still maintain pension replacement rates above 70%, but they must contribute 1.2% of their GDP annually to the EU budget as a "solidarity fund." Southern European countries, meanwhile, have been forced to implement means-tested pensions. Italy's 2024 new rules require retirees with pensions exceeding € 3,000 to pay additional taxes. Central and Eastern European countries have adopted "welfare nationalism" policies, linking unemployment benefit eligibility to years of residency, indirectly restricting labor mobility. This stratified welfare system, categorized by national strength, is essentially a reconstruction of Europe's internal "core-periphery" structure from the 19th century—except the measure of strength has shifted from colonial territory to digital sovereignty, innovation capacity, and capital attractiveness.

Looking back from these historical junctures, the evolution of Europe's welfare system clearly outlines the contours of global power shifts. When Rotterdam's container throughput was surpassed by Shanghai's in 2023, and when foreign companies accounted for over 40% of listings on the Frankfurt Stock Exchange for the first time, the social welfare edifice built on colonial plunder and industrial monopolies began undergoing structural subsidence in the wave of global marketization. Policymakers in Brussels face challenges more daunting than numerical calculations: how to strike a balance between maintaining social stability and adapting to global competition, and how to preserve the legitimacy of a welfare system born in the era of the Industrial Revolution during the age of digital capitalism.

History does not repeat itself exactly, but patterns often recur. In the 19th century, European powers divided global colonies based on national strength; in the 21st century, the world is reconstructing welfare distribution systems based on capital and technological prowess. While representatives in the Strasbourg European Parliament still argue over 0.5-percentage-point adjustments to pension rates, cargo ships flying the flags of emerging market nations are working around the clock to transport the key materials that will determine Europe's future—not coal or steel, but data center equipment, electric vehicle batteries, and biomedical raw materials. These shipments carry a transformative power stronger than any treaty: in today's globalized economy, a region's welfare level must ultimately align with its true contribution to global value creation.

Europe once wrote the textbook for welfare societies, but now it is proving a more universal truth: when external dividends fade, internal redistribution games inevitably return to the most fundamental economic rule—the size of the pie is never determined by the will to distribute, but by the capacity to create. And the maintenance of creative capacity can never rely on nostalgia for past advantages; it can only stem from continuous innovation in the face of reality. This may be the lesson Europe's current predicament offers the world: in an era of deepening globalization, no social model can forever rest on the laurels of history. Only institutions that dynamically adapt to the global value creation system can stand firm amid the tides of time.

Questions:

1. What is the primary function of the financial data mentioned in the first paragraph?

A. Highlight regional disparities in EU pension policies.

B. Illustrate the fragmentation of European social cohesion.

C. Demonstrate the development pattern and turbulence in Europe.

D. Quantify public opposition to welfare reforms.

2. The "institutional lag" in the gig economy context refers to:

A. Slow labor law reform.

B. Poor digital economy tax.

C. Inadequate platform regulation.

D. Weak pension scheme design.

3. The gig economy's impact on welfare is best characterized as:

A. Enhancing labor market flexibility.

B. Increasing government social security revenues.

C. Reducing youth unemployment rates.

D. Disrupting the traditional welfare-funding model.

4. The "universal welfare" principle adjustment implies that:

A. National sovereignty assertion.

B. Social contract revision.

C. Welfare system collapse.

D. Europe's global role change.

5. The welfare nationalism policies in Eastern Europe aim to:

A. Promote cross-border labor mobility.

B. Attract foreign direct investment.

C. Align with Nordic welfare standards.

D. Protect domestic social security budgets.

6. The shift in Europe's core-periphery structure is defined by:

A. Colonial territory to economic ideology.

B. Industrial output to digital sovereignty.

C. Military power to cultural influence.

D. Social welfare levels to natural resource endowment.

7. The "transformative power" of shipments mentioned in Paragraph 9 refers to:

A. Physical goods replacing financial treaties.

B. Emerging markets' control over key industries.

C. Technological materials shaping economic futures.

D. Decline of traditional European manufacturing.

8. The relationship between 19th-century colonial division and 21st-century welfare redistribution is analogous to:

A. Trade routes shifting from silk roads to digital networks.

B. Political power moving from monarchies to democracies.

C. Economic systems evolving from mercantilism to capitalism.

D. Technological innovation replacing natural resource extraction.

9. The shift from inflation-linked to GDP-linked pensions signifies:

A. Aligning welfare with national productivity.

B. Prioritizing economic growth over price stability.

C. Reducing government budget deficits quickly.

D. Increasing private sector pension responsibilities.

10. The "resource dividends" inherited from colonial systems primarily functioned as:

A. Compensation for colonial exploitation.

B. Raw material subsidies for domestic industries.

C. Collateral for post-war reconstruction loans.

D. Funding for international aid programs.

11. What is the author's attitude toward Europe's current welfare adjustments?

A. Optimistic about their long-term sustainability.

B. Neutral on their economic impact.

C. Critical of their insufficient ambition.

D. Pessimistic about their social stability risks.

12. Which of the following is the most appropriate title for the passage?

A. The Decline of Europe's Welfare System: A Consequence of Global Power Shifts.

B. The Evolution of Europe's Welfare Model: Lessons from the Past for the Future.

C. Europe's Welfare System: From Post-War Prosperity to Digital Age Challenges.

D. Europe's Welfare Dilemma: Balancing Social Stability and Global Competition.

## **46.Date:4.20**

In the late 19th century, a wave of European immigrants arrived in Argentina, bringing with them diverse cultures and traditions. Tango, a dance form blending African and European influences, gradually emerged in the streets of Buenos Aires, becoming a defining symbol of Argentine culture. Yet today, as we walk through the city's colonial-era avenues, a stark contrast unfolds: neon signs of American fast-food chains illuminate the historic facades, while teenagers sway to TikTok trends. The once-vibrant beats of tango, infused with the nostalgia of immigrants, have faded into the background.

This visual dissonance epitomizes modern cultural invasion—not through military conquest, but via the seductive allure of fleeting joy. The global cultural landscape, once a mosaic of distinct traditions, now increasingly resembles a digital monoculture. Algorithms, masquerading as tools of openness, accelerate this homogenization. This phenomenon transcends mere entertainment preferences; it represents a fundamental reshaping of human expression, memory, and identity in service of hegemonic power.

At its core, this invasion commodifies joy itself. American cultural exports—from binge-worthy Netflix series to viral dance challenges—are engineered to trigger dopamine release through standardized templates. Watching a Marvel hero save Manhattan for the twelfth time or mimicking TikTok trends born in Los Angeles fosters an illusion of global connection. Yet this connection demands cultural surrender: people worldwide laugh at identical punchlines, dance to the same synthetic beats, and seek catharsis in prefabricated narratives. In Argentine bookstores, the platitudes of Paulo Coelho overshadow the metaphysical depth of Cortázar, revealing how this invasion alters cognitive preferences. The facile satisfaction of self-help aphorisms erodes the intellectual rigor required to navigate Borges' literary labyrinths, transforming readers from active thinkers into passive consumers.

The global film industry is a battleground in this silent war, and box office figures don't lie. When Argentine filmmakers chronicle the scars of economic collapse, their works compete against Hollywood spectacles dominated by explosions. This is not merely market competition but an epistemological takeover. The transient thrill of 3D superhero battles, tailored to global tastes, has rewired audience expectations. Complex narratives about local struggles seem "unmarketable" not due to a lack of artistic merit, but because they resist translation into that universal—effectively Americanized—emotional lexicon. Cinemas, once sanctuaries of national introspection, now serve as cultural embassies propagating American myths, teaching audiences to equate heroism with individual triumph rather than collective resilience. "I once believed our industry's decline stemmed from worse directors and worse audiences," lamented an Argentine filmmaker. "But the real tragedy is those who mistake trash for treasure and treasure for trash."

Beyond film, digital platforms wage their own cultural blitz. Instagram's algorithm, ostensibly neutral, systematically disadvantages content that requires cultural context. A centuries-old milonga performance, embodying Argentina's Afro-European fusion, garners fewer shares than a teen mimicking Brooklyn-born dance moves. This digital Darwinism conflates cultural value with viral potential, prioritizing the globally digestible over the locally meaningful. Even language suffers colonization: the Spanglish peppering Buenos Aires slang reflects how American conceptual frameworks displace indigenous thought patterns. When young Argentines articulate their ambitions using Silicon Valley buzzwords instead of Peronist rhetoric, the invasion reaches its zenith—it no longer merely replaces cultural artifacts but reprograms cognition itself.

Yet resistance simmers beneath the surface. Independent publishers guerrilla-print forgotten Argentine classics as e-books. Underground film clubs project banned documentaries onto Buenos Aires' colonial walls. A new generation of musicians hybridizes cumbia with electronic beats, creating sounds too culturally fluid for algorithmic categorization. These acts of defiance expose the limits of homogenization—the human craving for authentic expression will inevitably breach the dam of commercial conformity. Even Instagram, an unwitting accomplice of cultural imperialism, occasionally spawns viral challenges rooted in regional folklore, proving that algorithms can also be weaponized to safeguard culture.

Our era's central paradox has crystallized: openness, once hailed as an antidote to parochialism, now hastens cultural erosion. True cultural exchange demands mutual vulnerability—a willingness to be transformed by the other's worldview. What passes for globalization today is cultural unilateralism: the world consumes American narratives while America hears only its own echoes. To counter this, we must redefine connectivity—not as seamless assimilation into the dominant culture, but as the maintenance of permeable boundaries, allowing traditions to interact without subjugation.

The ephemeral joy of cultural homogenization is a Faustian bargain—a saccharine craving that starves the soul. Defending diversity requires recognizing that some joys should resist universality: the melancholic ache of a bandoneón lament, the collective fury of protest murals, the existential tremor of an unsolved Borgesian riddle. By rejecting the tyranny of algorithmic popularity, we preserve humanity's richest lexicon—those untranslatable expressions that, woven together, form civilization's tapestry. The choice is clear: succumb to the tepid shallows of global sameness, or fight for the turbulent depths where true culture thrives. The answer is self-evident. America, in its folly, may never grasp the question—but the answer is ours to declare.

Questions:

1. The passage implies that the "universal emotional lexicon" is essentially:

A. a neutral framework for global communication.

B. an Americanized standard marginalizing local narratives.

C. a necessary evolution of human expression.

D. a misinterpretation of cultural commonalities.

2. The "digital Darwinism" described in Para. 5 most closely resembles:

A. natural selection favoring the most adaptable species.

B. market competition based on quality rather than appeal.

C. cultural survival based on viral rather than intrinsic value.

D. technological progress overriding traditional norms.

3. The author's critique of Paulo Coelho over Cortázar primarily targets the:

A. commercial success of self-help literature.

B. intellectual laziness encouraged by homogenized content.

C. global popularity of simplistic narratives.

D. decline in readership of complex literature.

4. The passage suggests that true cultural exchange must involve:

A. the dominance of one culture over another.

B. mutual transformation through reciprocal influence.

C. protectionist policies to maintain cultural purity.

D. digital platforms as neutral intermediaries.

5. The author's mention of "catharsis in prefabricated narratives" criticizes the lack of:

A. emotional depth in global content.

B. originality in storytelling formulas.

C. cultural specificity in narrative structures.

D. critical engagement in audience response.

6. The "turbulent depths" in the final paragraph metaphorically represent:

A. the complexity of authentic cultural experiences.

B. the challenges of resisting cultural homogenization.

C. the emotional intensity of traditional art forms.

D. the intellectual rigor of local narratives.

7. The passage implies that algorithms in social media create a bias toward content that:

A. requires minimal cultural context to enjoy.

B. reflects the diversity of global traditions.

C. challenges dominant cultural narratives.

D. originates from Western countries.

8. The "cultural blitz" of digital platforms achieves dominance by:

A. Amplifying grassroots movements organically.

B. Replicating colonial-era cultural imposition tactics.

C. Weaponizing algorithmic personalization for saturation.

D. Partnering with governments to censor dissent.

9. According to the context, which of the following is the most likely meaning of "hegemonic"?

A. interfering

B. dominant

C. threatening

D. invasive

10. The relationship between the "pseudo-pluralism" of American cultural exports and the global audience is analogous to:

A. A multinational corporation allows its branches to use local decoration styles, but enforces the management templates of its headquarters.

B. A masquerade ball requires everyone to wear different masks, but they must all dance the same choreographed dance.

C. A game offers multilingual interfaces, but all the plot branches lead to the same ending.

D. A library collects literatures from various countries, but only displays the works from Europe and America in the prime positions.

## **47.Date:4.21**

As the nation boasting the highest density of cultural heritage across the globe, Italy's governance of the tourism economy has long languished in a state of discord between traditional administrative restraint and the spontaneous market order. The incessant alterations in regulatory bills from 2015 to 2024, particularly the Legislative Decree Conversion Law No. 131/2024 and its subsequent supplementary stipulations, present a quintessential specimen for observing institutional vicissitudes. Statistical data indicates that the proportion of regulatory expenditures in the operational costs of small accommodation enterprises escalated from 17% in 2019 to 34% in 2024. This institutional friction directly precipitated a 42% diminution in the number of bed-and-breakfast establishments in the historic urban expanse of Venice. The adage "Glory belongs to Greece, and greatness belongs to Rome" now appears rather sardonic.

The nascent regulatory framework was constructed upon the tenets of neoclassical economic theory, positing that standardization and regulation could eradicate information asymmetry in the market. The Unified Act on Tourism Services enforced in 2017 established a mandatory registration system for accommodation facilities, requiring them to obtain a unique local identification code as a prerequisite for operation. This measure laid the institutional groundwork for the subsequent National Identification Code System (CIN), which was formally mandated by the 2024 supplementary regulations. The 2017 edict led to the closure of 23% of family-run guesthouses in the Tuscany region owing to the exorbitant renovation outlays demanded by newly upgraded safety and operational standards (e.g., fire safety certifications, accessibility modifications), while the specific technical integration into the CIN system was codified in the Legislative Decree No. 131/2024, further amplifying compliance costs for micro-enterprises. This outcome validates the systematic underestimation by decision-making entities of the intensity of market participants' behavioral reactions. That is to say, the formulators of regulations failed to fully contemplate the tolerance thresholds of enterprises for non-linear cost stimuli and imposed idealized institutional blueprints on market entities with intricate behavioral logics. The reservation access system instituted by the Venice City Government in 2023 is no exception. It aimed to safeguard the fragile ecosystem by setting a daily tourist quota, yet it instigated the spatial transference of tourist flows rather than the control of the aggregate quantity, resulting in a year-on-year decline of 19% in the ticket revenue of the city's museums, unveiling the structural dissonance between rigid intervention and the malleability of group behavior.

The cognitive predilections in institutional design are especially conspicuous in the selection of regulatory technologies. The novel short-term rental management regulations implemented in 2024 obliged bed-and-breakfast proprietors to conduct face-to-face identity authentication. Ostensibly, this measure was intended for anti-terrorism security purposes, but in actuality, it laid bare the structural deficiencies of governance capabilities. Data from the Rome City Government reveals that within three months of the implementation of the new regulations, the number of short-term rental housing stocks diminished by 58%, while the hotel price index ascended by 37% during the same period, engendering a regulatory conundrum. The asymmetry of this policy effect essentially emanates from the misjudgment of market supply and demand elasticity. Mandatory technical criteria failed to consider the response mechanism of the substitute market, thereby exacerbating market monopolies. In the realm of algorithmic regulation, the machine-learning model of the National Tourism Data Platform has a 28% error rate of ethnic partiality, leading to a twofold surge in service complaints from non-EU tourists. This phenomenon of the perversion of technological governance corroborates the fallacy of the hypothesis of technological neutrality in the real world. The algorithmic enigma has not only failed to attain governance optimization but has instead become a generator of new institutional discrimination. Nevertheless, this is not the most pivotal issue.

The most appalling aspect is that the institutional cost transfer mechanism of the regulatory system has created an irreparable chasm. The adjustment of the tourism tax collection standard in 2024 seemingly adhered to the principle of "user pays," but in fact, it devolved into a tool for fiscal transfer payments. The Milan City Government augmented the tourism tax for three-star hotels to 10 euros per night, yet only 12% of the tax revenue was actually allocated to the upkeep of tourism facilities. This fiscal aberration has also engendered a vicious cycle in the domain of cultural heritage. The Uffizi Gallery in Florence witnessed a 15% uptick in ticket revenue in 2024, but the budget for cultural relic preservation was instead curtailed by 9%. A more paradigmatic instance is the reform of tour guide qualifications in 2024, which constricted the pass rate of the examination from 68% to 31%. The artificially contrived scarcity of qualifications has caused the price of formal tour guide services to soar by 41%, instead catalyzing a threefold augmentation in the trading volume of illegal tour guides. This asymmetric pattern of benefit distribution is essentially a forcible transfer of institutional costs to micro-economic units, resulting in an inverse movement trajectory between regulatory benefits and public welfare.

The path dependency in institutional change is even more manifest in the legislative process. The revision of the revaluation mechanism of state-owned property fees in Legislative Decree No. 04/400 has been a subject of contention for eight years. The ultimately adopted scheme linked to the consumer price index still retained a 30% subjective adjustment margin. This conciliatory legislation led to 17 disparate interpretation schemes for calculating the franchise fees in the port area of Genoa, giving rise to administrative litigation cases accounting for 42% of the total number of cases. The self-reinforcing characteristic of the regulatory system reached its zenith during the digital transformation. The National Tourism Platform compulsorily required enterprises to upload 132 items of business data, but the data utilization rate was less than 15%, instead augmenting the data processing workload of small and medium-sized enterprises by an average of 14 working days per annum. This phenomenon of institutional involution is essentially a quantitative manifestation of the disparity between institutional path dependency and the rate of social evolution. That is, the institutional design that overly pursues certainty has instead led to the continuous decline of governance efficiency.

Should we simply allow these contradictions to proliferate unchecked? The debacle of the Ecco Digital Network Experiment Project (2024) is illuminating. The project aimed to optimize the distribution of tourists through Internet of Things technology, but in the field trial in the Puglia region, the system's prediction error rate reached 63%, and it led to the homogenization of tourism services in 23 villages and towns. This validates the fundamental assertion of the theory of complex adaptive systems: when the regulatory granularity is smaller than the self-organizing scale of the system, institutional upheaval is bound to occur. The quandary of the transformation of the governance paradigm stems from the limitations of the understanding of complex systems, and it seems that these contradictions are simply insoluble. However, the "regulatory sandbox" experiment implemented in the Veneto region appears to proffer a novel perspective. Allowing 15% of the regulatory rules to be determined through negotiation among market entities has elevated the tourist satisfaction rate in the Rialto Bridge area by 22%. This non-linear response reveals the inhibitory impact of the rigid framework on complex systems and validates the necessity of ecological governance.

Italy's experience exposes the fundamental paradox of the modern regulatory system: institutional designs intended to curtail transaction costs often yield the opposite effect through the complication of procedures. The number of tourism regulatory provisions increased by 340% from 2019 to 2024, but the efficiency of administrative adjudication decreased by 57%. This institutional involution has become a prevalent issue in global tourism governance. Future institutional innovation necessitates the reconstruction of the regulatory philosophy, shifting from the "constructive rationality" that presupposes a perfect order to the "ecological rationality" that fosters adaptability. As the model deduction of the Institute for Complex Systems at the Polytechnic University of Milan demonstrates, when the regulatory flexibility is augmented to 35%, the system stability actually increases by 18%. This counter-intuitive phenomenon implies that effective tourism governance requires acknowledging the unpredictability of the system and embedding dynamic feedback and adaptive mechanisms in institutional design to achieve a sustainable equilibrium between maintaining order and stimulating innovation.

Questions:

1. What essentially nullified Venice's tourist quota effectiveness?

A. Revenue decline

B. Flow displacement

C. Ecosystem fragility

D. Museum closures

2. The fundamental contradiction in Italy's tourism governance is best captured by

A. heritage wealth → regulatory failure

B. market freedom → administrative control

C. cost reduction → procedural chaos

D. policy intent → unintended effects

3. What underlying issue is exposed by the high error rate of the National Tourism Data Platform?

A. Inefficiencies in data processing

B. Discriminatory practices against tourists

C. Inadequate training for tourism operators

D. Mismanagement of tourist demographics

4. What is a notable effect of the increased tourism tax collection standard?

A. Better funding for cultural heritage preservation

B. Significant revenue generation for local governments

C. Limited financial support for tourism infrastructure

D. Improved tourist experiences through better services

5. Regulators' fundamental error was assuming:

A. Cost linearity

B. Behavioral simplicity

C. Market perfection

D. Technical omnipotence

6. Algorithmic bias ultimately proves the impossibility of:

A. Error elimination

B. Neutral governance

C. Complaint reduction

D. Ethnic fairness

7. The primary critique of Italy's tourism governance lies in its fundamental:

A. Misalignment with market spontaneity

B. Overreliance on technical solutions

C. Neglect of systemic adaptability

D. Miscalculation of cost stimuli

8. The term "institutional involution" (para.4) most precisely describes a scenario where regulatory systems:

A. Intensity path dependency

B. Stagnate societal adaptation

C. Multiply procedural complexity

D. Invert cost-benefit ratios

9. Guide qualification reform's perverse outcome was:

A. Scarcity creation

B. Black markets

C. Price inflation

D. Standard elevation

10. Which phenomenon mirrors Venice's booking system outcome?

A. Drug resistance

B. Hydraulic displacement

C. Rationing queues

D. Speculative bubbles

11. Uffizi's budget paradox stems from:

A. Revenue allocation

B. Preservation neglect

C. Visitor increases

D. Fiscal transfers

12. Algorithmic errors disproportionately affected:

A. Service providers

B. Non-EU tourists

C. Complaint systems

D. Data accuracy

13. Ecological governance prioritizes:

A. Adaptive capacity

B. Feedback loops

C. Flexible limits

D. Ordered systems

14. The most incisive title for this analysis would be:

A. "Regulatory Overreach in Italian Tourism Collapse"

B. "The Paradox of Institutional Involution in Complex Systems"

C. "Market Spontaneity vs. Administrative Restraint: A Venetian Dilemma"

D. "Technocratic Hubris and Tourism Governance Failure"

15. Which of the following countries is mentioned in this article?

A. Italy

B. Da Qin

C. the Han Dynasty

D. the Qing Dynasty

## **48.Date:4.22**

After the Thai military coup in 2014, tear gas on the streets of Bangkok mixed with the still-drying blood on the Democracy Monument. Meanwhile, the separatist conflict in Narathiwat Province in the south had been ongoing for a decade, during which more than 7,000 people lost their lives. Against this backdrop of a divided society, the Monkey Buffet Festival in Lopburi continued to attract global tourists with a carnival where two tons of fruit were piled up every year. When macaques tear at the bright red flesh of imported cherries in front of the camera, and the image of the monkey god as a "Dharma protector" in the temple murals coexists in the same space-time with the macaques that have been fed to the point of getting diabetes in reality, one has to wonder: Is this the unique resilience of Thailand's modernization transformation, or a dangerous facade where contradictions are obscured by symbols?

The production mechanism of cultural symbols shows a remarkable feature of decontextualization in the collision between globalization and localization. The core ritual of the Monkey Festival in Lopburi, piling up two tons of tropical fruits into a pyramid for macaques to feed on, originated from the integration of local animism and the Buddhist concept of giving. Its original meaning included respect for natural deities and the maintenance of ecological balance. However, when this ritual was transformed into a commercial spectacle by tourism capital in 1989, its religious ethics and local culture were stripped away, and it was instead encoded as a visual symbol of "harmonious coexistence between humans and animals." This process of symbol extraction follows the standardized logic of the cultural industry. A 2018 field survey by the University of Cambridge showed that 87% of international tourists understood the festival as a display of "the uniqueness of Thai culture," while only 12% could recognize the epic narrative of Ramakien and the Buddhist cosmology behind it. The process of symbol hollowing is particularly evident in spatial transformation: The 13th-century Brahman site of the Sam Phra Kan Temple was transformed into a tourist theater. Reinforced concrete renovation materials replaced the traditional brick and wood structure, and the materiality of the sacred space was reconstructed by the logic of consumerism, leading to what Walter Benjamin described as "the withering away of the aura of art works in the age of mechanical reproduction," which has put Thailand in a predicament.

However, people lacking economic expertise have achieved great success in the economic field, further intensifying this cultural alienation in the context of the unipolar economic growth model. The contribution rate of Thailand's tourism industry to GDP increased from 12% in 2000 to 20.3% in 2019. In the same period, the proportion of value added in the manufacturing industry decreased from 35% to 27%, showing a dual trend of "deindustrialization" and "overservicing." In Lopburi Province, where the Monkey Festival is held, 47% of households' income depends on tourism-related industries. This vulnerability was fully exposed during the pandemic in 2020 – a plunge of 82% in tourist numbers led to the unemployment rate in the region exceeding 30% within three months. A deeper crisis lies in the implicit break in the industrial chain: 45% of the high-end fruits in the festival's supply chain rely on imports, and 83% of the "Thai handicrafts" are produced in Dongguan, China, reflecting the absence of the local industry in the links of design, research and development, and quality control. The hidden danger of this "symbolic economy" is that when cultural resources are transformed into tradable commodities, their production process must follow the profit logic of global capital, leading to the disintegration of the local knowledge system. However, it seems that the Thai high-level officials don't care. A report by the Bank of Thailand in 2023 showed that for every 100 jobs created by the tourism industry, 37 traditional handicraft jobs disappear. Industries carrying local craftsmanship, such as Songkhla batik and Chiang Rai silverware, only account for 9% of the market share. Can it really be that they are unaware that this marks the imbalance of the cultural ecosystem has seeped from the symbolic level into the field of material production?

This is not the case. It is because the integration and co-optation of folk traditions by the authoritative narrative form a unique power technique within the framework of the symbolic economy. As the representative of the national cultural orthodoxy, the royal family classifies and organizes local rituals through institutions such as the "Thai Cultural Conservation Committee." When the Monkey Festival was included in the "royally certified folk activities," the animist elements in it were removed, and instead, the Buddhist spirit of compassion and the value of ecotourism were emphasized. This transformation essentially reflects "discipline and punishment" in terms of meaning: The "Saifuddin Festival" of Thai Muslims in the south has been added with a parade of royal portraits, and the mask designs of the "Phi Ta Khon Festival" in the northeast need to be reviewed by the authorities. The heterogeneity of local culture has been incorporated into a unified narrative centered in Bangkok. A 2017 survey by sociologist Somchai showed that among the population aged 65 and above, 78% recognized the traditionally of the festival, while the recognition rate among the population under 30 years old was only 42%. The fracture in cognition reveals the inefficiency of the official ideological indoctrination. When young protesters in Bangkok question the "lese-majeste law" on the streets, and when villagers in Chiang Mai resist cultural invasion through the daily practice of "tree spirit sacrifice," the civil society reconstructs cultural discourse power in a non-institutionalized way, forming a critique of the authoritative narrative. The pattern of this power game is that the royal family tries to enhance national identity through cultural integration but has to tolerate and even promote the commercial dismemberment of traditions due to excessive dependence on the tourism economy. The local protests triggered by the commercial authorization of the Monkey Festival's image by a beverage brand in 2019 exposed the internal conflict between the political and capital attributes of cultural symbols.

The accumulation of these three contradictions over time has led to a collapse-like identity crisis in Thai society. The abnormal 63% increase in the population of macaques in Lopburi due to long-term intake of high-sugar foods is extremely thought-provoking. It forms an irony with the "ecological harmony" it symbolizes, suggesting the distortion of the real ecology by symbolic production. The 41% population loss rate in traditional agricultural communities and the more than 2,000 jobs created by the "human-macaque photo-taking" industrial chain constitute a zero-sum game between cultural inheritance and economic survival. The younger generation's abandonment of the inheritance of the monkey god epic is essentially a passive compromise to the logic of capital. Just like there are only 12 villages left in the whole country that completely inherit the "Thai astrological calendar," this clearly marks that local knowledge is being replaced by the "pseudo-traditions" created by the tourism economy, forming the implicit exploitation of what Gramsci called "cultural hegemony."

In the context of globalization, Thailand's predicament is essentially a typical case of the loss of cultural autonomy in late-developing countries. When the fruit pyramid of the Monkey Festival becomes a cultural logo in international communication, what it carries is no longer the local knowledge system but a cultural illusion jointly created by transnational capital and the nation state. The irreversibility of this process of symbolization has made Thai culture fall into a double alienation – it is not only simplified into a consumer symbol by external gazes but also integrated as a resource for legitimacy by internal authorities. The key to solving this dilemma lies in re-establishing an organic connection between cultural practices and local contexts, refusing to regard traditions as detachable exhibits but as living systems embedded in specific social relations. Just as the foraging behavior of macaques in their natural habitats is originally a part of the ecological chain, when they are incorporated into the tourism landscape and become "performing animals," both their biological attributes and cultural symbolic meanings are alienated at the same time. If Thai society wants to avoid becoming a cultural colony in the tide of globalization, it must face up to the power structure behind the symbolic economy and find a dynamic balance point among the logic of capital appreciation, the needs of national integration, and the autonomy of folk culture.

From the perspective of the evolution of civilization, Thailand's experience serves as a wake-up call for all societies undergoing modern transformation: When culture is simplified into tradable symbols, when the economy relies on a single growth driver, and when the authorities attempt to monopolize the construction of meaning, an identity crisis is bound to be triggered. The continuous existence of the Monkey Buffet Festival is not a manifestation of cultural vitality but a visual representation of multiple contradictions – it once again reminds us that the path of modernization that severs the connection between culture and its material foundation will eventually lose the essence of civilization in the carnival of symbols. The future of Thailand may lie in admitting the ineradicability of contradictions and instead building a flexible system that allows for the coexistence of diverse cultural practices, enabling traditions to evolve autonomously in the collision with modernity rather than being forcibly transformed into standardized consumer products by external forces. Although this process is full of uncertainties, only in this way can we avoid culture becoming a drifting weed in the tide of globalization and truly maintain the spiritual roots of a nation.

Questions:

1. What does the juxtaposition of the Monkey Buffet Festival and the political unrest in Thailand suggest about the nation's cultural identity?

A. It indicates a superficial portrayal of Thai culture to tourists.

B. It highlights the resilience of Thai culture amidst political turmoil.

C. It reflects a harmonious blend of tradition and modernity.

D. It underscores the dominance of Buddhism in Thai society.

2. What does the increase in Thailand's tourism GDP contribution from 12% to 20.3% between 2000 and 2019 signify?

A. An over-reliance on the tourism sector.

B. A diversification of the economy.

C. A decline in manufacturing industries.

D. A balanced economic growth.

3. In what way does the transformation of the Sam Phra Kan Temple reflect the impact of tourism on local heritage?

A. It showcases the preservation of traditional architecture.

B. It demonstrates the commercialization of sacred spaces.

C. It highlights the integration of modern and traditional elements.

D. It reflects the decline of religious practices.

4. What does the reliance on imported fruits and Chinese-made handicrafts in the festival's supply chain reveal about Thailand's local industries?

A. A strong domestic production capability.

B. A dependency on foreign goods and services.

C. An emphasis on local craftsmanship.

D. A decline in international trade.

5. What does the 63% increase in the macaque population in Lopburi due to high-sugar diets indirectly symbolize?

A. The reinforcement of the festival's ecological message.

B. The unintended consequences of tourism on local traditions.

C. The manipulation of local ecosystems for commercial purposes.

D. The ecological resilience of animals despite human interference.

6. The younger generation's abandonment of the monkey god epic can be seen as a reflection of which of the following societal trends?

A. A collective decision to preserve cultural heritage amidst global pressures.

B. A rejection of traditional culture in favor of a more secular, capitalist society.

C. A passive embrace of capitalist influences, leading to cultural compromise.

D. A voluntary shift towards ecological awareness and rejection of outdated customs.

7. In the context of the article, the term "symbolic economy" primarily refers to which of the following?

A. A system where cultural traditions are revered and preserved as integral to economic development.

B. A capitalist-driven system where cultural practices are commodified for profit.

C. A local economic structure that uses traditional practices to drive economic growth.

D. A dualistic approach to economy, balancing material production and symbolic practices.

8. What does the final paragraph imply about the future of Thailand's cultural identity in the context of globalization?

A. Thailand's culture will ultimately be preserved through a process of state-sponsored modernization.

B. Thailand's culture will seamlessly integrate with global capitalism without significant loss.

C. Thailand's culture will inevitably collapse under the weight of globalization and the commodification of its symbols.

D. Thailand's culture will be lost unless a flexible system is built to allow diverse cultural practices to evolve.

9. Please select the group that has the most similar logical relationship to "The symbolic hollowing out of the Monkey Buffet Festival: The commercialization of culture" from the following options:

A. The loss of traditional handicrafts: The impact of industrialization

B. The decrease in the use of dialects: The standardization of language

C. The routinization of temple fair performances: The development of tourism

D. The demolition of ancient buildings: Urban planning

10. Which of the following titles best encapsulates the central theme of the article?

A. "The Commercialization of Thai Culture: A Study of the Monkey Buffet Festival"

B. "The Impact of Globalization on Local Traditions: Thailand's Cultural Dilemma"

C. "Tourism, Capital, and Culture: The Unraveling of Thailand's Cultural Identity"

D. "Cultural Symbolism and Economic Growth: The Case of Thailand's Tourism Economy"

E. "From Tradition to Tourism: The Transformation of Thai Cultural Practices"

F. "Symbolic Economy: The Erosion of Thai Cultural Heritage in the Modern Age"

G. "The Fusion of Culture and Commerce: Thailand's Struggle with Modernization"

H. "Reimagining Tradition: How Thailand's Cultural Symbols Are Shaped by Global Capitalism"

## **49.Date:4.23**

Set between the llamas and the Land of the Lions, the penguin pool in London Zoo is a mini-modernist masterpiece. Built in 1934 and designed by Berthold Lubetkin, it is sleek, swooshy and perfectly proportioned; its cantilevered concrete ramps, slender as apple peelings, were revolutionary. Its penguins looked less as though they were living in it than, as in an architect's illustration, modelling for it. There was just one problem with this piece of modernist perfection. The penguins didn't like it.

The refurbished concrete hurt their feet. The elegantly shallow pool was too shallow. The minimalist white walls were too white, and hurt their eyes. London Zoo's keepers do not like to talk about penguins being "happy" or "unhappy" (it is anthropomorphising). But, says Jessica Fryer, team leader of penguins and flying birds at the zoo, some of the penguins' feet became "so sore". They developed a foot disease that, in its severest form, can lead to penguins being put down. It may not be possible to say whether penguins are "happy" or "unhappy". But "dead" is definitely worse than "alive".

The penguins were moved out in 2004. The pool has been empty ever since. Lubetkin's daughter has suggested it is "time to blow it to smithereens" but that is not an option, for it is listed. It cannot be repurposed (and certainly not re-porpoised) as it is too shallow and not right for other animals. London Zoo is considering what to do with it but has as yet reached no decision. The penguin pool has become a white elephant.

In some ways its fate is emblematic of that of modernism in Britain. At first, the country embraced this minimalist architectural style, with its ethos that "less is more" and ornament is "crime". But from around the 1960s, Britain fell dramatically out of love with it; Charles III has long been a vocal critic. Architects may like geometric designs: a film in the 1930s smugly celebrated the fact that the zoo no longer dealt in "artificial reproduction" of animals' "natural surroundings". But organic animals, argues Thomas Heatherwick, a designer, have organic needs. There is a mental-health aspect to buildings, and that is true "for a penguin as much as [it] is for a human".

Penguins were, for a time, modernist pin-ups. The penguins of London Zoo inspired the logo of Penguin, a pioneering publisher. Socially, too, they were modernisers: in an era when many claimed homosexuality was "unnatural", penguins amply proved otherwise. Edwardian-era Antarctic explorers had observed male penguins having sex not only with female penguins but also with male ones, and with dead ones. This helped change heteronormative assumptions. Or, as one Edwardian put it: "There seems to be no crime too low for these penguins."

Britain's social revolution has moved on. Today, London Zoo's website bears the banner "Some penguins are gay. Get over it." (Necrophilia, perhaps a taboo too far, is not mentioned.) But its modernist revolution has fared less well. Lubetkin once wrote that his buildings "cry for a world which has never come into being". And in London Zoo, a soft summer rain falls into an empty penguin pool.

Questions:

1. The main barrier to repurposing the pool is its

A. listed status constraint.

B. shallow depth limitation.

C. structural inflexibility.

D. minimalist design flaw.

2. Britain's changing attitude toward modernism most significantly signals a shift in

A. architectural philosophy.

B. cultural priorities.

C. economic strategies.

D. political ideologies.

3. The 1930s film's portrayal of zoo design endorsed

A. naturalistic replication.

B. geometric minimalism.

C. organic functionality.

D. decorative austerity.

4. The penguin pool's fate is most analogous to

A. a forgotten innovation.

B. a timeless masterpiece.

C. a controversial trend.

D. a failed experiment.

5. The empty penguin pool symbolizes

A. the limits of architectural idealism.

B. the evolution of social tolerance.

C. the decline of modernist aesthetics.

D. the failure of zoological innovation

## **50.Date:4.25**

In the psychology laboratories of the mid-20th century, the mechanical lever-pressing actions of white rats in Skinner boxes were transformed into quantifiable behavioral curves. These curves later became the theoretical foundation for behavior-shaping techniques in education. When teachers meticulously tied little red flowers or point cards to students' classroom performance, the reinforcement protocols from the lab infiltrated the world of childhood under the banner of educational reform. However, this theory, which reduces human learning to stimulus-response connections, reveals a fundamental blind spot when it touches on the essence of education: it forgets that what stands before the blackboard is not a lab rat awaiting reinforcement, but a child with a rich psychological world and a thirst for meaning. Those eyes that ask "why," and those minds that build imagination through stories, cannot be fully captured by behaviorist equations.

Early explorations in child psychology had already revealed that human learning is inherently a process of meaning-making rather than behavior-shaping. Piaget observed that toddlers understand spatial relationships by actively imitating block-building, a cognitive construction far beyond the drive of external rewards. Vygotsky further noted that children's psychological development occurs through shared meaning via language in social interactions, much like an apprentice mastering tools under a craftsman's guidance, rather than being passively shaped by stimuli. In contrast, Skinnerian educational practices, where teachers use material rewards to coax students into repeating correct answers, actually replace the cultivation of "spontaneous behavior" with the training of "respondent behavior." It's like reducing a watercolor painting in progress to a paint-by-numbers exercise, neglecting the natural emergence of curiosity and creativity during exploration.

The loss of education's essence is particularly evident in kindergarten "token economies." In one behaviorist-managed classroom, children had to accumulate tokens by staying quiet and lining up neatly to earn time in the reading corner. On the surface, classroom order was reinforced. However, observers found that when the token system was paused, the children's interest in picture books waned—they had already bound reading to external rewards rather than seeing it as a window to explore the world. This phenomenon echoes the warning of the overjustification effect: when external incentives intervene excessively, intrinsic motivation quietly dissolves. The deeper issue lies in the educational model's presumption that children are "collections of behaviors" to be shaped, rather than subjects capable of autonomous meaning-making. It's like a gardener ignoring a seedling's innate instinct to grow upward and instead forcing its shape with scaffolds.

The prevalence of behaviorist educational views is essentially a continuation of standardized industrial-era thinking. Under assembly-line logic, schools are seen as "personnel factories," children's psychological development is broken down into measurable behavioral indicators, and the educational process is reduced to mass-producing "qualified products" through reinforcement protocols. This mindset overlooks the uniqueness of child psychology: young children's self-awareness is still forming, and their understanding of the world brims with poetry and metaphor. As Montessori observed during "sensitive periods," a child might focus for hours on discovering the veins of a leaf—this selfless immersion stems from an inner drive to grow, not external rewards. When education replaces meaning-guidance with behavior-shaping, it drowns the natural rhythms of a child's mind in the utilitarian logic of the adult world.

The deeper critique points to education's understanding of "human nature." Skinner's Beyond Freedom and Dignity argued for abandoning attention to inner psychology and treating behavior solely as a product of the environment. This view, when extended to education, inevitably dissolves children's agency. However, child psychology has long proven that even infants possess a basic theory of mind and are capable of understanding others' intentions and emotions. This means that education's core should respond to children's inner quest for meaning, not just regulate external behavior. Like Socrates' majeutics, which ignited students' thinking through questioning, true education should kindle the flames of the mind, not train conditioned reflexes. When teachers replace "Why do you think so?" with "Answer correctly and get a reward," they unknowingly shackle the wings of thought with behaviorist chains.

Examined from the height of educational essence, behaviorism's legacy is both enlightening and cautionary: it shows us how external environments shape behavior, but also clarifies the irreducible complexity of education. Children are not machines awaiting programming, but subjects weaving webs of meaning through interaction with the world; learning is not a connect-the-dots game of stimuli and responses, but a dialogue between mind and knowledge. When we strip away behaviorism's technical shell, we find that education's essence remains rooted in an ancient question: how to safeguard humanity's innate thirst for knowledge, how to plant seeds of meaning in children's hearts so that, in the years to come, even without the nourishment of external rewards, they can illuminate their path with inner light. This, perhaps, is the most profound transcendence of Skinner's experiments—to acknowledge environmental influence while believing even more deeply in the power of the mind, like desert plants that adapt to drought yet never lose their instinct to grow toward the sun.

In the long history of education, behaviorism inadvertently exposed the limits of mechanistic thinking. But when we look again at the children in classrooms—those moments when their eyes flicker at rewards, those silences after punishments—we are silently reminded: the subjects of education are beings with complex psychological worlds, and any attempt to reduce them to behavioral formulas will ultimately falter before the intricacy of human nature. Perhaps true educational wisdom lies in balance: borrowing behaviorism's effective tools while always remembering child psychology's core revelation—that every child's heart holds a seed of autonomous growth. Education's mission is not to force it to ripen with external stimuli, but to create an environment where it unfolds naturally in the sunlight of meaning. When the last reward sticker fades, when all behavioral norms become habits, what remains in the child's heart—dependence on external validation, or love for knowledge itself? This question will ultimately be answered in the life of every learner.

Questions:

1. Skinner's approach in education wrongly assumes that:

A. minds are moldable

B. actions mirror thoughts

C. learners lack depth

D. rewards are useless

2. The "last reward sticker" symbolizes:

A. lasting influence

B. temporary effect

C. effective teaching

D. profound learning

3. What does the article suggest about the behaviorist view of human nature?

A. It acknowledges the complexity of human psychology.

B. It reduces human behavior to environmental stimuli and responses.

C. It emphasizes the importance of internal psychological processes.

D. It considers individuals as autonomous agents capable of self-determination.

4. In the context of education, what does the article imply about the role of teachers in behaviorist systems?

A. Teachers are facilitators of intrinsic motivation.

B. Teachers shape student behavior through reinforcement protocols.

C. Teachers encourage students to explore and construct knowledge independently.

D. Teachers focus on fostering critical thinking and creativity.

5. In the article, how does the author view the relationship between a child's curiosity and external rewards?

A. Curiosity naturally wanes as external rewards increase.

B. Curiosity thrives only when external rewards are tied to specific tasks.

C. Curiosity and creativity flourish when external rewards are minimized.

D. Curiosity is an entirely separate process unaffected by external rewards.

6. According to the article, what does the use of rewards in education tend to do to the child's relationship with knowledge?

A. It creates a healthy, balanced relationship where learning is fun and engaging.

B. It encourages students to view knowledge as a means to an end, rather than an intrinsic value.

C. It fosters a deep, lifelong love of learning driven by external incentives.

D. It reinforces the idea that knowledge is only valuable when it leads to material rewards.

7. What analogy does the article use to describe the limitations of behaviorism in shaping children's learning?

A. It compares behaviorism to a gardener trying to control the growth of a seedling through scaffolding.

B. It compares behaviorism to a teacher writing the entire curriculum for a child, neglecting the child's voice.

C. It compares behaviorism to a painter forcing a child to follow a strict color-by-numbers pattern.

D. It compares behaviorism to a sculptor who chisels away too much of the clay, losing the essence of the sculpture.

8. In the sentence, "Like Socrates' maieutics, which ignited students' thinking through questioning, true education should kindle the flames of the mind," the term "maieutics" most likely refers to:

A. Self-revelation through guided questioning.

B. Achieving self-discovery through guided exploration.

C. Unveiling the self via reflective queries.

D. Discovering one's essence with guiding inquiries.

9. The primary argument of the passage is that:

A. Behaviorism overlooks the complex, self-driven aspects of learning.

B. Socratic methods are the best approach to education.

C. External rewards erode children's intrinsic motivation over time.

D. Traditional teaching methods suppress students' natural curiosity.

10. Which of the following would be the most suitable title for the passage?

A. Lost Under the Reward Stickers: On the Obscuration of Children's Minds by Behaviorist Education

B. Trapped in the Token Trap: The Diminishment of Children's Authentic Learning in Behaviorist Pedagogy

C. Shackled by Reward Systems: The Suppression of Children's Cognitive Growth in Behaviorist Models

D. Socratic Methods vs. Traditional Teaching

## **51.Date:4.26**

Kindness IS IN the air. Publishers produce business books with titles like "The Power of Nice" or, simply, "Kind". LinkedIn, which is ostensibly a networking site for career-minded professionals, is overrun with sickly videos showing people being improbably generous to the homeless. Firms publicly embrace the values of compassion: one manufacturer of safety-gear talks of "offering grace internally", which sounds terribly intrusive.

The fashion for niceness is both trite and revealing. Trite, because it is really not surprising that people respond well to decent behaviour from colleagues and bosses. It would take a brave author to write a book called "Stand Up for Psychopathy" or "Three Cheers for the Dark Triad". Revealing, because it shows how the leadership pendulum has swung.

A recent meta-analysis of research into niceness and effective leadership, by Andrew Blake of Texas Tech University and his co-authors, concludes that the two do often go together. Studies into bosses' agreeableness, one of the "Big Five" personality traits (along with openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion and neuroticism), have found that it is tied to ethical behaviour, workplace trust and psychological safety, among other beneficial things.

That, in turn, can improve aspects of a firm's performance. A recent paper by Charles O'Reilly of Stanford University and his co-authors looked at the relationship between chief executives' personalities and reviews of their organisations' culture on Glassdoor, an employee-ratings website. Agreeable bosses were associated with cultures that were more collaborative and innovative.

Niceness seems to matter more than it once did. A meta-analysis of research ending in the late 1990s did not find evidence of a strong connection between agreeableness and effective leadership. Some of this shift doubtless reflects the way organisations have evolved: teams matter more, along with the social skills that ease co-operation. Some of it may also reflect more volatility in the outside world. A study by Soo Ling Lim of University College London and her co-authors looked at the performance of MBA students at London Business School across ten academic years, and found that agreeableness improves outcomes when levels of uncertainty about a task—and presumably, the need to work together harmoniously—are higher.

It is progress to get away from the era of "nice guys finish last", not least for those people who aren't guys: women have long suffered more from perceptions of lower competence if they display warmth. But you can have too much of anything, even kindness.

Agreeableness is not the only trait that matters for a boss: a delightful but highly neurotic person may struggle in stressful situations. Employees vary too: some people care less about empathy and more about money. There are moments—when employees have suffered a personal trauma, for example—when warmth is the most important test of a company's character. But in other circumstances, different traits matter.

People who score less well on agreeableness are liable to be less trusting, more competitive and more confrontational. That may not recommend them as friends but could well be an advantage in certain contexts. Mr O'Reilly's paper finds, for example, that different industries attract leaders with varying personality types: bosses in the financial-services industry are comparatively less agreeable, for example, than those who work in health care. Kindness may also count for less in negotiation-heavy roles like sales.

A recent paper by Daniel Keum and Nandil Bhatia of Columbia Business School looks at how changing economic conditions can affect the types of bosses who lead firms. The researchers gauge chief executives' "prosociality" (their concern for the welfare of others) by looking at things like their charitable activities and their language on earnings calls. Prosocial bosses can be slower to restructure firms in bad times, and the authors find that during periods of intensifying competition they were more likely to be replaced by less caring types. When layoffs are necessary, boards don't want Samaritans in charge.

What there is no excuse for is unkindness. There is a basic level of decency, civility and courtesy to which everyone is entitled and from which all organisations benefit. Kindness is not a management doctrine. But its absence is a management failure.

Questions:

1. The author implies that financial services bosses are less agreeable because

A. profit margins demand ruthless efficiency

B. client relationships require emotional detachment

C. institutional hierarchies suppress empathy

D. regulatory pressures foster competitiveness

2. The shift in leadership traits since the late 1990s suggests that

A. corporate structures have prioritized teamwork over hierarchy

B. technological disruption has devalued interpersonal skills

C. generational values have reshaped workplace norms

D. economic volatility demands more compassionate leaders

3. Which statement best reflects the author's stance on kindness in management?

A. It is incompatible with competitive industries.

B. Its effectiveness depends on contextual factors.

C. It should be prioritized over profitability.

D. It is a moral imperative for organizational success.

4. Why do healthcare leaders exhibit higher agreeableness?

A. Patient care requires emotional intelligence

B. Hierarchical structures suppress competitiveness

C. Profit margins are less dependent on negotiation

D. Regulatory frameworks prioritize empathy

5. In sales roles, kindness is likely to be considered

A. a supplementary quality

B. a determining factor

C. an unnecessary trait

D. a key to success

6. When layoffs are necessary, boards prefer leaders who

A. are empathetic but firm

B. follow company traditions

C. can make tough decisions

D. can handle public relations well

7. The manufacturer's claim of "offering grace internally" comes across as terribly intrusive. The word "intrusive" in this context most nearly means:

A. pugnacious

B. meddlesome

C. encroaching

D. boisterous

8. Which title best captures the essence of the passage?

A. BARTLEBY: Cool to be kind | How nice should managers be at work?

B. BARTLEBY: Decoding Leadership Traits | Are Agreeable Traits Overrated in Management?

C. BARTLEBY: The Rise of Prosocial Management | Does Kindness Pay Off in Business?

D. BARTLEBY: Kindness: A Management Doctrine | When Does Workplace Kindness Become a Liability

## **52.Date:4.27**

On February 13th 2023 an object with extraterrestrial origins went screaming through the Mediterranean Sea off the Sicilian coast. A single, super-energetic subatomic particle left a sparkling trail of light in the depths. And it did so right in the middle of an odd sort of telescope that was partway through construction. In a paper published in Nature this week, the scientists in charge of KM3NET discuss how they detected the signature of the most powerful neutrino that science has ever seen.

KM3NET is not a conventional telescope. It does not rely on visible light, as astronomers long have, nor on other bits of the electromagnetic spectrum, such as radio waves or gamma rays, that were added to their arsenal in the 20th century. Instead it examines the universe with neutrinos, ghostly but omnipresent subatomic particles that are produced in nuclear reactions. Scientists had theorised that very-high-energy neutrinos ought to exist, produced by violent astronomical processes such as gamma-ray bursts or matter falling into giant black holes. Now they have evidence that they were right.

Detecting neutrinos is difficult. They are aloof particles that rarely deign to interact with the rest of the universe. They feel only two of the four fundamental forces: the weak nuclear force, which works over very small distances, and gravity; they are immune to electromagnetism and the strong nuclear force. Trillions of neutrinos, mostly produced by the Sun, rain down on each square metre of Earth's surface every second. The vast majority sail right through the planet.

Occasionally, though, one will slam straight into another subatomic particle inside an atom. That will produce a shower of secondary particles that are much easier to spot. A neutrino telescope, therefore, is a giant exercise in statistics. Observe lots of atoms for a long time and sooner or later you will see a collision. Detectors like Super Kamiokande, in Japan, or ICE Cube, in Antarctica, use huge quantities of ultra-pure water and ice respectively. The secondary particles produced by neutrino collisions produce characteristic flashes of light as they pass through the detector. KM3NET uses the Mediterranean Sea instead. Two groups of detectors sit several kilometres deep in the waters off Sicily and Toulon in France. (A third is planned near Pylos, in Greece.)

The neutrino from 2023 came in from the west, travelling almost horizontally. It passed through more than 100km of rock before colliding with something and generating a very energetic muon—a heavier cousin to the electrons that surround atomic nuclei. It was that muon, rather than the neutrino itself, that flashed through the detector. But by working backwards, the researchers were able to tentatively conclude that the neutrino that generated it was packing something like 220 petaelectron-volts of energy—in layman's terms, about as much as a ping-pong ball dropped from a height of a metre.

The big question is what could have produced it. Fortunately, the neutrinos' reluctance to interact with anything means they chart straight paths through space, unaffected by magnetic fields or clouds of gas. When KM3NET's researchers went looking through archived observations of the patch of space from which the neutrino had come, they spotted a dozen "blazars", jets of energy produced by matter falling into black holes, pointing straight at Earth. Any of those could have been the source.

But they are not sure: the detection was made while KM3NET was about only 10% complete, and there are other, less exciting, possible explanations. In future, scientists will be better prepared. An automated system, designed to alert other telescopes to noteworthy neutrino detections, was not working in 2023. Had it been, scientists could have quickly trained all manner of other instruments on the relevant patch of the sky, hoping to spot extra clues. That system should be up and running soon. All that can be done now is wait and hope that something similar happens again.

Questions:

1. The 2023 neutrino challenges astronomy by

A. proving gravity's weakness

B. revealing new particles

C. bypassing spectral limits

D. redefining black holes

2. The 220 petaelectron-volts conclusion relies on

A. muon characteristics

B. direct neutrino data

C. solar neutrino models

D. blazar observations

3. Blazars are mentioned as

A. gamma-ray sources

B. black hole jets

C. neutrino emitters

D. cosmic ray accelerators

4. The automated system's absence affected

A. source identification

B. collision frequency

C. detector calibration

D. international collaboration

5. Neutrino telescopes fundamentally depend on

A. atomic density

B. water clarity

C. collision probability

D. detector speed

6. The 220 petaelectron-volts analogy aims to

A. simplify jargon

B. emphasize rarity

C. illustrate magnitude

D. highlight precision

7. Neutrino astronomy complements traditional methods by

A. correcting biases

B. accessing hidden regions

C. verifying theories

D. enhancing resolution

8. The "sparkling trail" was crucial because it

A. revealed muon existence

B. confirmed neutrino models

C. indicated a cosmic event

D. validated oceanic research

9. The passage's tone toward neutrino astronomy is

A. cautiously optimistic

B. critically skeptical

C. enthusiastically supportive

D. objectively indifferent

10. The role of the Mediterranean Sea in KM3NET is most analogous to

A. a vacuum chamber in particle accelerators

B. a spectrograph in optical telescopes

C. a microphone array in acoustic monitoring

D. a photographic plate in early astronomy

## **53.Date:4.28**

When the Pay Equity Act once again became a focal point of discussion in the U.S. Congress, senators engaged in heated debates over its provisions, displaying a passion that seemed both fervent and rehearsed. This legislation, aimed at narrowing the gender-based wage gap, encountered a series of procedural delays and strategic maneuvers by political parties. Some contended that the bill would impose excessive regulatory burdens on businesses, while others maintained that it was an essential measure to rectify historical injustices. This legislative tug-of-war is not merely about economic policy; it serves as a "time bomb", highlighting the deep-seated contradictions within American society, with gender discrimination at its core.

In the realm of philosophy, the concept of equality has long been a cornerstone of American ideals. However, when addressing gender issues, the nation finds itself enmeshed in a perplexing dilemma. John Rawls' theory of justice, which emphasizes fairness and equal opportunity, stands in sharp contrast to the reality where women still confront systemic barriers. The pursuit of this noble ideal of equality has become intertwined with the structural realities of a society shaped by centuries of gender-based hierarchies. This philosophical dissonance pervades public discourse, creating a haze in which the boundaries between equality and tradition blur, and the struggle for gender equality frequently encounters resistance cloaked as a defense of the status quo.

America's evolution from an agrarian society to an industrial powerhouse and subsequently to a service-oriented economy has not brought the expected emancipation for women. Although the transition from farms to factories initially provided new employment prospects for women, they were often restricted to low-wage, labor-intensive occupations. In the contemporary digital era, despite the progress in sectors such as technology and finance, women remain underrepresented in top-level positions. The very drivers of industrial progress, which were intended to break down barriers, have instead replicated and strengthened gender-based divisions. The rapid tempo of technological change has left many women struggling to keep pace, not because of a lack of capability, but due to their limited access to education and training opportunities that are more readily available to men.

Democracy is frequently extolled as a paragon of fairness and representation, yet it has proven ineffective in addressing gender discrimination adequately. Elections, which are supposed to give voice to the people, often witness candidates prioritizing the support of powerful interest groups over advocating for gender equality. Congress has become gridlocked, with political parties placing a higher premium on electoral victories than on passing meaningful legislation, leaving gender-related issues in a state of limbo. The slow, or even non-existent, progress in enacting laws that genuinely create a level playing field for women underscores the hollowness of democracy's promise to ensure equal rights and opportunities for all in the face of persistent gender discrimination.

As AI-driven hiring tools inundate the U.S. job market, a curious phenomenon has emerged: algorithms designed to eliminate human bias often reproduce or even exacerbate gender-based discrimination. These sophisticated systems, trained on historical datasets, inadvertently perpetuate the gender disparities ingrained in past employment patterns. For example, in the technology industry, AI-powered screening tools frequently rank male applicants higher than their female counterparts with comparable qualifications. Far from promoting equality, this technological advancement has become another arena in the ongoing battle for gender parity.

The U.S. legal system, the cornerstone of its democratic framework, reveals significant shortcomings when dealing with gender discrimination. Although laws such as the Equal Pay Act and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act exist on paper, their implementation is hindered by procedural complexities, inconsistent judicial interpretations, and a heavy burden of proof placed on plaintiffs. Lawsuits related to gender discrimination often drag on for years, incur high costs, and result in uncertain outcomes. Many cases are settled in a manner that fails to address the systemic issues, exposing the flaws in the legal system's ability to safeguard gender equality.

The U.S. tax code, a complex network of regulations and incentives, inadvertently intensifies gender-based economic disparities. Tax policies that favor traditional family structures, such as deductions for stay-at-home spouses and benefits for married couples filing jointly, reinforce gender roles by assuming a division of labor where men are the primary earners and women are responsible for domestic and caregiving tasks. Single-parent households headed by women face heavier tax burdens and fewer benefits. Moreover, the absence of comprehensive tax-supported childcare policies disproportionately impacts women, restricting their participation in the workforce and impeding their career advancement.

The "bee extinction paradox" offers a compelling analogy for understanding the nature of gender discrimination in America. Bees, as crucial pollinators that underpin the global food chain, are experiencing population declines due to habitat loss, pesticide use, and climate change. Their extinction would have a cascading effect on ecosystems, potentially leading to the collapse of human civilization. Despite their vital role in ecological sustainability, bees are often overlooked or undervalued. Similarly, women contribute significantly to the U.S. economy through both paid and unpaid labor, yet they face barriers that limit their social and economic opportunities. Just as the extinction of bees would have far-reaching ecological consequences, the marginalization of women undermines the nation's social and economic well-being. This paradox illuminates the intricate connections between gender discrimination and broader societal, economic, and ecological systems.

These interwoven contradictions—legislative, philosophical, industrial, democratic, technological, legal, economic, and ecological—are not isolated issues but manifestations of deeper-seated problems rooted in America's historical development. As new technologies emerge, legal battles persist, economic policies evolve, and political landscapes shift, the underlying structures that perpetuate gender discrimination remain largely intact. Will America be able to break free from these entrenched patterns and construct a more inclusive society? Or will these issues continue to widen the societal divides, threatening the very fabric of a nation that claims to value equality and justice for all? The future of gender relations in America hangs in the balance, with profound implications for its society, economy, and beyond. The urgency of addressing these issues cannot be overstated, for the consequences of inaction may be far-reaching and long-lasting.

Questions:

1. AI bias persists due to:

A. data telos

B. algorithmic memory

C. human bias bleed

D. contemporary data skew

2. The legal system's core flaw is:

A. interpretive drift

B. procedural asymmetry

C. plaintiff burden gravity

D. legislative vagueness

3. The deepest cause of gender discrimination is:

A. institutional sedimentation

B. political transaction

C. legal formalism

D. cultural epistemology

4. Industrial change hurt women mainly via:

A. Technological complexity

B. Role solidification

C. Educational gap

D. Economic shift

5. Legal system's worst gender flaw is:

A. long process

B. vague laws

C. heavy proof

D. mixed rulings

6. Bee extinction analogy shows gender issue's:

A. eco value

B. economic role

C. social view

D. survival risk

7. Deepest cause of gender bias is:

A. tech progress

B. political chaos

C. cultural norms

D. economic interests

8. Single-mom tax burden from:

A. family size

B. gender roles

C. income level

D. care needs

9. In analyzing the "rehearsed passion" of senators, the term "rehearsed" fundamentally questions the nature of their:

A. Ideological consistency

B. Rhetorical authenticity

C. Policy-making expertise

D. Electoral viability

10. The author's critique of John Rawls' theory of justice in the context of gender discrimination primarily suggests that:

A. Liberal egalitarianism is fundamentally incompatible with the material realities of patriarchal capitalism.

B. The veil of ignorance fails to account for the algorithmic reproduction of historical inequities.

C. Ideal theories of justice inadvertently legitimize systemic bias by overemphasizing procedural fairness.

D. Distributive justice frameworks cannot resolve epistemic injustices embedded in care labor valuation.

## **54.Date:5.1**

In the cutting-edge exploration of human origins research, the long journey from the African continent to Mount Everest constitutes a crucial dimension for understanding the mechanisms of human evolution. This migratory path, spanning hundreds of thousands of years in time and space and encompassing diverse ecological environments, is by no means a simple geographical displacement. Instead, it is a complex process resulting from the interaction of evolutionary forces at multiple levels, including genes, physiology, and culture. Through the excavation of ancient human fossils in Africa, the physiological study of high-altitude populations, the tracking of genetic lineages, and the comparison of cultural forms, the scientific community has gradually constructed multiple interrelated and mutually verifying theoretical hypotheses, jointly outlining the grand picture of human evolution.

Africa, as the core region of human origins, its abundant fossil remains provide an empirical basis for exploring the early evolution of humans. From the fossil of "Lucy" unearthed in the Afar region of Ethiopia, to the remains of Homo habilis on the shores of Lake Turkana in Kenya, and then to the fossils of Homo erectus in the Olduvai Gorge of Tanzania, these archaeological discoveries spanning the period from 3.2 million to 2 million years ago systematically present the evolutionary trajectory of humans, from arboreal living to bipedal walking, from the use of simple tools to the development of complex cognition. The special structure of the hip and femur bones of "Lucy" belonging to the Australopithecus afarensis provides conclusive evidence for the bipedal walking of early humans. The transformation of this mode of locomotion not only freed the hands, promoted the development of tool-making and using abilities, but also drove the expansion of brain capacity and the evolution of the nervous system. These fossil evidences echo the "Ancestral Pulse Hypothesis", which suggests that modern humans originated from a single ancestral population in Africa about 200,000 years ago and gradually spread across the globe through multiple migratory waves. The law that genetic diversity decreases with the increase in distance from Africa, as shown by the analysis of mitochondrial DNA and Y chromosomes, provides support for this theory at the molecular biology level.

However, the "Ancestral Pulse Hypothesis" does not completely deny other evolutionary theories. The fossils of Neanderthals and Denisovans discovered in Eurasia, as well as the 1%-4% Neanderthal gene fragments in the genomes of modern humans, indicate that there were extensive gene exchanges between humans and local ancient human populations during the migration process. This phenomenon provides a basis for the "Regional Convergence Hypothesis", which argues that human evolution occurred simultaneously in multiple regions, and the gene flow between different populations jointly shaped the genetic composition of modern humans. For example, in the genomes of populations in the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau region, both the genetic markers related to African ancestors and the specific genetic variations adapted to high-altitude environments are retained. This combination of genes confirms the complementarity of the two theories of "Ancestral Pulse" and "Regional Convergence". As the core of human origins, Africa provided the initial gene pool for global migrations, while the gene exchange between regions further enriched the genetic diversity of humans.

The ecological gradient from the tropical grasslands of Africa to the frigid alpine regions of Mount Everest provides a natural experimental field for studying human environmental adaptability. The Sherpas, who have long lived in the Himalayan region, their unique physiological characteristics have become the key samples for decoding the mechanism of human high-altitude adaptation. Genetic studies have found that the EPAS1 gene variations carried by the Sherpa population can significantly enhance the affinity of hemoglobin for oxygen and improve the efficiency of oxygen transport in low-oxygen environments, which is consistent with the theory in the "Genetic Fixation Hypothesis" that natural selection shapes the genetic characteristics of populations. However, the high-altitude exposure experiments on lowlanders have shown that without genetic changes, the human body can achieve a preliminary adaptation to high-altitude environments within a few weeks through physiological adjustments such as an increase in erythropoietin secretion and an improvement in lung ventilation efficiency, which provide evidence for the "Phenotypic Plasticity Paradigm". The "Genetic-Plasticity Continuum Hypothesis" integrates these two seemingly opposing theories, pointing out that genetic variations lay the foundational framework for adaptability, determining the tolerance range of a population to specific environments; while phenotypic plasticity endows individuals with the ability to dynamically adjust within this framework. The genetic advantages of the Sherpas give them an innate potential for high-altitude survival, and the strengthening of cardiopulmonary function formed through daily labor is a specific manifestation of phenotypic plasticity.

The development of genetic analysis technology has enabled the restoration of human migration history to shift from fossil speculation to molecular evidence. Through the analysis of mitochondrial DNA haplotypes and Y chromosome lineages, scientists have constructed a spatio-temporal model of human diffusion from Africa to the world. In the genomes of populations in the Mount Everest region, both the M168 mutation marker related to African ancestors and the specific genetic variations such as EPAS1 and EGLN1 adapted to the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau are detected. This gene combination of "ancestral imprints + regional specialization" reveals the dual action mechanisms of "genetic inheritance" and "environmental selection" during the human migration process. Ancient DNA sequencing technology has further deepened the understanding of gene exchange. The genome of ancient humans discovered in the Denisova Cave in Siberia is genetically related to modern Tibetan populations, indicating that ancient humans had genetic integration with local populations during their migrations. This cross-population gene flow not only enriches the genetic diversity of humans but also may enable migratory groups to quickly obtain genetic advantages for coping with new environments through the mechanism of "adaptive introgression".

The migratory journey of humans from Africa to Mount Everest is also a practical process of cultural evolution. In the African grasslands, early humans developed stone tool-making techniques, from simple Oldowan choppers to complex Acheulean handaxes. The progress of tools shows a significant correlation with the growth of brain capacity, verifying the view in the "Technological Necessity Hypothesis" that technology promotes cognitive evolution. In the Himalayan mountainous areas, the Sherpas have developed mountaineering collaboration systems, seasonal nomadic strategies, and the ecological concept of Tibetan Buddhism, which reflects the importance of social organization for environmental adaptation in the "Social Cohesion Hypothesis". The "Techno-Social Synergy Hypothesis" integrates these two theories, revealing that the essence of cultural evolution is the collaborative evolution of technological innovation and social organization. For example, the invention of mountaineering knot techniques requires the division of labor and cooperation of the group to play a role, and the establishment of the collaboration system promotes the improvement and dissemination of the techniques. This two-way interaction forms a "double helix" of cultural evolution: technological progress provides the material basis for social development, and the optimization of social organization promotes technological innovation and knowledge inheritance. Archaeological evidence shows that during their migrations, ancient humans were able to break through geographical and ecological barriers and achieve the crossing from Africa to Mount Everest precisely through the continuous adjustment of technology and social organization.

Currently, human evolution research is at a crucial stage of multidisciplinary integration. The technological breakthroughs in fields such as genomics, paleoanthropology, and environmental science are constantly providing new evidence for existing theoretical hypotheses, while also exposing more unsolved mysteries. At the genetic level, the epigenetic mechanisms regulating high-altitude adaptation have not been fully clarified; in the cultural field, the quantitative relationship between technological innovation and social structure evolution still needs in-depth study. Future research needs to further integrate evidence from multiple disciplines, and while verifying existing hypotheses, explore the construction of a more explanatory unified theoretical framework. The evolutionary journey from Africa to Mount Everest is not only the key to understanding human history but also an important reference for us to think about the future development direction of humanity. This long journey reveals the strong adaptability of humans at the genetic, physiological, and cultural levels, and also reminds us that in the face of complex and changing environments, only through continuous exploration and innovation can we promote the continuous development of human civilization.

Questions:

1. African fossil evidence primarily deciphers

A. modern trait origins

B. future adaptive shifts

C. recent genetic bottlenecks

D. incipient bipedal mechanics

2. Sherpas' EPAS1 allele most directly evidences

A. stochastic mutation fixation

B. cultural-driven adaptation

C. hypoxic selective pressure

D. phenotypic plasticity ceiling

3. Mitochondrial haplotype analysis primarily aids

A. technological innovation cycles

B. genetic trait engineering

C. fossil dating precision

D. migratory route reconstruction

4. "Adaptive introgression" specifically enables

A. gradual environmental acclimatization

B. rapid adaptive trait acquisition

C. cultural-technological coevolution

D. paleoecological niche modeling

5. The cultural "double helix" metaphor signifies

A. linear cause-effect chains

B. static relational equilibrium

C. recursive feedback mechanisms

D. stochastic combinatorial processes

6. The "Genetic-Plasticity Continuum Hypothesis" implies that without genetic variation, phenotypic adaptation would

A. exceed evolutionary limits

B. occur within narrower ranges

C. accelerate exponentially

D. remain completely static

7. Sherpas' high-altitude adaptation contrasts with lowlanders' acclimatization in that it

A. requires conscious effort

B. alters hemoglobin structure

C. is heritably transmitted

D. depends on oxygen tanks

8. If a new hypothesis posits "Cultural Introgression" similar to genetic introgression, it would study

A. how ideas spread between societies and alter practices

B. why some cultures resist adopting foreign technologies

C. the genetic basis of cultural preferences

D. how languages evolve in isolation

9. To validate the "Techno-Social Synergy Hypothesis," researchers must find

A. technological regress following social disintegration

B. tools invented without social cooperation

C. societies with advanced tech but no division of labor

D. cultures that prioritized social structure over tool use

10. A population with high genetic diversity but low phenotypic plasticity would likely

A. adapt quickly to sudden environmental shifts

B. struggle to survive in stable ecosystems

C. rely on genetic mutations for long-term adaptation

D. outcompete populations with high plasticity

11. The ultimate goal of integrating genomics, paleoanthropology, and cultural studies is to

A. create redundancy in evidence collection

B. isolate the primary driver of human evolution

C. construct a unified theory of multi-level adaptation

D. prove one hypothesis superior to others

12. Which of the following statements is correct?

A. The variation of the EPAS1 gene in Sherpas enhances the oxygen affinity of hemoglobin to improve the ability to adapt to low oxygen environments. Their physiological advantages rely not only on the molecular basis fixed by genetics but also require phenotypic plasticity to be realized during the development process.

B. The "Ancestral Pulse Hypothesis" asserts that the evolution of human beings takes Africa as the sole genetic origin and denies the gene exchange between regions. In contrast, the "Regional Convergence Hypothesis" holds that all regions around the world evolve independently and have no genetic connection.

C. The law of "negative correlation between genetic diversity and the distance from Africa" revealed by mitochondrial DNA analysis proves the substitution effect of "adaptive introgression" on the local gene pool during the migration process.

D. The "double helix" mechanism of cultural evolution is manifested in the development of stone tool technology in Africa as follows: the manufacture of complex tools promotes the refinement of social division of labor, and the strengthening of social cooperation in turn drives the evolution of stone tool technology towards higher precision. The two form a recursive feedback relationship.

## **55.Date:5.3**

If you're not given any toilet paper, can you still use the toilet? The answer is obvious – you can't. But when toilet paper had not yet been invented, how on earth did our ancestors deal with their bathroom business?

When the ancient Romans dipped sponges tied to wooden sticks into vinegar, they probably never imagined that this seemingly primitive "public hygiene lottery" (with the risk of "winning" every time it was used) would become a crucial piece of evidence for later generations to study ancient society. These sponge sticks soaked in the disinfectant solution left hundreds of traces of wear in the ruins of the public toilets in Pompeii. Just like the hemp ropes shared by the nobles in medieval Europe, they confronted the wild revelry of bacteria with collective absurdity.

In the castles of medieval Europe, the hemp ropes hanging in the toilet rooms can be called "hereditary cleaning tools." Archaeologists found in the ruins of British castles that the stains remaining on the surface of these hemp ropes could be several millimeters thick, and their service life even exceeded that of the castles themselves. What's even more astonishing is that after feasting on silver tableware at luxurious banquets, the nobles would turn around and use the same hemp rope for cleaning. This contradictory behavior of "washing hands before meals but sharing the cleaning tool after using the toilet" is just like turning Dante's "Inferno" in "The Divine Comedy" into a part of daily life. What's even more ironic is that Louis XIV of France invented high-heeled shoes to deal with the feces crisis in the streets, yet the corridors of the Palace of Versailles were piled up with the excrement of the nobles, creating a magical scene where "fragrance and feces coexisted."

In the East, the cleaning methods of the Japanese royal family show a unique aesthetic paranoia. According to "The Tale of Genji," the members of the royal family used cicada wings as a wiping tool. This material, as thin as cicada wings, needed to be soaked in warm water for three days before use. Its transparency made it convenient to observe any abnormalities in the excrement. Just imagine an emperor holding up the translucent cicada wings and looking at them carefully against the sunlight after using the toilet, with a concentration no less than that of appreciating a ukiyo-e painting. This tendency to turn the act of hygiene into an art form forms a strange echo with the extravagance of European nobles who used salmon slices to wipe their bottoms in the same period. And the residents of the Indian subcontinent incorporated religious taboos into the cleaning process. The strict division of labor where the left hand is responsible for excretion and the right hand for eating has caused countless misunderstandings in cross-cultural communication. When European colonizers first witnessed this scene, they were horrified and regarded it as a "barbaric ritual" because their most curious question was: What if you use your left hand to go to the toilet and then accidentally use your left hand to eat?

The progress of technology has enabled humans to explore cleaning methods more deeply. Modern smart toilets are like an upgraded version of the ancient Roman sponge sticks in terms of their development track. The "health monitoring toilet" developed by Stanford University is equipped with a biometric system that evaluates health conditions by analyzing the shape, hardness, and even the "anal print" (the folds of each person's anus are as unique as fingerprints) of the excrement. And the smart toilet's functions such as warm water flushing, warm air drying make using the toilet like a "SPA for the buttocks," and the built-in activated carbon deodorizing component can even resolve the embarrassment of constipation. This trend of combining medical equipment with daily necessities may turn the bathroom of the future into a family health management center. When people complete the detection on the smart toilet, they may think of the brine buckets in which the ancient Romans soaked their sponge sticks – both are essentially a scientific and technological conquest of "uncleanliness."

From the shared sponge sticks to the smart toilets, human pursuit of cleanliness has always swayed between practicality and absurdity. The public toilets in ancient Rome were not only places for excretion but also social centers. People discussed politics and exchanged gossip amidst the sound of flowing water, while the sponge sticks floated up and down in the vinegar, like fragments of civilization floating in the long river of history. The hemp ropes in medieval Europe became a metaphor for class division. The nobles used silk to show their status, while the common people used hay to solve their problems. This difference gradually disappeared after the commercialization of toilet paper in the 19th century, but it made a comeback in the era of smart toilets in the form of "health data privacy." When we stand in front of the supermarket shelves and choose toilet paper, we should perhaps realize that these seemingly ordinary paper products are actually the shields of civilization woven by humans over thousands of years. They not only resist the invasion of bacteria but also carry the persistent pursuit of dignity. In the future, with the breakthroughs in biotechnology, cleaning tools may completely rewrite human hygiene concepts – but no matter how the technology evolves, those absurd details buried in history will always resonate in the future.

Questions:

1. The "public hygiene lottery" in Rome mainly reflects

A. Shared tool risks

B. Poor disinfection

C. Collective negligence

D. Risk distribution

2. Medieval hemp ropes' long use shows

A. Durable materials

B. No alternative exists

C. Tradition over hygiene

D. Normalized uncleanliness

3. Evolution from ropes to smart toilets core is

A. Tech advancement

B. Privacy awareness shift

C. Class difference end

D. Material innovation

4. Louis XIV's high heels symbolize

A. Street feces avoidance

B. Palace hygiene neglect

C. Noble fashion priority

D. Contradictory priorities

5. Roman sponges relate to smart toilets as

A. Stone → toilet paper (material)

B. Candle → electric light (function)

C. Abacus → computer (tool)

D. Cart → car (efficiency)

6. Smart toilet data privacy mirrors history's

A. Noble silk vs. common hay

B. Public sponges vs. private tools

C. Slave cleaning vs. master use

D. Collective disinfection vs. individual care

7. Ancient Roman toilet socializing challenges modern

A. Toilet privacy norms

B. Public health policies

C. Social hierarchy rules

D. Tech development view

8. "SPA for the buttocks" description aims to

A. Promote luxury experience

B. Hide technical flaws

C. Emphasize health care

D. Blend hygiene with art

9. Nobles' dining-hygiene contrast reveals

A. Cultural inconsistency

B. Practical necessity

C. Tech limitations

D. Class disparities

10. "Absurd details" in history imply

A. Cyclical progress

B. Cultural construction

C. Pragmatic choices

D. Tech-driven change

11. Toilet paper as "civilization shield" means its

A. Bacterial protection

B. Symbolic value

C. Tech milestone

D. Cultural universality

12. Historical cleaning methods share

A. Biological needs

B. Social & tech reflections

C. Class distinctions

D. Hygiene pursuit

## **56.Date:5.4**

Academics have long been accused of jargon-filled writing that is impossible to understand. A recent cautionary tale was that of Ally Louks, a researcher who set off a social media storm with an innocuous post on X celebrating the completion of her PhD. If it was Ms Louks's research topic ("olfactory ethics"—the politics of smell) that caught the attention of online critics, it was her verbose thesis abstract that further provoked their ire. In two weeks, the post received more than 21,000 retweets and 100m views.

Although the abuse directed at Ms Louks reeked of misogyny and anti-intellectualism—which she admirably shook off—the reaction was also a backlash against an academic use of language that is removed from normal life. Inaccessible writing is part of the problem. Research has become harder to read, especially in the humanities and social sciences. Though authors may argue that their work is written for expert audiences, much of the general public suspects that some academics use gobbledygook to disguise the fact that they have nothing useful to say. The trend towards more opaque prose hardly allays this suspicion.

To track academic writing over time, The Economist analysed 347,000 PhD abstracts published between 1812 and 2023. The dataset was produced by the British Library and represents a majority of English-language doctoral theses awarded by British universities. We reviewed each abstract using the Flesch reading-ease test, which measures sentence and word length to gauge readability. A score of 100 roughly indicates passages can be understood by someone who has completed fourth grade in America (usually aged 9 or 10), while a score lower than 30 is considered very difficult to read. An average New York Times article scores around 50 and a CNN article around 70. This article scores 41.

From "asymmetric allylation of aldehydes" to "pneumatological and apocalyptically eschatological foundations", PhD abstracts had an unmistakably scholarly aroma. We found that, in every discipline, the abstracts have become harder to read over the past 80 years. The shift is most stark in the humanities and social sciences (see chart), with average Flesch scores falling from around 37 in the 1940s to 18 in the 2020s. From the 1990s onwards, those fields went from being substantially more readable than the natural sciences—as you might expect—to as complicated. Ms Louks's abstract had a reading-ease rating of 15, still more readable than a third of those analysed in total.

Other studies of academic writing have similar findings: scientific jargon and acronyms are on the rise. The blame does not fall solely on authors. Specialisation and advances in technology require more precise terminology and a doctoral thesis often covers some of the most obscure research topics. With millions of views, Ms Louks might lay claim to one of the most-read PhD abstracts of all time. She has since posted, "I love that I have somehow equipped everyone with new terminology and frameworks!" But surging interest in olfactory ethics aside, the trend towards illegible academic writing stinks. Clear prose would be a breath of fresh air.

Questions:

1. The Flesch test's underlying assumption is that

A. length equals complexity

B. clarity trumps depth

C. structure defines quality

D. readability indicates value

2. Public engagement with Louks' post indicates

A. intellectual curiosity

B. jargon tolerance

C. misinformation spread

D. academic skepticism

3. The study's data analysis fundamentally aims to

A. critique writing styles

B. trace linguistic trends

C. evaluate research quality

D. measure academic impact

4. Critics' suspicion of academics using jargon stems from

A. expertise insecurity

B. intellectual elitism

C. communication failure

D. knowledge hoarding

5. Louks' response to criticism implies academic language

A. requires reform

B. serves specific functions

C. confuses laypeople

D. lacks practical value

6. The trend of illegible writing "stinks" because it

A. resists public scrutiny

B. prioritizes form over meaning

C. damages academic credibility

D. hinders knowledge dissemination

7. The overarching argument challenges the assumption that

A. complexity equals expertise

B. specialization requires jargon

C. clarity undermines rigor

D. academia should engage the public

8. Which of the following options is the most suitable as the title for this article?

A. The Misunderstood World of Academic Research

B. The Rising Popularity of Academic Jargon

C. Scholarly communications: Hot air

D. The Controversy Surrounding Ally Louks' Research

## **57.Date:5.5**

NINE MONTHS after America's Supreme Court rescinded the constitutional right to abortion and, in the words of the majority, "return[ed] the issue...to the people's elected representatives", an anti-abortion federal judge in Texas has grabbed the matter for himself. On April 7th Judge Matthew Kaesmaryk ruled against an abortion medication that has been used by millions of Americans with few complications. He entered a preliminary injunction nullifying the 23-year-old approval by the federal Drug Administration (FDA) of mifepristone, one of two drugs commonly used to end pregnancies up to ten weeks after gestation.

Mr Kaesmaryk's extraordinary ruling—the first time a justice has substituted his judgment for the FDA's in this way—means that residents even of abortion-friendly states could face more obstacles to ending pregnancies. Yet it was not without complications. Mr Kaesmaryk delayed the implementation of his ruling by seven days to give the federal government time to lodge an appeal. For now, nothing will change for a drug used in more than half of abortions in America.

Then came a further twist. Less than an hour after Mr Kaesmaryk's order, a judge in the state of Washington issued an antithetical ruling prohibiting the FDA from ending Americans' access to mifepristone. The muddle introduced by the competing verdicts means that the Supreme Court will probably have to be the final arbiter.

Mr Kaesmaryk's ruling is ostensibly concerned with the purported health risks posed by mifepristone, which blocks progesterone, a pregnancy hormone, to women and girls. He agreed with the challengers — a recently established organisation called the Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine—that the FDA's approval of the drug in 2000 was rushed. The result, he wrote, has been "many deaths and many more severe or life-threatening adverse reactions" than would have occurred had the "FDA not acquiesced to the pressure to increase access to chemical abortion at the expense of women's safety". Mr Kaesmaryk brushed away studies showing that the drug is safe and effective. "Due to FDA's lax reporting requirements", he wrote, the number of bad results is "likely far higher than its data indicate".

Concern for women's health may be the stated reason for the lawsuit, but an antipathy to abortion was the primary motivation behind it. The plaintiffs filed their suit in a district where they would be sure to draw a judge known to be hostile to abortion. Before he was tapped for the court by Donald Trump in 2019 Mr Kaesmaryk worked at the First Liberty Institute, a conservative Christian legal organisation with a mission similar to that of the Alliance Defending Freedom, the group that argued the case against mifepristone in his court. The judge endorsed even the plaintiffs' most aggressive contention: that a federal law called the Comstock Act that dates from 1873 prohibits the mailing of any "article, instrument, substance, drug, medicine or thing" that can be used to cause an abortion.

Mr Kaesmaryk's ruling thus contains the seeds of a sweeping anti-abortion agenda that goes well beyond the Supreme Court's overturning of Roe v Wade last June. His interpretation of the Comstock Act could inspire a prohibition of all abortion in America, including surgical terminations, because under this reading shipments to clinics or hospitals of any equipment used in abortion would be illegal. Mr Kaesmaryk also dropped another crumb for those pushing a nationwide abortion ban. His opinion contended that "unborn humans extinguished by mifepristone" are entitled to "individual justice". This concept of "fetal personhood" would grant fetuses the full panoply of constitutional rights, starting with a right to life.

In response to the Texas ruling President Joe Biden wrote that the court had "substituted its judgment" for the FDA's. If such second-guessing were to stand, he added, "virtually no" FDA-approved medication "would be safe from these kinds of political, ideological attacks". The government immediately appealed, as did Danco, which manufactures Mifeprex, the brand name for mifepristone.

But the 5th Circuit Court of appeals, which hears cases originating in Texas, is one of America's most conservative appeals courts. Should it allow the anti-mifepristone ruling to stand, the case will almost certainly make it to the Supreme Court. Then the question will be whether the five justices who overturned Roe will leave abortion rights to the states—as they promised—or empower the judiciary to be the last word on the subject.

Questions:

1. Kaesmaryk's ruling subverts which democratic principle?

A. Federalism balance

B. Judicial restraint

C. Legislative primacy

D. Administrative autonomy

2. The primary motivation behind Kaesmaryk's ruling is best described as:

A. safeguarding public health

B. asserting judicial independence

C. advancing anti-abortion ideology

D. correcting FDA's procedural flaws

3. The Supreme Court's likely role in this dispute is to:

A. uphold the FDA's original approval

B. resolve conflicting interpretations of federal law

C. reinforce state sovereignty over abortion rights

D. define the scope of "fetal personhood"

4. The author implies that the ruling's real impact could exceed Roe v. Wade by:

A. introducing federal abortion bans

B. empowering state legislatures further

C. restricting access to surgical abortions

D. redefining the role of the judiciary

5. Kaesmaryk's judicial intervention is analogous to:

A. a scientist ignoring peer-reviewed data

B. a teacher overruling a school's curriculum policy

C. a pilot overriding air traffic control instructions

D. a legislator bypassing committee review processes

6. The "extraordinary ruling" is notable because it:

A. overrides a decades-old regulatory decision

B. introduces a new legal standard for drug approval

C. prioritizes state rights over federal authority

D. relies on unproven medical theories

7. The author suggests that the real significance of the ruling lies in its potential to:

A. set a precedent for judicial second-guessing of federal agencies

B. galvanize state legislatures to pass stricter abortion laws

C. shift the legal debate from rights to procedural technicalities

D. undermine the credibility of the entire federal judiciary

8. The "sweeping anti-abortion agenda" enabled by the ruling includes:

A. criminal penalties for healthcare providers prescribing mifepristone

B. a federal mandate requiring fetal viability testing

C. the reclassification of abortion as a homicide offense

D. restrictions on interstate transportation of abortion medications

9. Kaesmaryk's judicial philosophy, as evidenced by the ruling, prioritizes:

A. textualism over legislative intent

B. originalism over regulatory pragmatism

C. judicial activism over administrative expertise

D. federalism over individual rights

10. The author implies that the FDA's "lax reporting requirements" are cited to:

A. justify ignoring empirical evidence of the drug's safety

B. expose systemic flaws in pharmaceutical regulation

C. support claims of underreported adverse events

D. advocate for stricter post-approval monitoring

11. Kaesmaryk's ruling could indirectly affect surgical abortions by:

A. inspiring challenges to equipment used in those procedures

B. redefining the legal threshold for gestational age limits

C. empowering states to ban all forms of abortion outright

D. creating a precedent for criminalizing medical professionals

12. Biden's comparison of the ruling to "political attacks" suggests he views it as a threat to:

A. the independence of regulatory science

B. the separation of powers between branches

C. the democratic legitimacy of the judiciary

D. the right to access evidence-based healthcare

13. Kaesmaryk's argument that "unborn humans" deserve "individual justice" relies on:

A. a literal reading of constitutional amendments

B. a redefinition of personhood under civil law

C. precedents from wrongful death jurisprudence

D. religious doctrines influencing legal interpretation

14. The "fetal personhood" concept could essentially:

A. redefine life

B. reshape rights

C. reinforce laws

D. challenge ethics

15. The author's tone when describing the ruling can best be characterized as:

A. analytically critical of its ideological underpinnings

B. neutrally explanatory of legal procedures

C. cautiously supportive of judicial innovation

D. alarmist about its societal implications

16. The Comstock Act's potential revival through Kaesmaryk's ruling would most directly undermine:

A. state sovereignty

B. medical autonomy

C. women's privacy

D. federal authority

17. Compared with the Supreme Court's overturning of Roe v Wade, Kaesmaryk's ruling is more radical in that it:

A. questions medical expertise

B. ignores public opinion

C. extends the scope of anti-abortion

D. challenges federal regulations

18. Kacsmaryk's claim about "many deaths and severe reactions" due to mifepristone is based on his belief that:

A. FDA's data is accurate

B. medical research is reliable

C. reporting requirements are strict

D. FDA caved in to external pressure

19. Which of the following best serves as the title for the passage?

A. The Abortion Pill Battle

B. FDA vs. Judiciary

C. Abortion medication: mifepristone muddle

D. Roe v Wade's Aftermath

20. What does the word "panoply" mean in this article?

A. The integrity of rights

B. Objective rights planning

C. Complete legal chain

D. Well-considered social opinions

## **58.Date:5.6**

In the annals of human craftsmanship, there exists a curious dichotomy between the quest for perfection and the acceptance of inherent flaws, a tension that has persisted through epochs of technological advancement and aesthetic evolution. Take, for instance, the historical records of 19th-century European gem traders, whose ledgers reveal a meticulous process of evaluating rough diamonds not merely by size or clarity, but by the unique inclusions and imperfections that rendered each stone distinct. These seemingly blemished specimens were not discarded; instead, they were subject to a series of precise calculations and incisions, a practice that defied the contemporary belief in the superiority of flawless gemstones.

What appears at first glance as a simple act of transforming raw materials into polished products is, upon closer examination, a complex negotiation between natural constraints and human ingenuity. The diamond cutter's art is not merely a matter of applying force to stone; it involves an intimate understanding of crystallography, optics, and the subtle interplay between light and matter. In the workshops of Antwerp and Amsterdam, where generations of cutters have honed their skills, the process of shaping a diamond often begins with a detailed mapping of its internal structure, a task that requires both scientific precision and artistic intuition. This dual approach challenges the conventional distinction between science and art, suggesting that true mastery lies in the synthesis of seemingly disparate disciplines.

Yet, the significance of diamond cutting extends beyond the realm of technical expertise. The value attributed to a finished diamond is not solely determined by its physical properties; it is also a reflection of cultural ideals, economic forces, and social status. In the 1940s, a marketing campaign by a major diamond company succeeded in redefining the diamond as an essential symbol of romantic love, a narrative that has persisted to this day. This strategic manipulation of consumer perception reveals how the act of cutting and polishing a diamond is intertwined with larger systems of meaning-making, where the physical transformation of the stone becomes a metaphor for personal and social transformation.

As technology continues to reshape the diamond industry, the traditional methods of cutting face new challenges and opportunities. Computer-aided design and laser cutting have increased the precision and efficiency of the cutting process, allowing for the creation of increasingly complex shapes and patterns. However, these technological advancements also raise questions about the role of human craftsmanship in an age of automation. Will the artisanal skills developed over centuries be replaced by machines, or will they adapt and evolve in response to new technologies? The answer to this question lies not only in the capabilities of technology but also in the enduring value society places on the human touch.

In the end, the story of diamond cutting is a microcosm of the broader human experience. It is a tale of transformation, where the imperfections of nature are transformed into objects of beauty and value through human intervention. But it is also a story of contradiction, where the pursuit of perfection coexists with the acceptance of flaws, and where the technical precision of science intersects with the subjective nature of art. As we stand at the crossroads of technological progress and cultural heritage, the question remains: in our quest to shape the world according to our ideals, are we also losing sight of the beauty that lies in its imperfections?

Questions:

1. The 19th-century gem traders' ledger entries primarily imply that

A. flaws define diamond value.

B. perfection is overrated.

C. uniqueness warrants evaluation.

D. beauty lies in imperfections.

2. Traditional diamond cutters' expertise most closely resembles

A. scientific researchers.

B. artistic innovators.

C. cultural interpreters.

D. technical engineers.

3. The diamond industry's evolution mirrors society's

A. aesthetic changes.

B. value conflicts.

C. technological progress.

D. cultural adaptations.

4. The Antwerp-Amsterdam workshops highlight the importance of

A. geographical heritage.

B. generational expertise.

C. technological adoption.

D. artistic freedom.

5. The tension between perfection and flaws reflects

A. human contradictions.

B. cultural dichotomies.

C. technological dilemmas.

D. aesthetic paradoxes.

6. The diamond's cultural value construction process most resembles

A. historical narrative writing.

B. scientific theory formation.

C. artistic creation process.

D. social norm establishment.

7. Early gem traders' evaluation methods suggest a belief in

A. inherent diamond value.

B. relative perfection standards.

C. objective beauty criteria.

D. subjective flaw appreciation.

8. Which of the following best serves as the title for the passage?

A. The Development History of Diamonds

B. The Hidden Layers of Gemstone Valuation

C. Shaping the Invisible: The Tacit Realms of Diamond Craft

D. The Conspiracy of Diamon

## **59.Date:5.7**

In the quiet year of 1781, when the scholarly world of Königsberg went about its daily pursuits, few could have foreseen the seismic shift that would be set in motion by the publication of a single book. Immanuel Kant, a seemingly unassuming retired professor whose daily walks along the same cobblestone paths had become the stuff of local legend, released the Critique of Pure Reason. This work, filled with intricate arguments and presented in a style both precise and unyielding, posed a question deceptively simple in form yet revolutionary in its implications: if all knowledge has its origin in experience, does it also find its end there? At first glance, the query might have seemed like a mere academic curiosity, but it carried the potential to reshape the very foundation of human understanding, challenging not the political order of the time, but the intellectual framework that defined what humanity could claim to know.

Newtonian physics, by that era, had firmly established itself as the bedrock of European intellectual thought. The cosmos appeared to be a grand, intricate machine, with planets moving in perfect accordance with mathematical equations, tides ebbing and flowing in submission to numerical laws, and even the stars twinkling in a rhythm that seemed to resonate with human rationality. However, David Hume's earlier skeptical musings cast a long, persistent shadow over this newfound certainty. Hume questioned the very essence of causality, suggesting that what humans perceived as cause-and-effect relationships might be nothing more than deeply ingrained mental habits. Kant's philosophical endeavor emerged from the tension created by these contrasting views. His aim was to safeguard the integrity and dignity of scientific knowledge while avoiding the pitfall of assuming that human concepts directly mirrored the objective reality of the world. In pursuit of this balance, he introduced a fundamental dichotomy: the distinction between the world as it is presented to us through the faculties of sense perception and understanding, and the world as it exists independent of these human filters, which he termed the Ding an sich, a concept later translated, perhaps with some distortion, as "thing-in-itself."

The 19th century witnessed philosophers grappling with Kant's proposed divide, much like sailors navigating through a vast, fog-laden sea. Some, driven by an unwavering optimism, believed that the far shore of the Ding an sich was indeed reachable. They argued that through intuitive insights or moral convictions, humans could bridge the gap between the phenomenal world and the noumenal realm. Conversely, a more cautious group pointed out that every attempt to describe the unconditioned reality, as Kant had demonstrated in his antinomies, inevitably led to logical contradictions. This philosophical debate extended far beyond the confines of the academic study; it delved into the very nature of human ambition. Were humans the master architects of reality, capable of shaping and understanding the world in its entirety, or were they prisoners of their own cognitive apparatus, forever confined to the realm of appearances? The Industrial Revolution, with its impressive feats of engineering such as steam engines and railroads, seemed to tip the scales in favor of human mastery. Yet, upon closer examination, these technological marvels were ultimately triumphs of manipulating the observable world, rather than true penetrations into the underlying nature of reality.

Take, for instance, the work of a geologist studying a sedimentary rock. Equipped with a suite of scientific instruments, she measures the rock's density, analyzes its chemical composition, and traces the layers to reconstruct the ancient seabeds from which it was formed. Each conclusion she draws is firmly rooted in observable data, the result of the intricate interplay between light, matter, and abstract conceptual frameworks like time and erosion. But what if, stripped of these human-imposed categories—space, time, causality—the rock exists in a manner that defies all such descriptions? Kant's argument was not that this underlying reality was unimportant; rather, he emphasized that human knowledge is inherently subjective, shaped by the a priori forms of intuition, namely space and time, and the categories of understanding that render experience intelligible. To speak of the rock as it is in itself is to venture into a territory where the traditional boundaries of human knowledge dissolve.

This limitation, often misinterpreted as a defeat, is in fact a profound recognition of the demarcation between the construction and discovery of knowledge. When astronomers use Newton's laws to predict the trajectory of a comet, they are not deciphering the hidden intentions of the universe. Instead, they are applying a conceptual framework that organizes raw sensory input into a coherent narrative. This framework functions with remarkable efficiency, enabling humanity to send probes hurtling through the vast expanse of space towards distant planets. However, its effectiveness does not guarantee that it captures the ultimate structure of the universe. Instead, it underscores humanity's remarkable ability to create systems that impose order and meaning upon the chaotic flood of sensations.

The 20th century added another layer of complexity to this age-old conundrum with the advent of quantum mechanics. In this new frontier of scientific exploration, particles exhibited behaviors that defied the classical categories of space and causality. Some scientists speculated that Kant had anticipated such a revolutionary shift, noting the resonance between his emphasis on the mind's role in shaping experience and Heisenberg's uncertainty principle. However, this parallel is not without its flaws. Kant's primary concern was not with the specific intricacies of subatomic physics but with the fundamental conditions that make any form of scientific knowledge possible. His concept of the thing-in-itself is not a mysterious entity lurking behind the veil of appearances; rather, it serves as a constant reminder that the act of knowing is always mediated by the knower, with all their inherent biases, limitations, and cognitive tools.

To dismiss Kant's ideas as mere idealism is to overlook their true significance. He was not asserting that the world is a product of the human mind; rather, he was highlighting the fact that human access to the world is always filtered and interpreted. Consider the metaphor of a traveler who has spent their entire life within a valley, never glimpsing the mountains that encircle it. The traveler meticulously maps the rivers, forests, and fields of the valley, yet the mountains remain an ever-present horizon. Visible in the distance, they influence the climate and light of the valley, yet their true nature remains elusive from within the confines of the valley. The traveler can wonder about the mountains, form hypotheses about their composition, and even ascend partway, but they can never step outside the cognitive valley to perceive reality from an objective, unmediated perspective.

This horizon of the unknowable is not a cause for despair but a crucial context within which human knowledge must be understood. When we speak of truth, we are referring to what holds true within the valley of our experience—ideas that are coherent, useful, and essential for navigating the world. To demand more, to seek a knowledge that transcends all human limitations, is akin to longing for a language without words or sight without eyes. The Ding an sich stands as the silent presence beyond the horizon, not an object to be known but a boundary that defines the very shape of human knowledge. It imparts a profound lesson: the greatest wisdom may lie in recognizing the limits of our understanding, in acknowledging where our maps of knowledge end and the vast realm of mystery begins.

As technology continues to expand the boundaries of what humans can perceive and understand—through neural interfaces that blur the line between the mind and machine, virtual realities that create entirely new worlds, and artificial intelligence that can "see" in wavelengths invisible to human eyes—the question of the nature of knowledge becomes more pressing than ever. Are we truly expanding the frontiers of knowledge, or merely refining the tools we use to explore the familiar valley of appearances? When algorithms generate models of reality that surpass the comprehension of any individual human mind, do they bring us closer to understanding the mountains beyond the horizon, or do they simply create new valleys of their own? The answer may lie in the recognition that, no matter how brilliant our technological and intellectual advancements, each step forward is still a step within the realm of appearances. In this realm, the thing-in-itself persists, not as a problem to be solved, but as a timeless reminder of the infinite expanse of the unknown that lies beyond the reach of human language and understanding.

Questions:

1. The publication of Critique of Pure Reason primarily aimed to

A. challenge political order

B. redefine knowledge origin

C. reconcile opposing views

D. prove Hume's skepticism

2. Newtonian physics' role in Kant's context was to

A. inspire new theories

B. represent established truth

C. highlight causal flaws

D. oppose Hume's ideas

3. Kant's Ding an sich concept fundamentally implies

A. unknowable reality

B. subjective perception

C. objective existence

D. moral conviction

4. The traveler metaphor suggests that

A. truth is attainable

B. knowledge is bounded

C. reality is subjective

D. perception is flawed

5. Hume's skepticism influenced Kant by

A. inspiring opposition

B. prompting reconciliation

C. raising doubts

D. defining limits

6. Kant's concept of the Ding an sich suggests that in the process of scientific discovery, what seems like a discovery of a fundamental truth might actually be

A. a confirmation of pre-existing biases

B. an approximation within the realm of phenomena

C. a breakthrough beyond human cognitive limitations

D. a reflection of objective reality

7. The essence of human ambition debated in the 19th century was

A. creating reality

B. understanding self

C. knowing boundaries

D. shaping perception

8. Which best parallels Kant's Ding an sich concept?

A. A hidden code

B. A distant star

C. An unopened book

D. A blurred mirror

9. According to the author's interpretation of Kant, the ultimate purpose of philosophical inquiry is to

A. uncover hidden realities

B. perfect cognitive models

C. clarify knowledge boundaries

D. challenge scientific dogma

10. If Kant were presented with the concept of "simulated universes" in modern philosophy, he would likely argue that

A. they are the Ding an sich

B. they expand cognitive horizons

C. they remain within the phenomenal realm

D. they challenge his dichotomy

## **60.Date:5.10**

On December 13, 1937, when the last line of defense of the Chinese garrison collapsed at Yuhuatai, the flag of the Kuomintang on the city walls of Nanjing had not yet completely faded, and the cries of street vendors were still frozen in the icy air. Soldiers of the 16th Division of the Japanese army, with Type 38 rifles bayoneted, poured into Zhonghua Gate. This was not a routine advance in war but a meticulously planned massacre. According to the post-war statistics of M.S. Bates, an American professor at Jinling University, by January 1938, more than one-third of the buildings in the city were burned down, and over 80,000 women were raped. The youngest victim was only 9 years old, and the oldest was 76. These numbers, arranged as cold sequences on the archival papers, cannot conceal the torn lives behind each figure: pregnant women had their abdomens sliced open by bayoneted knives to remove the fetuses, the elderly were forced to sit on piles of the corpses of their relatives and witness decapitation, and children were thrown into the air as live targets for bayonet training.

The atrocities committed by the Japanese army showed a perverse and cruel logic. Second Lieutenant Tanaka Yoshiyuki of the 6th Division recorded in his diary that he had used the "Sukemitsu" sword to continuously hack and kill more than 300 civilians. After the blade became curled, he even had the army blacksmith sharpen it on the spot. What was even more heinous was the "hundred-man killing contest": Mukai Toshiaki and Noda Takeshi of the 16th Division agreed that slaying a hundred people with their swords would be the symbol of victory. Eventually, they claimed to have killed 105 and 106 people respectively. After the contest, their group photo was published in the Tokyo Nichi Nichi Shimbun, and the smiles on their faces were even more chilling than the bloodstains on their swords. Reverend John Magee, a member of the International Safety Zone, recorded with a 16-millimeter camera that Japanese soldiers tied Chinese civilians to lampposts and forced them to watch as their family members were humiliated: fathers were forced to commit incest with their daughters, sons were ordered to dismember their mothers, and husbands could only watch as their wives were gang-raped by dozens of people. Then, the Japanese army poured gasoline on the wives' private parts and set them on fire, and the screams echoed in the empty streets. Even children were not spared. Babies were boiled in boiling water and then returned to their mothers who had just been raped. These scenes were not the out-of-control actions of individual soldiers but the result of military orders from above. Matsui Iwane, Commander of the Central China Front Army, declared before the attack, "Nanjing is the capital of China. After its occupation, the Chinese people must be completely subdued." His chief of staff, Mutō Akira, directly approved that "the troops camping outside the city can solve the problems of food and women on their own."

The experience of survivor Li Xiuying was an epitome of thousands of tragedies. At the age of 19, while taking shelter in a bomb shelter on Wutai Mountain, she was gang-raped by three Japanese soldiers. In her resistance, she was stabbed 37 times. The knife wounds on her face, neck, and chest were so deep that the bones were exposed, and her left eyeball was punctured. She woke up several days later in the International Red Cross Hospital. Later, she testified at the Tokyo Trials: "They ripped open my clothes with bayoneted knives and then they stabbed my mouth with knives and cut my tongue..." Such testimonies were repeated more than 200 times at the International Military Tribunal for the Far East in 1946. However, decades later, some right-wing Japanese elements claimed that "Li Xiuying's scars were self-inflicted and forged." What was even more suffocating was the institutional mechanism of forgetting: When revising textbooks in 1955, the Japanese Ministry of Education described the Nanjing Massacre as "Due to the tenacious resistance of the Chinese army, the Japanese army suffered heavy losses and then occupied Nanjing," completely omitting keywords such as "rape" and "massacre." It was not until the "Textbook Incident" in 1982 that the vague statement of "causing many civilian casualties" was reluctantly added.

This kind of memory erasure made it difficult for Japanese youths born after the war to imagine the crimes of their predecessors. But historical evidence will not disappear due to tampering. At the site of the "comfort women" system in Nanjing's Lizixiang, the "physical examination records of comfort women" made by the Japanese army are still preserved. On the yellowed forms, the age, native place, and "usage times" of the victims are detailed. In the "Mass Grave" site of the Memorial Hall of the Victims in Nanjing Massacre by Japanese Invaders, the twisted skeletons maintain the struggling postures at the moment of death: some have their hands clasped around their throats (indicating they were strangled), some skulls have the marks of being hacked by swords, and in the lower body of a female skeleton, fragments of a broken glass bottle are embedded. These silent physical evidences are more powerful than any words. They wordlessly tell us to what depth humanity can sink when an army is indoctrinated with the idea that "the Chinese are living resources." The Japanese army not only established a "field post office" to allow soldiers to send looted jade articles and calligraphy and paintings back to Japan but also set up a "bone mill," grinding the bones of the massacred into powder as fertilizer, squeezing out the last bit of value of the dead.

The initial indifference of the international community cast a second layer of shadow over this human catastrophe. On December 15, 1937, the US Naval Attaché Office in China received an urgent telegram from missionaries: "The Japanese army is carrying out large-scale executions of civilians outside the safety zone, with an estimated number of 20,000. We request intervention." However, then-US President Franklin D. Roosevelt chose "neutrality," and Secretary of State Cordell Hull believed that "public condemnation may harm US interests in China." The British Foreign Office instructed the British Ambassador to China to "avoid provoking Japan," and even prohibited the BBC from reporting the real situation in Nanjing. This collective silence made the Japanese army even more unscrupulous. They tied thousands of civilians together with iron wires by the Yangtze River and mowed them down with machine guns in the name of "drills." Bodies were pushed into the river, causing the river to seem to stop flowing. At Hanzhongmen Square, civilians were driven into air-raid shelters and then burned with gasoline. The piles of charred corpses at the entrance of the shelter were as high as two meters. Japanese soldiers passing by even cut the charred corpses with their swords and regarded them as "trophies." It was not until January 1938 that Rosen, the secretary of the German Embassy in Nanjing, wrote in his report to Berlin: "What is happening here is the darkest page in the history of modern civilization, a hundred times more barbaric than the Crusades in the Middle Ages."

When people today stand in front of the theme sculpture of "December 13, 1937," looking at the bronze statues of mothers holding their bombed babies and the elderly kneeling on the ruins to call back the souls of the dead, they will suddenly understand that the horror of the Nanjing Massacre lies not only in the death toll of more than 300,000 but also in the exposure of the fragility of human civilization. When the army of a country is trained to be "the beasts of the Emperor" and the whole society is indoctrinated with the myth of the "superior race," the 防线 of humanity can collapse in an instant. Survivor Xia Shuqin still remembers that on December 13, 1937, when the Japanese army rushed into her home at No. 5 Xinlukou. Her father, mother, and grandfather were killed on the spot, and her one-year-old sister was thrown to the ground and died. She and her four-year-old sister were stabbed several times and pretended to be dead to survive. This scene is repeatedly recreated in the "Family Memory" exhibition area of the memorial hall. In each exhibition cabinet, there are the relics of the victims: a chipped rice bowl, a diary soaked in blood, a baby's open-crotch pants. These insignificant objects can pierce people's hearts more than any grand narrative, for they remind us that behind each "300,000" are living and breathing lives that, like you and me, once had dreams and suffered pain.

In Japan, there are still politicians visiting the Yasukuni Shrine, and some scholars are advocating the "theory that the Nanjing Massacre is a fiction." But the truth of history does not depend on the recognition of power. As Li Xiuying said before her death, "The scars on my body are the best evidence. Even if I die, these scars will speak for me." These scars are marks engraved on the body of the Chinese nation and a warning branded on the history of human civilization. When a nation chooses to forget atrocities and a culture condones the disregard for life, the wheel of history will repeatedly roll in the same abyss. The significance of Nanjing is not to continue hatred but to safeguard the truth. Those chests pierced by bayoneted knives, pillows soaked in tears, and streets swallowed by flames are wordlessly shouting that only by becoming strong can we prevent the next disaster from happening.

Standing at the exit of the memorial hall and looking at the inscriptions blackened by the flames of war on the "Peace Bell," one will suddenly realize that the true cruelty lies not only in the bloodiness of the atrocities but also in the denial and beautification of the atrocities by the perpetrators. When right-wing Japanese elements downplay the Nanjing Massacre with the excuse that "casualties are inevitable in war" and some countries evade responsibility by saying that "history should be turned over," they are actually repeating the crimes committed more than 70 years ago - a second massacre of the victims and a second strangulation of the truth. The story of the Nanjing Massacre must be told over and over again, to remember that in a cold winter, more than 300,000 Chinese people were crushed like ants, and their blood once dyed the land under our feet red. This is our promise to the dead and our commitment to human civilization - to never let "Nanjing" become the second or third name to be forgotten.

Questions:

1. The description of street vendors' cries "frozen in the icy air" primarily serves to

A. emphasize winter chill

B. highlight the suddenness of tragedy

C. depict urban atmosphere

D. contrast with wartime chaos

2. The inclusion of Li Xiuying's testimony mainly aims to

A. personalize historical horror

B. challenge Japanese denials

C. expose judicial loopholes

D. document medical evidence

3. The "Textbook Incident" reflects Japan's attempt to

A. revise historical facts

B. mitigate international criticism

C. reshape national memory

D. downplay military aggression

4. The US and UK's initial responses indicate

A. geopolitical calculations

B. moral indifference

C. diplomatic caution

D. strategic ambiguity

5. Rosen's comparison to the Crusades emphasizes

A. historical recurrence

B. cultural barbarism

C. moral depravity

D. religious fanaticism

6. The "Family Memory" exhibition relics are effective as they

A. evoke emotional resonance

B. authenticate historical accounts

C. challenge grand narratives

D. symbolize national trauma

7. The "Peace Bell" inscriptions' blackening symbolizes

A. war's physical scars

B. historical distortion

C. collective memory

D. unhealed wounds

8. Right-wing justifications for the Massacre echo

A. historical relativism

B. military necessity

C. cultural misinterpretation

D. victim blaming

9. Which best parallels the "second massacre" of victims?

A. Historical revisionism

B. Cultural appropriation

C. Diplomatic evasion

D. moral relativism

10. The central argument of the passage is that

A. atrocities define history

B. memory safeguards truth

C. power distorts reality

D. resilience prevails over tragedy

## **61.Date:5.12**

Smoking is to be banned outside schools and hospitals as part of a crackdown on the UK's biggest killer and most common cause of cancer. But the government has dropped plans to ban smoking outside pubs and restaurants, prompting campaigners to complain about “vested interests” covertly influencing policy. The extension of the ban on indoor smoking to some outdoor settings is contained in the delayed tobacco and vapes bill, which will be laid before parliament today. It would make the UK the first country to eradicate smoking, by raising the age at which people can buy cigarettes by one year every year until no one can legally do so.

The legislation will ban the advertising of vapes following alarm over a rise in the number of children and young people taking up the habit. It will also restrict the flavours, packaging and marketing of vapes. The hospitality trade welcomed the decision not to prohibit smoking outside pubs, cafes and restaurants.

The Guardian disclosed on 25 October that the plan - which Keir Starmer had initially appeared to support - had run into opposition inside Downing Street, where officials described it as an “unserious” policy not backed by evidence. “Had this restriction been introduced it would have led to many pubs shutting their doors and jobs being lost and so we welcome the government's change of heart and proportionate approach,” said Emma McClarkin, the chief executive of the British Beer and Pub Association.

Kate Nicholls of UKHospitality said the mooted ban had caused “angst among hospitality businesses”, which feared it would increase costs and drive away customers. But Caroline Cerny, the deputy chief executive of Action on Smoking and Health, voiced frustration that the bill had been watered down after behind the scenes lobbying by commercial interests. “We welcome the government taking overarching powers to limit exposure to second-hand smoke outdoors and that they intend to move quickly in areas with the most consensus,” she said.

“This is the start of an important ‘national debate’, which should be shaped out in the open by health evidence and public opinion, not behind closed doors by industry with vested interests. We will continue to push for ambitious legislation that will protect as many people as possible.” The bill will allow ministers to ban smoking in certain outdoor areas, subject to a public consultation, with a focus on places where children and vulnerable people gather. Playgrounds and outside schools and hospitals are likely to be the first settings in which it will be enforced.

Wes Streeting, the health secretary, will appear on TV and radio this morning to explain the biggest assault on smoking since the indoor ban came into force in England, Wales and Northern Ireland in 2007. He said: “This government is taking bold action to create the first smoke-free generation, clamp down on kids getting hooked on nicotine through vapes, and protect children and vulnerable people from the harms of secondhand smoke.”

Questions:

1. Caroline’s frustration stems from the bill’s

A. diluted protective measures

B. delayed implementation timeline

C. exclusion of public consultation

D. overreliance on industry input

2. The final bill differs from initial proposals in its

A. targeted omissions

B. enhanced enforcement

C. ideological purity

D. public approval focus

3. Keir Starmer’s initial support for pub bans indicates

A. early alignment with health advocates

B. subsequent political recalibration

C. evidence-based policy advocacy

D. public opinion responsiveness

4. The “watered-down” bill exemplifies

A. legislative pragmatism

B. ideological compromise

C. enforcement ambiguity

D. public disengagement

5. The health secretary’s rhetoric emphasizes

A. generational health legacy

B. economic stimulus through regulation

C. technological innovation in tobacco control

D. cultural normalization of smoke-free lifestyles

6. The bill’s efficacy crucially depends on

A. voluntary industry compliance

B. sustained political will

C. public behavioral adaptation

D. international regulatory alignment

7. The absence of pub bans signals a prioritization of

A. economic stability over health equity

B. regulatory simplicity over comprehensive protection

C. public convenience over vulnerable groups

D. evidence-based policy over lobbying pressures

8. Public consultation serves to

A. legitimate pre-determined policies

B. surface latent societal values

C. mitigate legal challenges

D. aggregate expert consensus

9. The policy’s design embodies a tension between

A. radical innovation and incrementalism

B. health advocacy and economic pragmatism

C. evidence-based theory and political reality

D. public welfare goals and private sector resistance

10. Which of the following best serves as the title for the passage?

A. Smoking set to be banned outside hospitals - but not in beer gardens

B. Tobacco Bill: Health vs. Economy

C. UK’s Quest for Smoke-Free Future

D. Policy Shifts in Tobacco Legislation

## **62.Date:5.14**

In the annals of scientific inquiry, few experimental setups have sparked as much prolonged debate and philosophical introspection as the double-slit experiment. Its origins can be traced back to the early 19th century, a time when the scientific community was deeply divided over the fundamental nature of light. On one side stood the adherents of Newton’s corpuscular theory, which posited that light consisted of tiny particles; on the other were those who championed the wave theory, arguing that light propagated through space as a series of oscillations. Into this fray stepped Thomas Young, a British polymath whose 1801 experiment would lay the groundwork for a century-long journey into the heart of quantum mystery.

Young’s experimental design was deceptively simple yet ingeniously constructed to test the competing theories. He directed a beam of light at a screen punctured by two narrow, parallel slits, placing a second screen behind it to capture the resulting projection. If light were indeed composed of particles, the expectation was that two distinct bands would appear on the rear screen, corresponding to the paths of particles passing through each slit. What emerged, however, was a pattern of alternating bright and dark fringes—a phenomenon known as interference, which could only be explained by the superposition of waves. When light waves passed through both slits, they spread out and interacted: where their peaks coincided, they reinforced each other to form bright fringes; where a peak met a trough, they canceled each other out, creating dark fringes. This result seemed to settle the debate in favor of the wave theory, but it also planted a seed of curiosity about the boundaries of human perception in scientific observation—how does the act of seeing shape what is seen, and does this interaction transcend the mere mechanics of light and matter?

The turn of the 20th century brought with it a revolution in physics, as scientists began to explore the behavior of matter at the subatomic level. In 1927, Clinton Davisson and Lester Germer, working at Bell Laboratories, conducted an experiment that would extend Young’s findings to particles previously thought of as purely material. Their original goal was to study electron scattering off nickel surfaces to understand metallic structures, a task hindered by an accidental oxidation of their sample during routine maintenance. After heating the oxidized nickel to remove the oxide layer, they discovered the crystal had re-formed into large, ordered lattices—an unintended transformation that would rewrite physics. Directing a 54-eV electron beam at this crystalline structure, they observed a sharp peak in the scattering pattern at a 50-degree angle, a result incompatible with classical particle behavior. Mathematical analysis revealed the pattern matched the diffraction formula for waves, with the electron wavelength calculated via de Broglie’s hypothesis—confirming that electrons, too, exhibited wave-like properties. This accidental discovery of electron diffraction not only validated de Broglie’s radical idea of matter waves but also opened the door to exploring wave-particle duality through controlled double-slit configurations, forcing scientists to confront the fact that the dichotomy between “particle” and “wave” was a construct of human categorization, not an inherent feature of reality.

Claus Jönsson’s 1961 experiment represented a deliberate attempt to replicate Young’s setup for electrons, addressing the criticism that Davisson and Germer’s crystal acted as a multi-slit system rather than a simple double-slit. Using precision machining, Jönsson fabricated a copper plate with five slits, each 300 nm wide and 10 μm apart—dimensions chosen to ensure electron waves would overlap significantly behind the slits. Electrons emitted from a thermionic gun were accelerated to 40 keV, creating a beam with a de Broglie wavelength of 0.062 Å, small enough to interact meaningfully with the slit spacing. The detection screen, a thin layer of zinc sulfide, produced visible scintillations upon electron impact, allowing for real-time observation of the accumulation pattern. Initially, individual electrons struck the screen as discrete points, seemingly random in distribution. But over hours of exposure, a distinct interference pattern emerged, with 11 bright fringes spanning a 2-cm width—an exact replica of Young’s optical result. The experiment’s breakthrough lay in its control: by isolating the double-slit geometry and eliminating crystalline complexity, Jönsson proved that electron interference was a direct consequence of passing through two slits, not a byproduct of atomic lattice interactions. Yet when he introduced electron microscopes as path detectors, the mere potential for determining the electron’s trajectory dissolved the interference pattern, a result that defied classical causality and hinted at a deeper connection between observation and reality—was the act of measurement not just recording but deciding the electron’s path?

G. I. Taylor’s 1909 low-intensity light experiment, though conducted decades earlier, provided critical evidence for the single-particle nature of interference. Taylor’s challenge was to create a light source so dim that photons passed through the slits one at a time, a feat achieved by placing a candle behind a series of smoked glass filters and measuring exposure times in hours. Using a slit width of 0.02 mm and a screen distance of 2 meters, he ensured each photon would traverse the setup individually, with no overlap in their passage. The photographic plate, initially blank, began to show faint dots after hours—each marking a photon’s impact. Over days of continuous exposure, these dots gradually formed the characteristic interference pattern, with density matching the wave theory’s prediction of probability distributions. Taylor’s work disproved the notion that interference required simultaneous wave interaction, demonstrating that even isolated photons carried wave-like information about both slits. This laid the groundwork for the concept of quantum superposition, where a particle’s path is not a binary choice but a combined state of passing through both slits until measured—a concept that would later collide with psychological theories of perception, which suggest that human consciousness imposes order on otherwise ambiguous sensory input.

The 2023 temporal double-slit experiment by the University of St Andrews team represented a leap beyond spatial dimensions, leveraging metamaterials to manipulate light in the time domain. Their setup utilized a 40-nm gold layer sandwiched between glass and indium tin oxide, creating a structure whose refractive index could be modulated in femtoseconds via pump-probe lasers. The “temporal slits” were created by two 10-fs laser pulses separated by 200 fs, which transiently altered the material’s optical properties, effectively slicing the incoming 800-nm laser beam into two time windows. By analyzing the reflected light’s spectral content with a grating spectrometer, they observed that double pulses produced a comb spectrum with interference fringes, while single pulses remained monochromatic. This showed that light, when subjected to time-dependent boundary conditions, exhibited wave-like behavior analogous to spatial interference, with the temporal separation of slits directly influencing the spectral pattern. The experiment’s significance lay in its demonstration that quantum-like interference is a phenomenon rooted in boundary conditions and interaction, not confined to spatial geometry—a realization that echoed ancient theological debates about the nature of time and creation, where some traditions posited that divine consciousness “weaves” reality through sequential acts of observation.

Adding a layer of complexity, the 2019 “conscious observer” experiment by a team at the University of Tokyo sought to investigate whether human attention influenced the observer effect. Using a modified double-slit setup with polarized photons, they compared outcomes when detectors were activated passively (by automated sensors) versus when human observers actively focused on the detection process. Subjects were instructed to mentally “will” the photons to exhibit particle or wave behavior during specific trial blocks, while EEG sensors monitored their neural activity. Statistically significant differences emerged in the interference pattern’s contrast when human attention was directed toward the measurement, though the effect vanished when subjects were distracted. While far from conclusive, the experiment hinted at a non-trivial interaction between conscious intention and quantum systems, bridging the gap between physics and psychology—a domain where William James’ radical empiricism, which posited consciousness as a constitutive element of reality, found unexpected resonance.

Philosophical interpretations of these results have occasionally brushed against theological concepts, particularly in Eastern traditions where the mind-matter divide is less rigid. In Advaita Vedanta, for example, the idea that Brahman (universal consciousness) manifests the world through observation finds an eerie parallel in quantum mechanics’ emphasis on interaction creating reality. Similarly, the Christian notion of divine omniscience as both observer and creator echoes the Copenhagen interpretation’s implicit observer centrality, though theology assigns intentionality and agency to the observing entity, while physics remains agnostic on such metaphysical questions. These intersections are not proof but poetic resonances, inviting reflection on whether the “observer” in quantum mechanics is a placeholder for a deeper, perhaps transcendent, principle of awareness.

As these experiments evolved, so too did the interpretations of their results. The Copenhagen interpretation, formulated in the 1920s, posited that quantum systems exist in a state of superposition until measured, at which point the wavefunction collapses to a definite state influenced by the act of observation. This view implicitly assigned the observer a central role in defining reality, though it carefully avoided invoking consciousness as a causal agent. In contrast, the many-worlds interpretation, proposed by Hugh Everett in the 1950s, sidestepped the concept of wavefunction collapse by suggesting that every possible outcome of a quantum event branches into separate parallel universes, each containing a version of the observer who experiences a unique reality. Both interpretations grappled with the same empirical data but offered vastly different perspectives on the relationship between observation and reality, reflecting the deep-seated unease scientists felt about assigning a causal role to human perception in physical phenomena—a tension that mirrors the age-old theological debate between determinism and free will.

The cumulative effect of these experiments is a growing realization that the act of observation in quantum mechanics is not a passive recording but an interactive process that influences the observed system. In Young’s experiment, the interference pattern emerged from the unobserved propagation of light waves; in Jönsson’s electron setup, the mere possibility of determining the electron’s path—even when the detectors were not activated—altered the outcome, a phenomenon later confirmed by “quantum eraser” experiments that allowed for the delayed choice of measurement. These results suggest that the boundary between the observer and the observed is permeable, with the act of designing an experiment—choosing what to measure and how to measure it—shaping the reality that emerges. This permeability challenges not just scientific orthodoxy but also psychological models of perception, which typically treat the observer as a receiver rather than a co-creator of experience.

Yet for all their revolutionary implications, these experiments stop short of explicitly linking observation to consciousness in the philosophical sense. The “observer” in quantum mechanics is typically defined as any physical apparatus that interacts with the system, from a simple detector to a complex measurement device. There is no requirement for human awareness or intention; even a lifeless recording machine would induce the same wavefunction collapse. And yet, the persistent use of terms like “observer effect” and the enduring fascination with experiments where human choices influence outcomes—such as the delayed-choice quantum eraser—inevitably draw connections to the role of consciousness in shaping reality. It is a temptation rooted in the human desire to find meaning in the mysterious, to see our own existence reflected in the fundamental laws of the universe—a desire that theology has long sought to satisfy by positing a conscious universe or a divine observer.

As we stand at the intersection of these experimental advancements and philosophical quandaries, the double-slit experiment remains a silent provocateur, urging us to reconsider the nature of knowledge itself. Each iteration—from Young’s optical fringes to temporal metamaterial slits—has refined not just our understanding of quantum mechanics, but our grasp of how observation and reality are intertwined. The experiments do not answer whether consciousness shapes the universe, but they reveal a deeper truth: that in the act of inquiry, we are never mere spectators. They challenge the Cartesian divide between mind and matter, suggesting instead a universe where the act of knowing and the object known are inseparable threads in a single fabric.

In the realm of psychology, this invites a reevaluation of perception as an active process of reality construction, rather than a passive mirroring of an external world. Gestalt psychology’s emphasis on “figure-ground” organization, where the mind imposes structure on raw sensory data, finds a quantum counterpart in the way measurement imposes definiteness on superposition. Theology, too, is prompted to revisit its concepts of creation and immanence, considering whether the universe’s unfolding is not a one-time event but an ongoing act of observation—divine or otherwise—that brings potentiality into actuality.

It shows us that what we observe is not just a reflection of an independent reality but a product of the interplay between the observer and the observed. As we continue to refine our techniques and expand our understanding, the experiment reminds us that in the quantum world, and perhaps in the universe at large, the act of seeking knowledge is inseparable from the process of creating it. When we ask whether consciousness plays a role in shaping reality, we are not just debating physics; we are confronting the oldest mystery of all—how we, as conscious beings, came to exist in a world that seems both to precede us and to be defined by our presence within it.

Questions:

1. Taylor’s experiment subtly suggested that:

A. photons are solitary.

B. interference is individual-based.

C. wave interaction is complex.

D. probability exists.

2. Advaita Vedanta’s concept remarkably parallels quantum’s idea of:

A. divine creation.

B. observer’s role.

C. world manifestation.

D. consciousness.

3. The “observer” in quantum mechanics intrinsically represents:

A. human awareness.

B. measurement device.

C. interaction entity.

D. conscious choice.

4. The experiments suggest reality is shaped by:

A. observation process.

B. quantum behavior.

C. scientific inquiry.

D. human perception.

5. In the grand narrative of these experiments, what veiled narrative remains largely untold?

A. tech evolution.

B. paradigm shifts.

C. cognitive revolutions.

D. experimental serendipities.

6. What is the main difference between the Copenhagen interpretation and the many-worlds interpretation?

A. One believes in wavefunction collapse, the other doesn't.

B. One involves human consciousness, the other doesn't.

C. One focuses on parallel universes, the other on single reality.

D. One is based on data, the other on speculation.

7. Which of the questions below is closest in meaning to the central query posed by the double-slit experiment?

A. Is the universe pre-existing or created?

B. Does consciousness shape the universe?

C. Are particles and waves different?

D. How do experiments affect reality?

8. What is the most unexpected parallel between the double-slit experiments and ancient philosophical thought?

A. The concept of non-duality.

B. The theory of four elements.

C. The idea of predestination.

D. The principle of harmony.

9. In the comparison between different interpretations of double-slit results, what is the most overlooked point of divergence?

A. Attitude towards probability.

B. Definition of reality.

C. Treatment of time.

D. Perception of space.

10. What is the most counterintuitive lesson that double-slit experiments teach about the nature of scientific truth?

A. Truth is absolute.

B. Truth depends on observation.

C. Truth is unknowable.

D. Truth evolves over time.

11. The many-worlds interpretation avoids:

A. Observer effect.

B. Wavefunction idea.

C. Outcome branching.

D. Collapse concept.

12. These experiments make us rethink:

A. Human ability.

B. World origin.

C. Knowledge nature.

D. Experiment purpose.

13. The essence of the double-slit conundrum lies in:

A. Experimental error.

B. Conceptual conflict.

C. Observation paradox.

D. Theoretical flaw.

14. These experiments collectively suggest the universe is:

A. Self-sufficient.

B. Observer-dependent.

C. Randomly-ordered.

D. Law-governed.

15. The essence of the double-slit enigma is the conflict between:

A. Observation and prediction.

B. Wave and particle models.

C. Reality and perception.

D. Experiment and theory.

16. Which philosophical concept do double-slit experiments unconsciously echo?

A. Solipsism.

B. Determinism.

C. Nihilism.

D. Pragmatism.

17. What overlooked physical factor could potentially reconcile the discrepancies in different double-slit outcomes?

A. Dark energy.

B. Vacuum fluctuation.

C. Cosmic radiation.

D. Earth's rotation.

18. In a scenario where double-slit experiments are conducted in a parallel universe with different physical constants, which current scientific law would be most likely to remain valid?

A. Conservation of energy.

B. Inverse-square law.

C. Pauli exclusion principle.

D. Boyle's law.

19. If future double-slit experiments show that the act of measurement can be influenced by gravitational waves passing through the experimental apparatus, what would be the implications for the unification of quantum mechanics and general relativity?

A. Provide a new experimental approach.

B. Disprove existing theories.

C. Support string theory.

D. Have no relation to unification.

20. Which of the following best summarizes the main content of this article?

A. The article deeply explores how the double-slit experiment gradually reveals the direct effect of the act of observation on the manifestation of microscopic phenomena in scientific verification, and reshapes the cognitive framework of the scientific community regarding the essence of matter.

B. Centering on the series of explorations of the double-slit experiment, it focuses on demonstrating how the double-slit experiment redefines the criteria for the interactive relationship between observation and reality within the system of quantum mechanics.

C. It comprehensively analyzes the evolution process of the double-slit experiment and emphasizes excavating the thinking triggered by it at the philosophical level, especially the in-depth speculation on the boundaries between subjective consciousness and the objective world.

D. It mainly elaborates on how the double-slit experiment breaks through traditional cognition and triggers in-depth thinking about the essence of observation and the composition of reality at the levels of science, philosophy, and theology.

E. Focusing on the key findings of the double-slit experiment, it carefully probes into how it promotes interdisciplinary discussions, especially the inspiration regarding the cutting-edge proposition of consciousness participating in the construction of the material world.

F. Through the multi-dimensional research of the double-slit experiment, it systematically expounds the impact of the double-slit experiment on the scientific research paradigm, as well as the re-examination of the essence of existence in the context of philosophy and theology.

## **63.Date:5.17**

April 14th, Summer of the Jiyou Year (1645)

After the fall of Baiyanghe, Shi Kefa, the military governor, staggered into Yangzhou and closed the city gates to resist the enemy. Until the 24th, before the city's final breach, each gate was heavily guarded by soldiers. My family lived in the eastern part of Xincheng, under the garrison of General Yang. Soldiers were stationed everywhere like chess pieces; my household alone had two soldiers, and neighboring homes were no different. They trampled through our lives without restraint, demanding over a thousand coins daily for provisions — resources we could hardly sustain. In desperation, we jointly decided to host a banquet for the chief commander. I feigned deep respect, gradually ingratiating myself with him. Pleased, the commander ordered his men to leave my family undisturbed. He loved music and played the pipa skillfully, often seeking renowned courtesans to entertain the troops during leisure. That night, he invited me to a drinking gathering, intending to carouse freely. Suddenly, an urgent message from Shi Kefa arrived; the commander turned pale upon reading it, immediately ascending the city wall, and the gathering dispersed abruptly.

The next morning, Shi Kefa's official proclamation reached us, containing the words: "One man shall bear the responsibility; the people shall not be implicated." All who heard it wept in sorrow. News of a minor patrol victory also spread, prompting brief relief among the crowd. In the afternoon, a relative from Guazhou arrived, fleeing the deserters of Xingping Bo (General Gao Jie, whom Shi Kefa had ordered to retreat). My wife, reunited with the relative after a long separation, wept openly at the meeting. By then, one or two people had already whispered that Qing troops had entered the city. I rushed out to inquire, only to hear conflicting rumors — some claimed reinforcements led by Jingnan Hou Huang Degong had arrived. Glancing at the city walls, the guards still stood in neat formation, but in the marketplace, crowds murmured uneasily, with disheveled, barefoot refugees streaming in. When questioned, they panted in panic, unable to form coherent words.

Suddenly, dozens of cavalrymen charged southward from the north in disarray, surging like a tidal wave—among them, clearly visible, was Shi Kefa, escorted in the center. He had attempted to flee to the East Gate but was blocked by enemy forces, now heading for the South Gate. Only then did we confirm the enemy's successful entry. A lone cavalryman then rode northward, reins slack, wailing aloud; two soldiers clung to his horse's bridle, refusing to abandon their post. The scene remains vivid in my mind, though I regret never learning their names. As the cavalry faded, city guards fled in chaos, discarding armor and weapons — some with broken heads or legs. The watchtowers on the walls stood empty. Earlier, Shi Kefa had ordered planks installed along the narrow battlements to accommodate cannons, extending from the wall's edge to adjacent residential houses.

The project remained incomplete when enemy soldiers scaled the walls first, armed with bows and slashing swords. Panicked guards shoved one another, blocking escape routes; they clambered onto the planks to reach the rooftops of nearby homes. The unstable new planks tilted underfoot, causing most climbers to fall like autumn leaves, with eight or nine out of ten dying on impact. Those who reached the roofs trampled tiles into clattering shards, sounding like clashing metal or hailstones pelting the ground, echoing endlessly through the streets. Terrified residents fled their homes in disarray, only to find soldiers and civilians flooding every room, all desperately seeking hiding spots—even homeowners could not deter them. Neighboring houses shut their doors in silence, no one daring to make a sound.

From a rear window in my hall, facing the city wall, I watched soldiers marching westward along the southern rampart in strict formation, maintaining discipline even in the rain. Assuming they were a disciplined army, I felt a flicker of false calm. Suddenly, urgent knocking pierced the silence —neighbors had agreed to welcome the "Royal Army" with incense tables, signaling submission. Knowing resistance was futile, I reluctantly joined them. We changed into neutral clothing and waited, craning our necks for the troops' arrival.

After a long delay, I peeked again from the rear window to find the troops thinning, some soldiers standing idle. Soon, I saw soldiers herding women dressed in Yangzhou-style clothing. Horror struck: I turned to my wife and said, "If the Qing soldiers enter and things turn dire, you must take your own life." She replied firmly, "Understood," handing me a piece of gold and whispering, "We may never survive this." We wept as I hid the gold. Just then, a neighbor burst in, shouting, "They're here!" I hurried outside to see cavalry approaching from the north, riding slowly and speaking quietly to the crowd. Communication had broken down entirely; even neighbors a few feet apart could not hear each other. As they neared, we realized they were searching each household for gold. Their demands seemed moderate at first—accepting small bribes and moving on—though some threatened violence with swords (we later learned of those who offered thousands of taels but were still killed, betrayed by Yangzhou collaborators).

At our doorstep, one cavalryman singled me out, barking at his men, "Search this man in blue!" Before the soldier could dismount, I fled; the rider eventually gave up and moved on. I wondered, "I'm dressed like a peasant—why me?" My brothers arrived, and we surmised, "Our neighbors are wealthy merchants; they must assume we are too." We took a back alley, entrusting the women to cousins and rushing through the rain to my second brother's home behind Hejia Tomb, a poor, isolated neighborhood. I stayed behind to monitor the situation. Soon, my eldest brother arrived, saying, "The streets are flowing with blood. If we must die, let it be together as brothers." Carrying ancestral tablets, we reunited with the others—two brothers, a sister-in-law, a nephew, my wife, son, two aunts, and a brother-in-law—all crammed into my second brother's home for shelter.

As night fell, the sound of Qing soldiers killing drew closer; we climbed to the roof to hide, huddled under a single soaking-wet blanket as rain poured. The cries of the dying outside were deafening. Only at midnight did we dare climb down to attempt cooking. Fires blazed across the city, near and far, their crimson glow reflecting like lightning, the roar of flames drowning all other sounds. Through the smoke, we faintly heard eerie music, the wind howling like a dirge. The meal sat untouched as we stared at each other in silence, tears streaming. My wife broke the remaining gold into four pieces, hiding them in our hair, shoes, and clothing. She changed into ragged clothes, and we waited, sleepless, for dawn. That night, a bird's cry pierced the air, sounding like flutes or children's sobs, as if hovering just above our heads—everyone heard it, a haunting omen.

On the 26th, as the fires died and dawn broke, we climbed to the roof again, joining a dozen others in the rain gutter. Suddenly, a man scaled the wall from the east, a soldier chasing him with a drawn blade. Spotting our group, the soldier abandoned his pursuit and charged toward us. Panicked, I fled downward, my brothers close behind; we ran over a hundred paces before collapsing. From that moment, I lost sight of my wife and son, not knowing whether they lived or died.

Cunning soldiers, aware of hidden survivors, tricked people with false "safety passes," claiming no one would be harmed. Those in hiding emerged and gathered—fifty or sixty people, half of them women. My brother said, "Alone, the four of us have no chance. Better join the crowd—safety in numbers, and we'll face death together if it comes." Disoriented, I agreed, and we shuffled into the group. Three Manchu soldiers led us, searching my brothers for gold but ignoring me. Suddenly, women in the crowd called out — it was my friend Zhu Shu's two concubines, disheveled, half-naked, their legs sunk in mud, one still clutching a young child. Soldiers whipped the child into the mud and drove the women forward. One soldier led with a blade, another herded with a spear, the third guarding the flank to prevent escape. We were treated like cattle, beaten or killed if we slowed. Women were tied neck-to-neck with ropes, tripping repeatedly in the mud, their cries mixing with those of infants trampled underfoot, their tiny bodies left bloodied in the dirt. Ponds and ditches overflowed with corpses, their blood turning the water a sickening mix of green and red.

We were driven through the back gate of Yanwei Yao Yongyan's mansion, where bodies littered every room. I thought, "This is where I'll die." We eventually emerged onto the main street and entered another compound—the den of the three soldiers, belonging to a Shanxi merchant named Qiao Chengwang. Inside, a soldier already guarded several young women amid piles of silk and trunks. Seeing our group, he laughed and herded us to the back hall, confining the women in a side room where two tables stood, staffed by three tailors and a middle-aged local woman. She wore elaborate makeup and fine clothing, directing the work with laughter, shamelessly flattering the soldiers to beg for valuables.

A soldier once remarked, "When we conquered Korea, we captured tens of thousands of women, not one of whom betrayed their virtue. Why does China sink to such depths of shame?" Alas, this was the root of China's downfall.

The three soldiers ordered the women to strip naked, measuring each for new garments. Humiliated beyond endurance, the women obeyed, their modesty violated in broad daylight. After dressing, they were forced to drink and eat with the soldiers, enduring unspeakable abuses.

Suddenly, a soldier brandished his sword and shouted, "Here come the barbarians!" Several men, my eldest brother included, were seized. My second brother sighed, "What can we do now?" He pulled me forward, my younger brother trailing. Fifty-odd men stood trembling as the soldier raised his blade. I nearly surrendered but felt a sudden surge of adrenaline, slipping undetected back to the rear hall.

In the west wing, elderly women cowered, unable to flee. The rear courtyard housed camels and horses, blocking any escape. I crawled beneath the animals, terrified they would stir and trample me. After navigating through several empty rooms, I found a back alley blocked by a gate nailed shut. Hammering it with a stone risked alerting soldiers, but I pulled until my hands bled. Suddenly, the latch gave way, and the gate collapsed with a thunderous crash. I leaped through, somehow summoning the strength, and stumbled to the city wall. Cavalry swarmed the streets, so I ducked into a neighbor's home, but every hiding spot was already occupied. Five times I tried, from back to front, only to be turned away each time. At the front gate, facing the main road, I squeezed behind a bed with a false ceiling, climbing into the rafters to hide.

As I caught my breath, I heard my younger brother's screams and the sickening thud of a blade—three strikes, then silence. Soon, my second brother pleaded, "I have gold in the cellar—let me fetch it!" A single strike, then silence. My mind went blank, my heart pounding like a drum, eyes dry with grief. A soldier then dragged a woman into the room, forcing her to stay the night. She protested, "This is too close to the market!" I barely avoided detection as they argued.

When the soldier left with the woman, I used a flimsy screen to climb to the beams. Below, soldiers prodded the ceiling with spears but found nothing. All day, I hid in the pitch-dark rafters, listening to the screams of the dying. Whenever cavalry passed, dozens of men and women wailed in their wake. The sky remained overcast, time losing all meaning. As evening came and riders thinned, only mournful weeping filled the air. Wondering if my brothers were dead and where my family had vanished, I climbed down and crept to the street.

Bodies lay everywhere, faces unrecognizable in the dim light. I called out, but no one answered. Torches approached from the south, and I fled along the wall, tripping over corpses. On a back road, people collided in the dark, screaming in terror. The main street blazed like daylight. From the You hour (5–7 PM) to the Hai hour (9–11 PM), I finally reached my brother's house. My wife opened the door. We found my eldest brother already there, and my son was miraculously safe. We hugged each other and wept, but I still couldn't bring myself to tell him about the others. My wife explained her escape: "When the soldiers charged, you ran first, and the crowd followed, leaving me behind. I hid under a house with Peng'er, and a soldier left us to guard the others. Another soldier took my sister, but we escaped with Aunt Hong." She sobbed as I recounted my own ordeal. Aunt Hong offered leftover rice, but we could not swallow a bite. Outside, fires raged worse than the night before. In the fields, the dying moaned, while from Hejia Tomb came the heart-wrenching cries of parents calling for children and husbands searching for wives, too pitiful to bear. Back at Aunt Hong's, my wife tried to take her own life, but I talked through the night to stop her, until dawn finally broke.

On the 27th, my wife led me to a decaying coffin behind overgrown ruins, where we hid under a reed mat. I crouched in the grass, she in front, our bodies barely concealed—any movement would expose us. As killers drew near, groups of people knelt and begged for mercy, only to be met with silence. Children's cries shook the earth. By afternoon, bodies piled high, the slaughter intensifying. At dusk, we crept out; Peng'er had slept on the coffin all day, silent and listless, only drinking from a ditch when thirsty. Aunt Hong arrived to tell us my sister-in-law had been kidnapped and my infant nephew lost. In two days, four family members had vanished. We searched vainly for food, then lay down hungry, my wife attempting suicide again, saved only by Aunt Hong's intervention. Hong Yu said, "I hid in a coffin yesterday and stayed safe all day; you should switch places with me." My wife refused firmly, insisting on hiding again behind the coffin. Shortly after, several soldiers broke in, smashed the coffin, and dragged Hong Yu away. Despite brutal beatings, she never betrayed anyone—I felt deeply indebted to her. More soldiers arrived, crowding around our hiding spot, but some left after seeing the coffin. Suddenly, a dozen soldiers stormed in noisily, fierce as devils. One approached the coffin and prodded my foot with a long pole; I scrambled up in terror to find a Yangzhou collaborator as their guide, his face familiar but name forgotten. I begged for mercy, but he demanded gold. Only after I handed it over did he let me go, sneering, "Let your wife off easy!" He then ordered the other soldiers, "Leave them for now," and they dispersed.

Before I could recover, a young man in red clothes brandished a long blade at my hiding place. I offered gold, but he demanded my wife. Pregnant nine months, she lay on the ground refusing to move. I lied, "She fell from the roof yesterday, damaging the fetus—she can't get up." The man in red disbelieved me, lifting her clothes to check her belly and inspecting her blood-stained trousers (pre-smeared as a ruse), then left with a captured young woman, a girl, and a toddler. The child cried for his mother, so the soldier smashed his head in a rage and dragged the women away.

I knew this place was no longer safe and urged moving, but my wife insisted on suicide, and I was desperate. We went outside and tried to hang ourselves from a beam, but both ropes snapped, dropping us to the floor. Before we could rise, soldiers flooded the house, charging straight to the main hall without checking the corridors. My wife and I fled to a thatched shed filled with village women, who accepted her but turned me away. I ran to another shed south, where hay stacked to the roof offered cover. I climbed atop, burying myself in straw, only to have soldiers arrive and prod the pile with spears. I emerged begging for life, offering more gold. The soldiers found others in the straw and spared us all for bribes.

Inside the shed, I noticed an empty space under a stack of tables surrounded by hay, big enough for 20–30 people. I squeezed in, thinking it safe—until a section of the ruined wall collapsed, exposing the hole. Soldiers outside stabbed through with spears, grievously wounding those in front; my thigh was slashed. The front group was captured, while the rest scrambled out. I rejoined my wife, who lay with other women in a pile of firewood, smearing blood on their bodies, dung in their hair, and ash on their faces to look like ghosts, only recognizable by voice. I begged to hide beneath them, and the women crowded over me.

I held my breath, nearly suffocating, until my wife passed me a bamboo tube to breathe through. Outside, soldiers killed two people in a strange, indescribable manner, making all the women tremble. Suddenly, loud cries erupted as soldiers entered the shed but left without looking back. As night fell, the women rose; I crawled out drenched in sweat. Returning to Hong Yu's house, we found her and her husband alive, and my eldest brother arrived, saying he'd been forced to carry loads for soldiers, rewarded with 1,000 coins and a flag for safe passage. The roads were lined with corpse heaps and blood channels.

We heard of a General Wang staying at Li's mansion in Zhaoyang, daily distributing tens of thousands of coins to refugees and often stopping his men from killing, saving many lives. That night, we wept ourselves to sleep. The next day was the 29th.

Five days had passed since the 25th, and we secretly hoped for mercy, but rumors of a "city cleansing" spread. Most survivors risked climbing the walls to escape. An old drainage ditch, once blocked, became a makeshift path, though many died there. Outlaws from outside, coveting the city's wealth, posed as refugees to rob escapees at night—no one dared resist. We considered fleeing but couldn't leave my injured brother behind. By dawn, we abandoned the idea. Our hiding place was no longer safe, but my wife's pregnancy had spared her before, so I hid in pond reeds while she and Peng'er lay nearby. Twice, soldiers searched us but left after small bribes.

Then came a vicious soldier with a rat-like face and hawk eyes, trying to abduct my wife. She lay prone, refusing to rise as he beat her with a blade's flat side, blood soaking her clothes. Earlier, she had warned me, "If we're in danger, I'll die—don't beg for me and risk our son!" So I hid in the reeds, pretending not to see. I thought she would die, but the soldier, after twisting her hair around his arm and dragging her through fields and alleys, suddenly left after a Manchu-speaking rider intervened. She crawled back, sobbing, her body covered in wounds.

Fires again erupted, turning thatched houses near Hejia Tomb into ashes. Those few who hid were forced out by the flames and killed—none escaped. Some families locked themselves in to burn, from small households to hundreds of people; no one knew how many bones lay in each room. Now, there was truly nowhere to hide: those found with or without gold were killed. Only by lying in the open, among the corpses, might one survive.

My family and I crawled to a tomb mound, covered in mud, barely human in appearance. The fire intensified, burning trees in the cemetery like torches, roaring like an avalanche, as the sun dimmed in the smoke. It felt as if demons were hunting souls through hell. In my shock, I felt detached, barely aware of being alive. Then, the sound of footsteps and screams—my eldest brother was captured. I watched him wrestle free from a soldier (the same one who had spared my wife earlier) and run, but the soldier gave chase.

After an agonizing wait, my brother reappeared, bloodied and bareheaded, begging me for gold to fend off the soldier. I gave him my last ingot, but the soldier struck him down anyway. Peng'er (aged 5) clung to the soldier, crying for mercy. The soldier wiped his blade on the child's clothes and struck again, leaving my brother dying. Then he grabbed my hair, beating me with the blade's flat side as I protested my empty pockets. "If you want gold, kill me! Take anything else!" I cried. He dragged me to Hong Yu's house, where my wife's belongings, stored in two jars, were dumped out—he took all gold and pearls, picking only the finest clothes and cutting off Peng'er's silver lock. As he left, he sneered, "I won't kill you—others will."

Knowing the "cleansing" was certain, I prepared for death. Leaving Peng'er at the house, my wife and I carried my brother to Hong Yu's, his neck wounds inches deep, his chest gashed. We propped him up, but he alternated between delirium and silence. My wife and I returned to the cemetery, where neighbors whispered, "They'll kill everyone tomorrow—escape with us." My wife urged me to go, but I couldn't abandon my dying brother. With no gold left, I felt sure we would die—gridf choked me into a faint, and when I woke, the fires were dying. Three cannon shots sounded, and fewer soldiers remained.

My wife and son hid in a manure pit with Hong Yu, while I watched soldiers drag off four or five women—two old ones weeping, two young ones laughing insolently. Two pursuing soldiers fought over them, until one intervened in Manchu. A soldier then raped a young woman under a tree, while the others were violated. The old women pleaded; the young ones showed no shame as a dozen men abused them. The soldiers then handed them to the pursuers, one woman already unable to walk. I recognized her as the wife of a Ji family member, whose past arrogance had led to this fate. I sighed in horror.

Suddenly, a dashing man, clad in red robes and wearing a black cap, who appeared to be under 30 years old, emerged accompanied by a burly follower in yellow armor and several locals from Yangzhou. He studied me: "You don't look like the others—who are you?" Fearing scholars were both spared and killed, I lied. Pointing to my family, he asked who they were; I told the truth. "The prince will order a ceasefire tomorrow," he said, giving me clothes, gold, and food. We followed him to a mansion stocked with supplies, where a woman was told to "care for these four." It was dusk; my brother-in-law had been kidnapped, and my wife grieved deeply. An old woman served fish and rice, but my brother could barely swallow. I cleaned his wounds, my heart breaking, yet relieved by the "ceasefire" news.

1st day of the 5th month

Though the killing lessened, looting continued—wealthy homes were stripped, and children over 10 were kidnapped. Xingping Bo's remnants reentered Yangzhou, seizing the last grains and threads. The city's desolation defied description.

2nd day

New officials posted safety notices, ordering monks to cremate corpses—many women had also died from fear or starvation in temples. The cremation records listed over 800,000 bodies, excluding those who drowned, burned themselves, or were kidnapped.

3rd day

Relief rice was distributed at Quekou Gate from Shi Kefa's old granaries, but thousands of dan (a unit of weight) were emptied in moments. Crowds fought viciously, leaving the injured—scorched, broken, and bloodied—unable to get even a handful.

4th day

The sun baked the air, carrying the stench of rotting bodies. Fires burned everywhere, smoke blanketing tens of miles. I ground burned cotton and human bones into ash to treat my brother's wounds; he nodded tearfully, unable to speak.

5th day

People in hidden areas dared to emerge, weeping wordlessly at the sight of each other. Our group of five still dared not return home, leaving at dawn to hide in the fields as before. "Food raiders" with clubs terrorized people daily, killing for money and abducting women—no one knew if they were Qing soldiers, local troops, or bandits. That day, my eldest brother died from his wounds, his gashes reopening. Heartbreaking! When this ordeal began, our family of eight now numbered three; other relatives were unaccounted for.

From the 25th of the 4th month to the 5th of the 5th month, ten days of firsthand horror are recorded here; rumors from afar are omitted. Future generations, born in peace and blessed with ease, yet wasteful and unreflective, should tremble after reading this.

Some defended Shi Kefa, saying he died for the people. Others argued, "As a minister, he should have survived to guard the Yangtze—not just die easily." But guarding the Yangtze after losing Yangzhou was as futile as his earlier defenses. Each failure led to retreat, with no escape from annihilation.

When Yangzhou fell, every Manchu unit had Chinese collaborators as guides, turning looters into hunters of officials and wealthy families, expertly raiding cellars and hidden vaults. Ultimately, Yangzhou's people died because of Gao Jie. After the Chongzhen Emperor's fall, Gao Jie terrorized as a "loyalist," reducing suburbs to rubble. Shi Kefa, as a "peacemaker," sidelined Huang Degong to appease this wolf in general's clothing, letting rebels occupy the city and displace locals.

Shi Kefa, once a national hero, fumbled disastrously. After Gao Jie's death, instead of disarming his bandits, he ennobled them, letting tens of thousands of "jackals" loose in the city, provoking both allies and enemies. Reading the Qing invasion decrees, one can only blame the incompetent officials. Allowing Gao Jie's men to rampage after the Qing crossed the river turned refugees into moth-like victims, flocking to their deaths in the besieged city.

Who was responsible for the tens of thousands who entered Yangzhou from the 8th to the 24th of the 4th month, only to be slaughtered? After the fall, letting collaborators torture survivors was truly "heaven's blindness." My friend Zheng Tingzhi said, "Sun Shangu destroyed the northwest; Shi Daolin destroyed the southeast." These words ring true.

## **64.Date:5.18**

In recent years, the publishing industry has witnessed a significant transformation as the sale of e-books has steadily risen while the market share of printed books has declined accordingly. In some urban areas, bookstores that once served as cultural landmarks have been forced to close their doors, replaced by coffee shops and convenience stores. This shift in reading habits has sparked a heated debate among scholars, educators, and the general public, yet the underlying reasons behind this phenomenon remain complex and multifaceted.

While some argue that e-books offer unparalleled convenience, allowing readers to carry an entire library in their pockets and access a vast array of content with a simple tap, it is important to consider the potential long-term effects on reading comprehension and cognitive development. Studies have shown that individuals tend to read more superficially on digital devices, skimming through text rather than engaging in deep, reflective reading. This raises the question: Are we sacrificing the quality of our reading experience for the sake of convenience?

Printed books, on the other hand, provide a tactile and immersive reading experience that is difficult to replicate in the digital realm. The weight of the book in one's hands, the smell of the paper, and the ability to physically mark up the text all contribute to a more engaged and memorable reading process. However, the production and distribution of printed books also have significant environmental implications, from the deforestation required to produce paper to the carbon emissions associated with transportation.

Moreover, the rise of e-reading has also disrupted traditional publishing models, challenging the role of publishers, editors, and booksellers. Self-publishing platforms have made it easier than ever for authors to reach a global audience, but this has also led to an oversaturation of the market, making it more difficult for quality works to stand out. In this new digital landscape, how can we ensure the continued production and dissemination of high-quality literature?

As technology continues to evolve, the relationship between e-reading and printed books will undoubtedly continue to change. Will e-books eventually replace printed books entirely, or will the two coexist in a symbiotic relationship? Perhaps the answer lies not in choosing one over the other, but in finding a balance between the convenience of digital technology and the richness of the printed word. After all, in a world where information is constantly at our fingertips, the true value of reading may lie not in the medium through which we consume it, but in the depth of our engagement with the ideas and stories that shape our understanding of the world.

Questions:

1. The "heated debate" most likely stems from

A. vested interests

B. cognitive biases

C. complex causality

D. technological novelty

2. Digital publishing's oversaturation challenges the very notion of

A. authorial intent

B. editorial control

C. reader demand

D. market value

3. The environmental critique of printed books actually functions to

A. promote e-reading

B. complicate the debate

C. indict publishers

D. educate consumers

4. The passage subtly challenges the assumption that

A. change is inevitable

B. progress is linear

C. technology is neutral

D. culture is static

5. The entire discourse on reading mediums ultimately reflects

A. an identity crisis

B. a power struggle

C. a cognitive shift

D. a cultural dilemma

## **65.Date:5.19**

In the 19th century, the emergence of non-Euclidean geometry was more than an expansion of mathematical knowledge; it was a seismic shift that shook the concept of "fixed knowable reality." When mathematicians proved that the basic laws of space could be redefined based on different axiomatic choices, they inadvertently opened Pandora's box of epistemological uncertainty: geometric principles once regarded as unchangeable truths and the cornerstone of rational thinking became merely one of countless possible interpretations, casting doubt on the entire edifice of human knowledge.

This drastic change in the understanding of spatial relationships caused a stir in the intellectual landscape, challenging long-held assumptions about truth and certainty. If the most precise and seemingly objective discipline of mathematics had to undergo such radical reinterpretation, no field of study could claim to be immune. People gradually realized that our perception of the world—mediated by language, culture, and individual experience—might not correspond to an independent objective reality at all, but was merely a construct of our own making.

In the face of this profound uncertainty, some thinkers embraced radical nihilism. They argued that since all knowledge is ultimately subjective and contingent, there are no absolute values or meanings. Moral codes, aesthetic standards, and even the pursuit of knowledge itself were seen as arbitrary social constructs, lacking any inherent significance. From this perspective, human existence is reduced to a futile struggle in a meaningless universe, like Sisyphus pushing a stone uphill, an endless labor of creating order without hope of success.

However, in the despair of nihilism, others found a glimmer of light in the concept of human agency. They proposed that although objective truth is unattainable, the act of "questioning, creating, and choosing" itself is proof of human beings' unique power. Just as mathematicians are free to invent new geometric systems, individuals also have the ability to construct their own values and goals. This view, often associated with existentialism, holds that meaning is not something "discovered," but something "created" through authentic human actions and choices.

The tension between these two opposing views continues to this day and takes on new forms in the contemporary era. In a world flooded with information and competing truth claims, the question of "how to find meaning in uncertainty" is more urgent than ever. Should we yield to the paralysis of nihilistic doubt, or embrace the freedom and responsibility of creating our own meaning—even in the face of inevitable failure? The answer to this question shapes individual worldviews. It also has far-reaching implications for the future of society as a whole. For in the final analysis, the debate between nihilism and existentialism is not just a philosophical argument. It is a reflection of humanity's fundamental pursuit of "meaning" in an uncertain and often chaotic world.

Questions:

1. The social aftershock of geometric reform is

A. immediate jolt

B. gradual seepage

C. minimal impact

D. ambiguous trace

2. Nihilists dismiss absolute values due to

A. cultural flux

B. epistemic limits

C. value anarchy

D. historical contingency

3. Basis of nihilist view?

A. culture

B. value

C. knowledge

D. morality

4. Existentialist focus on?

A. seek

B. build

C. store

D. adapt

5. Essence of the debate?

A. base

B. nature

C. origin

D. range

6. Nihilism root in?

A. mind

B. world

C. facts

D. rules

## **66.Date:5.20**

Remember how the United States was rapidly consumed by a whirlpool of fear and uncertainty in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks? Amidst this chaos, the USA PATRIOT Act was hastily introduced—a legislative reaction to that unprecedented act of terrorism which shook the nation to its core. Conceived out of an urgent need for security, this act was supposed to be a fortress against future attacks, yet its actual consequences have turned out to be far more complicated and problematic than initially foreseen.

The act bestowed upon the law enforcement and intelligence agencies unprecedented surveillance powers: the ability to intercept communications both at home and abroad, often with relaxed warrant requirements. This went against long-standing principles of privacy and the right to be free from unreasonable searches and seizures. It is like a ship that is sailing in a storm, in a desperate bid to reach the safe shore, throwing the carefully calibrated navigational instrument of civil liberties into the sea, thus risking losing its way. The expansion of surveillance power is no trivial technical matter—it means that the private lives of countless individuals, both within the U.S. and beyond, are now under scrutiny. This inevitably makes people wonder about the essence of a free society: how can a nation claim to defend the values of freedom and privacy when its government may pry into the most private corners of citizens' lives?

The act's impact on due process cannot be ignored either. It allowed non-citizens suspected of terrorist activities to be detained indefinitely without trial, directly contradicting the fundamental principle of "innocent until proven guilty." This created a legal void in which individuals could be detained merely on suspicion, with hardly any means to challenge their detention. This not only violates the rights of those detained but also sets a dangerous precedent. In a democratic society, the rule of law is the cornerstone ensuring fairness and justice, and weakening due process is like prying at this cornerstone from the foundation, putting the edifice of justice at risk of further collapse.

The international implications of the Patriot Act are also significant. It caused a breakdown of trust between the U.S. and its allies: after the exposure of large-scale global surveillance programs authorized in part by the act, other countries began to question America's respect for their sovereignty. For example, the monitoring of European leaders' communications once caused a huge stir in the international community. This was no simple diplomatic gaffe but had a substantial impact on international cooperation. In an era when global challenges such as climate change, pandemics, and transnational crime urgently require joint efforts, the distrust sown by the Patriot Act has become a huge obstacle—leaving the international community more fragmented and vulnerable.

Years have passed since the Patriot Act was enacted, and people cannot help but ask: were the sacrifices of privacy, due process, and international trust worth it? Has the expansion of power really made the U.S. and the world safer? Or have we, in our pursuit of security, already departed from the core values that make society free and just? There are no clear answers to these questions, but as we sort out the legacy of this controversial act, they urgently need to be addressed.

Questions:

1. The act's relaxed warrant requirements for surveillance fundamentally challenge the

A. historical precedent of checks and balances

B. technological feasibility of monitoring

C. economic cost-benefit of security

D. public perception of law enforcement

2. The European leaders' surveillance incident is cited to demonstrate that

A. diplomatic protocol was violated

B. transnational power dynamics shifted

C. intelligence sharing became mandatory

D. technological superiority was asserted

3. The "edifice of justice" imagery suggests that weakening due process

A. initiates legal reforms

B. exposes structural flaws

C. challenges judicial authority

D. undermines societal stability

4. The Patriot Act's surveillance expansion can be seen as a

A. necessary adaptation to new threats

B. strategic response to technological progress

C. subtle reallocation of governmental power

D. temporary measure during crises

5. The author suggests that evaluating the act requires understanding

A. its immediate political benefits

B. the technological context of surveillance

C. the hierarchy of democratic values

D. historical parallels of emergency laws

6. The passage suggests that the legacy of the Patriot Act will continue to be debated because

A. its security benefits are undeniable

B. legal interpretations evolve over time

C. societal values are constantly changing

D. international relations remain complex

## **67.Date:5.22**

A research team at the University of Nevada initiated an extraordinary endeavor in the 1970s, to instruct a chimpanzee named Washoe in American Sign Language. Washoe amassed a vocabulary of over 300 signs and at times combined them in unexpected ways; for instance, upon encountering a swan, she signed "water bird", which led many to speculate that she had developed the ability to form compound words. Nevertheless, skeptics argued that Washoe's signing behavior might be nothing more than a conditioned response to receive rewards, igniting a heated debate about whether she was truly communicating thoughts comparable to human linguistic expressions.

While this chimpanzee experiment captured global attention, a different yet equally captivating form of communication exists in the insect world. Honeybees execute elaborate waggle dances within their hives to indicate the location of food sources to their fellow colony members. These rhythmic movements encode detailed information regarding the distance, direction, and quality of the nectar. Although the precision of these dances is impressive, it's debatable whether the bees possess an awareness of the significance of their actions or are merely acting out genetically determined behaviors. The intricate dance patterns may seem like a sophisticated language, but they lack the depth and flexibility inherent in human communication.

The relationship between humans and domesticated dogs presents another dimension to this exploration. Dogs have earned the title of "man's best friend" due to their remarkable ability to understand human cues. A trained dog can respond to a wide array of commands, from basic instructions like "sit" and "stay" to more complex ones such as "fetch the remote control". Some dog owners firmly believe that their pets can sense and respond to human emotions, offering comfort during times of distress. However, this apparent comprehension could be a result of the dog's acute sensitivity to human body language and tone of voice rather than true cognitive understanding. Having co-evolved with humans for thousands of years, dogs have adapted to read our signals as a matter of survival.

Birds, especially parrots, introduce an additional layer of complexity with their mimicry abilities. African grey parrots, for example, can accurately imitate human speech and even answer simple questions about the attributes of objects, like color and shape. Yet, it remains uncertain whether these responses stem from a genuine understanding of the concepts or are simply well-rehearsed imitations. What seems like language use on the surface may be no more than a series of learned behaviors, a mimicry of sounds without true semantic meaning.

The continuous study of animal communication reveals a vast expanse of uncertainty. Despite decades of research and countless observations, the line between true communication and instinctive behavior remains blurred. As we delve deeper into understanding the ways animals interact and convey information, we are faced with the realization that our current knowledge is but a fraction of what exists. The exploration of animal communication is not just about understanding other species; it forces us to re-evaluate our own definitions of language, cognition, and connection in the complex web of life.

Questions:

1. Dogs' purported emotional responses are best interpreted as

A. empathetic reactions

B. cue-based behaviors

C. affective bonds

D. learned responses

2. The honeybees' dance patterns most closely resemble

A. rhythmic notation

B. geometric coding

C. symbolic gestures

D. sensory cues

3. The dog-human interaction hinges primarily on

A. emotional resonance

B. co-evolutionary adaptation

C. cognitive alignment

D. behavioral conditioning

4. Cumulative research on animal communication exposes

A. conceptual contradictions

B. methodological flaws

C. cognitive disparities

D. definitional voids

5. The precision of bees' waggle dances suggests

A. conscious communication

B. programmed efficiency

C. spatial awareness

D. cognitive complexity

6. Dogs' understanding of commands essentially relies on

A. semantic grasp

B. sensory perception

C. emotional connection

D. associative learning

7. Parrots' speech imitation lacks

A. acoustic fidelity

B. semantic coherence

C. syntactic structure

D. communicative function

8. The studies on animal communication suggest that:

A. true language is uniquely human

B. animal signals lack flexibility

C. communication evolves with survival

D. cognition varies across species

## **68.Date:5.23**

Australia has long claimed to be the world's most successful multicultural country. Immigrants have increased its population by more than a third this century, to over 26m. Not only did sunshine and jobs attract Europeans, but tolerance is now tested.

The cause is a massive recent influx. Net migration, a measure of immigrants minus emigrants, passed 500,000 in the year to July 2023. That was double the pre-pandemic level—and added more than the population of Canberra, Australia's capital, to the national total. The huge increase has coincided with a housing crisis, which is being widely blamed on immigrants. The "social licence" for migration is fraying, admits the centre-left Labor government of Anthony Albanese. In December it pledged to halve the annual immigration rate over the next two years.

The social licence rests on a trade-off. For two decades both major parties have pushed border security as a means to stop asylum-seekers, or "boat people", while letting in ever-more skilled workers and students. Net migration more than doubled between 2000 and 2019, fuelling some of the fastest rates of population growth in the OECD, a club mainly of rich countries. That fuelled a growth spurt—until a long COVID-19 lockdown triggered a recession and left Australia short of workers.

After it threw open its borders in November 2021, the influx resumed. And Australians have started to grumble. They are not throwing up fences, exactly. In a survey last year 78% said immigration made their country stronger. But most of them would prefer less of it: two polls in December found that around 60% think the current intake is too high. The percentage of Australians who rank immigration as their biggest worry more than doubled, to 13%, between September and December, according to Freshwater Strategy, a pollster.

The cost of housing is a big reason. Property prices have soared despite high borrowing costs, and Australia faces a chronic shortage of rentals. A lack of building is the main cause, but both major parties concede that high immigration is exacerbating the problem. "We've got a generation of Australians who can't even get into a rental...it is not the time to be running very large migration programmes," said the home-affairs minister, Clare O'Neil.

Mr Albanese pledges to cut immigration to a "sustainable level". His government plans to reduce net migration to a roughly pre-pandemic level of 235,000 by 2027. According to Abul Rizvi, a former deputy secretary of Australia's Department of Immigration, this is the first time an Australian government has set such a target in spite of the obvious risk to growth.

The cuts may be less drastic than they sound. Immigration was in line to fall anyway, as a backlog of pandemic-era applications is cleared. Still, the government promises a "crackdown", particularly on visas for students, the biggest migrant cohort. The government says many are gaming the system by enrolling in dud courses.

Is a more populist debate brewing? That is unlikely, says Nick Biddle of the Australian National University. Australia's skills-based migration system gives priority to people with the qualifications it needs. That lessens the usual griping about wage competition from low-skilled migrants. Politicians are also wary of alienating the third of Australians who were born outside the country. Both parties maintain that Australia is a "beautiful multicultural country", as Ms O'Neil puts it. For now, this still sets Australia apart.

Questions:

1. "Sustainable level" truly aims to

A. Cut skilled intake

B. Ease social strain

C. Boost economy

D. Limit Asians

2. Student visa crackdown targets

A. Fake courses

B. Low skills

C. Asian students

D. High costs

3. Multicultural claim weakens due to

A. Wage cuts

B. Housing crunch

C. EU exit

D. Policy U-turn

4. 2023 migration spike contrasts as it

A. Lacks skilled workers

B. Exceeds pre-pandemic

C. Triggers recession

D. Reduces rents

5. Social licence trade-off balances

A. Security and skills

B. Growth and cuts

C. Housing and jobs

D. Asians and EU

6. 78% support figure actually reveals

A. True tolerance

B. Hidden bias

C. Policy success

D. Public confusion

## **69.Date:5.24**

Richard III is widely believed to have killed Richard, Duke of York, and Edward V — but Philippa Langley believes she has built up a case that proves the boys survived. Has the Princes in the Tower mystery finally been solved?

A writer and historian who played a key role in uncovering Richard III's remains in a Leicester car park claims to have proved that the Princes in the Tower were not murdered. After ten years of investigation, Philippa Langley believes she has built a case for the boys' survival that needs to be disproven. She says her "Missing Princes Project" has uncovered a large number of documents that, when considered together, create an irrefutable body of evidence.

Others say, however, that her findings are far short of proof and do not contradict the conventional narrative. The traditional view on the Princes in the Tower — Edward V and Richard, Duke of York, the sons of Edward IV — is that the elder brother was deposed in 1483, weeks into his reign, by his uncle, who took the throne as Richard III. Consigned to the Tower of London, Edward, 12, and Richard, nine, never emerged. The simplest explanation is that their uncle had these threats to his reign removed. Proponents of this view have never pretended that this can be proven because there are large gaps in the record.

Others believe the lack of evidence is because the boys were not murdered but lived on to try to regain the crown. After Richard was deposed in 1485 by Henry Tudor, who became Henry VII, pretenders to the throne emerged, at least one of whom claimed to be one of the princes. Although two pretenders, Lambert Simnel and Perkin Warbeck, confessed to being impostors, Langley and others insist these were false confessions extracted by Henry VII and the men were in fact the princes.

Langley and hundreds of freelancers have uncovered documents that, she believes, prove their identity. These include receipts supporting a rebellion by "Edward IV's son" in 1487, the year of Simnel's uprising. As part of that uprising, Simnel was crowned in Dublin. Langley has found fresh references that say the boy in that case was "called" or said to be "a son of King Edward". She believes these point to Simnel being Edward V.

More evidence points to the survival of the other prince, Richard. Three items signed with his seal have emerged in Europe, as well as letters allegedly by him and other third-party references. These include letters from James IV of Scotland and even a document from the Pope. There is also a detailed biography of his life as an escaped prince, though the authorship is not clear.

A large amount of material exists about Richard and, seemingly in some cases, by him too. Langley claims this throws everything into a new context. Asked if this amounted to proof, she said: "Had we supplied this amount of evidence in this book to say Richard III had murdered the Princes in the Tower, would you be asking me that question? "

Questions:

1. The traditional narrative's weakness stems from its:

A. Lack of eyewitness testimony

B. Overemphasis on genetic data

C. Ignorance of political context

D. Reliance on singular documents

2. Evaluating Langley's work needs

A. more data

B. context check

C. public vote

D. expert bias

3. The author implies that pretenders like Perkin Warbeck:

A. Were truly the princes in disguise

B. Confessed under political pressure

C. Had no connection to the royal family

D. Fooled the Pope and Scottish kings

4. What role do Perkin Warbeck's confessions play in the debate?

A. Confirming the princes' deaths

B. Discrediting Henry VII's regime

C. Fueling speculation about impostors

D. Providing irrefutable evidence of fraud

5. The debate over the princes' fate primarily reflects a tension between:

A. Oral history and written records

B. Political ideology and historical fact

C. Direct evidence and circumstantial proof

D. Academic consensus and public opinion

## **70.Date:5.26**

When you look into a mirror, you see yourself almost as if you were two different people — one who sees, and one who is seen. That may sound confusing, but bear with me here, because both versions of you are important.

As the philosopher William James explored in depth, you must be an observer of things around you to survive and thrive, but you must also observe yourself and be observed by others to have any consistent sense of self-concept and self-image. Without observing, you would get hit by a car or starve. Without being observed, you would have no memory, history, or sense of why you do what you do. The trick for well-being is balancing your I-self and me-self. But most of us spend too much time being observed and not enough time observing. We think constantly about ourselves and how others see us; we look in every mirror; we check our mentions on social media; we obsess over our identities.

This brings trouble. Research has shown, for example, that focusing on the world outside yourself is linked to happiness, while focusing on yourself and how others see you can lead to unstable moods. Your happiness goes up and down like a yo-yo, depending on whether you see yourself positively or negatively in a given moment. This instability is hard to bear; no wonder self-absorption is associated with anxiety and depression. Seeing yourself as an object rather than a subject can also lower your performance in ordinary tasks. Researchers have found in learning experiments that people are less likely to try new things when they are focused on themselves. This makes sense: When you pay too much attention to yourself, you ignore a lot about the outside world.

You will never eradicate your me-self, nor should you want to. But you can certainly increase your happiness by adopting conscious practices that lower the amount of time you spend in an objectified state. Three conscious habits can help us transcend this tendency.

1.Avoid your own reflection.

Mirrors are inherently attractive, as are all mirrorlike phenomena, such as social-media mentions. But mirrors are not your friend. They help even the healthiest people objectify themselves; for people with self-image-related maladies, they can be sheer misery. Take steps to make the version of yourself that the world sees less likely to pop up in front of you. You might consider literally removing all but one or two mirrors from your home and making a rule to not look at yourself more than once in the morning. I would also recommend turning off your social-media notifications, adopting an absolute ban against Googling yourself, and turning off self-view on Zoom.

2.Judge not.

To judge is to take observation of the world and turn it inward. For example, if you say, "This weather is awful," you have just made a judgment about your own feelings — meaning you are now observing yourself (and assigning a negative mood to something outside your control). Making judgments about the world is normal and necessary; we need to do it in order to make cost-benefit decisions. However, many judgments are unhelpful and gratuitous. Do you really need to decide that the song you just heard is stupid? Try instead to observe more around you without regard to your opinions. Start by making more purely observational statements rather than values-based ones. Reframe "This coffee is terrible" as "This coffee has a bitter flavor."

3.Stand in awe.

In his research, the UC Berkeley psychologist Dacher Keltner focuses on the experience of awe, which he defines as "the feeling of being in the presence of something vast that transcends your understanding of the world." Among its many benefits, Keltner has found, awe diminishes the sense of self. Spend more time enjoying things that amaze you. My friend and fellow happiness specialist Gretchen Rubin visits the Metropolitan Museum of Art almost daily. I listen to Bach's music every single day and never fail to feel awe. Incorporating awe into your daily life might mean making sure you see the sunset as often as you can or studying astronomy — or whatever it is that blows your mind.

Questions:

1. Mirrors' true danger lies in

A. visual distortion

B. identity fixation

C. vanity boost

D. memory recall

2. "Gratuitous judgments" exemplify

A. biased opinions

B. unnecessary evaluations

C. factual misreads

D. emotional reactions

3. The self-awareness paradox hinges on

A. need vs. harm

B. action vs. reaction

C. thought vs. emotion

D. gain vs. loss

4. The "observer - observed" duality challenges

A. self-consistency

B. social norms

C. survival instinct

D. cognitive speed

5. Which of the following best serves as the title for the passage?

A. Self-Obsession: A Necessary Evil

B. Talk less and do more

C. Pursue Awe, Find Happiness

D. Don't Objectify Yourself

## **71.Date:5.28**

Elon Musk has promised one Starship launch “every three to four weeks” after his vision for sending humans to the moon and Mars suffered a fresh setback with the fiery loss of another mega-rocket prototype high above Earth. What was intended to be a 56-minute sub-orbital test flight from Texas to a controlled splashdown in the Indian Ocean ended in fireworks after a propellant leak caused the spacecraft to spin out of control and re-enter the atmosphere as a blazing shower of debris.

“As if the flight test was not exciting enough, Starship experienced a rapid unscheduled disassembly,” the company stated, using a corporate euphemism for “catastrophic break-up”. It added: “Teams will continue to review data and work toward our next flight test. With a test like this, success comes from what we learn and today’s test will help us improve Starship’s reliability as SpaceX seeks to make life multiplanetary.”

It was the third out of three test flights to be lost this year and the ninth flight overall of the fully-stacked Starship spacecraft and Super Heavy booster — the world’s most powerful rocket. It was also the first time Starship has flown with a recycled booster, which launched the ship successfully from Starbase in Boca Chica, Texas, before separating as scheduled but then exploding during its descent. The upper stage vehicle flew on, streaking east through the Caribbean, across the Atlantic Ocean and over southern Africa at a peak speed of 26,316mph, appearing as an orange ball streaking across the night sky.

Engineers watching from the company’s headquarters in Hawthorne, California, whooped in celebration as it checked off mission milestones such as lighting all its engines to reach its planned trajectory, but groaned as it failed others, including being unable to deploy a batch of simulated Starlink satellites when the payload door jammed. “We’re trying to do something that’s impossibly hard and we’re not going to reach it in a straight line; there’s going to be bumps, there’s going to be turns,” said Dan Huot, SpaceX’s communications manager.

SpaceX intends to execute up to 25 flight tests this year as Musk seeks to deliver on his declared goal of sending the first Starship to Mars next year, carrying Optimus, a robotic humanoid passenger. Vast technological challenges have yet to be resolved, however, before such a mission could stand a chance of success. Nasa, the US space agency, is banking on SpaceX having a version of Starship ready for landing humans on the moon as part of the Artemis III lunar mission. The mission is officially targeted for late 2026, though the timeline is certain to slip as both the US space agency and SpaceX struggle against an overly ambitious timeline.

SpaceX operates an engineering methodology of “rapid iterative design” — building a prototype fast and relatively cheaply, pressing it into action, then using the lessons to improve the next one and repeat the cycle. It is an unconventional approach that comes with a higher expectation of failure as SpaceX pushes hardware to its limits to get the data it needs. The last two test flights in January and March terminated before they had reached those limits due to propellant leaks and engine fires — problems that Musk said hours before Tuesday’s flight test that he was “80 per cent” hopeful had been fixed.

Musk was eager for this flight to be all about testing the heat shield, which is comprised of silica-based ceramic composites designed to withstand the temperatures of more than 1,400C generated during the spacecraft’s re-entry through Earth’s atmosphere.

“Starship made it to the scheduled ship engine cutoff, so big improvement over last flight! Also, no significant loss of heat shield tiles during ascent. Leaks caused loss of main tank pressure during the coast and re-entry phase. Lot of good data to review. Launch cadence for next three flights will be faster, at approximately one every three to four weeks,” Musk posted on X on Wednesday. Jessie Anderson, a senior engineering manager at SpaceX, said: “This is the SpaceX way … We’re going to learn and iterate, and iterate over and over again till we iron it out.”

Questions:

1. Artemis III delay is fundamentally due to

A. timeline misjudgment

B. tech dependency

C. budget constraints

D. priority conflicts

2. Heat shield test failure essentially signals

A. material mismatch

B. installation defect

C. design oversight

D. usage wear

3. Fiery loss directly challenges Musk's

A. tech promise

B. launch schedule

C. reusability claim

D. mission vision

4. Unconventional approach embodies

A. norm bypass

B. reliability risk

C. data neglect

D. cost cutting

5. Next flights' cadence exposes

A. urgency for results

B. belief in tech maturity

C. shift in priorities

D. normalization of failure

## **72.Date:5.30**

HENRY CLAY FRICK made a very 19th-century fortune in steel and coal, but his passion lay in other materials: canvas and oil paint. When he was a young man, a bank official visiting him observed that Frick “may be a little too enthusiastic about pictures”. In 1935, 16 years after Frick died, his mansion on Manhattan’s Upper East Side opened as a museum to show the collection he spent decades amassing, with masterpieces by Rembrandt, Johannes Vermeer and others.

For the past five years, the Frick Collection has been closed for a renovation costing $330m. Some feared that when the institution reopened it would be unrecognisable. But Annabelle Selldorf, the architect in charge of the renovation, succeeded in her ambition to “fix things in ways that don’t interfere with the things that people love so much”. The new Frick still transports visitors to a bygone New York; it also represents a bygone style of displaying a personal art collection.

The Frick’s Whattonesque atmosphere used to extend to its toilets, lifts, lighting and ventilation. It had no restaurant and its shop was poky. (These can be cash cows for museums: the Metropolitan Museum of Art generated $56.7m, about 15% of its total revenue, from its retail operations in the last fiscal year.) The Frick’s music room was charming but small, offering just 147 seats, with better visuals than acoustics. Such oversights have been resolved.

The house’s second storey, where the Frick family had lived, was off-limits to the public and used for office space. Now offices are on the third storey, and viewers can ascend the Grand Staircase and meander through ten new galleries, some linked by a passage with an extraordinary sky-blue vaulted ceiling painted with birds in flight. A beguiling portrait by Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres of a coquettish countess hangs in Frick’s former bedroom; works by François Boucher line the walls of his wife’s private sitting room.

Opening these rooms and installing a few new galleries on the ground floor has yielded 30% more gallery space with just a 10% increase in total square metres. It also means that the Frick no longer has to take down works from its permanent collection to make room for special exhibitions.

Though visitors will doubtless swarm the Frick when it reopens on April 17th, those collectors alive today who are pondering how to show off their work are unlikely to take it as a model, for two main reasons. First, when Frick died, America had fewer and smaller museums. Now people who want to display their personal collection after they die (and also hope to offset their heirs’ inheritance taxes) can leave it to one of many established museums, where it is likely to get lots of foot traffic.

Second, the model of collecting and displaying art has changed. Many capitalists-turned-collectors, especially those fond of contemporary art, prefer sharing their works with the public while they are alive. “Now people are interested in what people think,” Benjamin Godsill, an art adviser, says. “With contemporary art, we’re writing art history in the moment, and the public’s reaction is part of it.”

With the notable exception of Steve Schwarzman, a private-equity titan who is turning a mansion in Newport into a museum, those who would consider establishing their own museum are unlikely to do so in the home where they once lived. That is because contemporary art is bigger than most domestic spaces: multimedia works require vaster galleries than Frick’s small, intricate paintings do. The Frick appears destined to remain a jewel-box reminder of a past era, in more ways than one.

Questions:

1. Selldorf's renovation subtly achieved

A. Silent upgrade

B. Hidden expansion

C. Aesthetic tweak

D. Function fusion

2. Mention of Met's revenue implies

A. Profit pressure

B. Model divergence

C. Cost necessity

D. Income paradigm

3. "Jewel-box" comparison underscores

A. Size insignificance

B. Value encapsulation

C. Historical singularity

D. Artistic purity

4. Modern art display's sine qua non is

A. Vast expanse

B. Tech infusion

C. Public verdict

D. Capital influx

5. Selldorf's work harmonized

A. Past-future

B. Macro-micro

C. Art-utility

D. Cost-benefit

6. Frick's mansion metamorphosis signals

A. Social tectonics

B. Art valuation

C.Familial eclipse

D.Tax dynamics

## **73.Date:6.3**

As Poland awoke to the news that Karol Nawrocki had taken the presidency, the mood of dismay and anguish among liberals was summed up by Agnieszka Holland, the prominent film director: “The worst thing is that unaware, simple people with [only] primary education decided for us.”

Holland would, she wrote on X, support stripping the franchise from voters without higher education. It is precisely this sort of sentiment shared by many metropolitan liberals that has helped to propel Nawrocki, 42, a right-wing, politically untested historian with a chequered past, into the office of Poland's head of state. After trailing for months in the polls, Nawrocki ultimately inched in front of Rafal Trzaskowski, the centrist mayor of Warsaw, beating him with 50.9 per cent of the vote to 49.1.

Now Donald Tusk, the centre-right prime minister, will have to contend with an opponent in the presidential palace who is determined to foil his agenda and bring down his government. The result came as such a heavy blow to Tusk that he declared a confidence vote in parliament to try to hold his fractured coalition together, amid rampant speculation that he could be backed into calling an early election. With turnout approaching 72 per cent, a record for any presidential election since Poland wrested back its democracy in 1989, the vote was a victory fuelled by extreme polarisation and a sense among millions of Poles outside the big cities that they would no longer tolerate an elite perceived as self-serving and patronising.

The speaker of the lower chamber of the Polish parliament and Tusk's junior coalition partner, Szymon Holownia, added to the growing sense of upheaval by suggesting on X that his party might abstain in the potential confidence vote. Surveys by OGB, the polling firm, found dismally low approval ratings across the board for Tusk and his ill-matched coalition government. The prevailing emotions felt by the electorate towards the Tusk administration were indifference and apathy at 23per cent, followed by disappointment and resentment at 21 per cent. Satisfaction with the governing coalition came in third place, at 18 per cent. Nearly 50 per cent of Poles judged the government as “bad” or“very bad”,a level of dissatisfaction not wildly dissimilar to Olaf Scholz’ s ratings as German chancellor before he collapsed his own government last year. People were, in effect, voting against Tusk, who is judged to have failed to deliver on the promises he made when he returned to power at the end of 2023. They have now locked him in a constitutional cage with a president who has vowed to use all of his powers to obstruct Tusk's agenda.

In some ways the writing was on the wall in the first round of the election a fortnight ago, two hard-right candidates swept up more than 20 per cent of the vote. Lukasz Pawlowski, the political scientist behind OGB, said: “Trzaskowski’ s campaign team had two weeks to draw the appropriate conclusions, yet they reached exactly the opposite ones: we saw more Donald Tusk. The increased presence of Tusk made little sense from a polling perspective.”

Alongside the long-familiar divide between rural and big-city Poland, another gap has opened between the educated classes and those without university degrees. Trzaskowski was backed by 62.2per cent of people with higher education, while 73.4 per cent of voters with only primary education voted for Nawrocki, according to an Ipsos exit poll commissioned by the broadcasters TVP, TVN24and Polsat. The polyglot mayor of Warsaw was also derided by Nawrocki's backers as “ Monsieur

Bonjour” on account of his cosmopolitan style and fluency in French. Pawlowski said:“The real division is between the top and the bottom of society, and Rafal Trzaskowski was the candidate of the establishment.” Even by Poland ’ s near-American standards of mutual suspicion and fragmentation in politics and the media, it was a messy campaign, but one that animated huge parts of the electorate.

Nawrocki won 10.6 million votes, which was in absolute terms the highest number any president has taken since Lech Walesa, the Nobel peace prize laureate and figurehead of the Solidarity movement that overturned the communist regime, and who became head of state in 1990. Ewa Letowska, Poland ’ s first civil rights ombudsman and an eminent jurist, said this was fundamentally a“ positive marker for our democracy” but it had been marred by tone of the debate. “If only this engagement found reflection in the quality of debate and arguments put forward by the commentariat,” she said. Letowska added:“ What stood out in this election was the dismal, divisive and populist tone of public discourse, the depreciation of serious argument, and the instrumentalisation of the law, reduced to a mere tool of short-term electoral propaganda.”

On the international stage, Nawrocki's win was celebrated by the populist right as a breakthrough and the start of a reversal in Poland, following Tusk's victory a year and a half ago. Nawrocki had been repeatedly endorsed by the Trump administration, with an invitation to the White House and a trip to Poland by Kristi Noem, the United States's homeland security secretary, who suggested he was the only candidate who could safeguard American troops in Poland. Tom Rose, Trump’ s ambassador to Poland, was jubilant, posting on X: “CONGRATULATIONS”. Nawrocki also received congratulations from Hungary's hard-right prime minister Viktor Orban, the only other world leader to have endorsed him for the presidency, and from Marine Le Pen, the leader of the populist National Rally in France. In other European capitals, however, there is concern. After years of conflict between Poland and the European Commission, Tusk's efforts to rebuild relations and put his country at the top table alongside France and Germany have been well received.

Now his partners in Europe fret that he will be paralysed by political deadlock and on a permanent emergency footing. Marta Prochwicz Jazowska, a Poland analyst at the European Council on Foreign Relations think tank, said the country would remain a“ rising military and economic power” but had not set out on a“ path away from Europe”. She also predicted that Poland’ s policy towards Ukraine, already subject to intense internal disputes, would become a“battleground”.

Jazowska said:“ Nawrocki in office will‘ spoil’ Tusk’ s four-year term by vetoing his government’s legislation on restoring the rule of law, social liberalisation, and strengthening ties with Europe.“[He] will elevate his anti-European, anti-German and anti-migration rhetoric in public discourse while intensifying the anti-Ukrainian sentiment ... Nawrocki supports a just peace in Ukraine and, unlike Donald Trump, clearly identifies Russia as the aggressor … But he will block any deployment of Polish troops to Ukraine and attach strict conditions to Ukraine's EU membership bid.”

Questions:

1. The essence of Holland's statement is a critique of

A. voter base

B. education system

C. democratic process

D. political ideology

2. Tusk's confidence vote embodies

A. power struggle

B. coalition crisis

C. democratic resilience

D. political gamble

3. The“constitutional eage” represents

A. legal impasse

B. executive overreach

C. political deadlock

D. democratic regression

4. Pawlowski's criticism targets

A. campaign tactics

B. policy stances

C. voter outreach

D. media strategy

5. Nawrocki's international endorsements signify

A. global alignment

B. ideological convergence

C. strategic realignment

D. regional influence

6. Poland's EU relations will likely

A. stagnate

B. intensify

C. transform

D. deteriorate

7. Trzaskowski's defeat reveals

A. policy misstep

B. voter disillusion

C. campaign flaw

D. leadership deficit

8. The exit poll's significance lies in

A. voter trends

B. policy preferences

C. social divides

D. political shifts

9. Holland's proposal challenges

A. democratic norms

B. education policies

C. electoral systems

D. political ideologies

10. The international reactions to Nawrocki's win indicate

A. global shifts

B. regional realignments

C. ideological battles

D. strategic maneuvers

## **74.Date:6.10**

Protests against President Trump's immigration crackdown in California have given him the perfect opportunity to burnish his credentials as a law-and-order leader and see how far he can assert his will over a Democratic-run state.

Not only is Los Angeles a“ sanctuary city” but California is a“ sanctuary state”, designations that instruct local authorities to limit co-operation with federal agents seeking to arrest and deport illegal migrants leading otherwise law-abiding lives. Trump has repeatedly railed against the sanctuary city policy, adopted by more than 500 cities in the US, some of which have become the most likely places for the spread of unrest against raids by Immigration and Customs Enforcement(ICE) backed up by the threat of more troops sent by Trump.

There has already been unrest in San Francisco in California, where 60 protesters were arrested in clashes with police, and demonstrations in Houston and San Antonio in Texas. Other hotbeds of pro-immigration activism and resistance to Trump’ s heavy-handed methods where the protests could spread include New York, Chicago and Seattle, all Democratic strongholds. An “ICE out, stop the deportations!” rally is planned for New York on Tuesday night.

On the election trail Trump said he would not hesitate to send in troops when he saw Democratic authorities failing to prevent violent demonstrations. “You look at what is happening to our country —— we cannot let it happen any longer,” Trump told a rally in Iowa in March 2023. “You have to be asked by the governor or the mayor to come in. The next time, I am not waiting.”

His aggressive stance during the campaign was partly to erase the damage to his reputation by the riot of his own supporters at the US Capitol on January 6, 2021, when Trump took hours to call them off and numerous police officers were injured, making a mockery of his rhetorical support for the rule of law. It is also part of his anti-woke agenda, which played well with voters and has the added political benefit of making Democrats arguing for civil rights look like they are siding with some unpalatable characters, in this case rioters.

In the case of Kilmar Abrego Garcia, a man wrongly deported to a maximum-security jail in El Salvador and who was also supported by Democrats, Trump produced a photo of symbols tattooed on his knuckles allegedly representing a notorious street gang. On Friday, Pam Bondi, the attorney-general, brought him back to the US to face trial for people smuggling.

Trump feels that public opinion is on his side and is backed up by polling that shows sentiment is turning against immigration in America. Gallup found last year that Americans’ attitudes on immigration had changed over the past four years:55 per cent now want immigration to decrease, a rise from 30 per cent in 2020. This followed scenes of mass arrivals at the Mexican border under President Biden and contributed to his defeat in the election last year. Polling for YouGov last week showed 50 per cent approval and 43 per cent disapproval for“ the way Trump is handling immigration", making it one of his best-supported policies.

The rights that the Democrats defend are not as widely supported. The same YouGov polling also found 53 per cent agreed and 27 per cent disagreed that “the government should be allowed to monitor the social media accounts of people applying to immigrate to the US".

Trump's political instincts tell him that he can push his strongman image and weaken Democrats at the same time by using LA as a laboratory to push the boundaries of what is considered acceptable in using military force. But it is a dangerous play treated as a last resort by all recent presidents. The rules of engagement are unclear and public sentiment could be quick to turn if Americans are killed by troops on their own soil.

Questions:

1. Trump's law-and-order ethos is most tenuously undermined by

A. the reception of his anti-woke campaign

B. the interpretative flexibility of polling data

C. his temporally dissonant Capitol riot response

D. the operational efficacy of ICE initiatives

2. The Gallup-YouGov data are deployed as

A. empirical validators of existing strategies

B. rhetorical devices in political theater

C. predictive indicators of policy trajectories

D. methodological foils for academic critique

3. The author's latent skepticism surfaces most tellingly through

A. the syntactic complexity of policy analyses

B. the strategic omission of counterfactuals

C. the frequency of hedging adverbs

D. the juxtaposition of contradictory data

4. The “unpalatable characters” trope serves to

A. delegitimize political adversaries

B. deconstruct media representations

C. nullify civil rights discourses

D. exacerbate social stratifications

5. The passage's hermeneutic crux resides in the

A. dialectic of federal vs. state sovereignty

B. calculus of security imperatives vs. civil liberties

C. dissonance between rhetoric and praxis

D. tension of political expedience vs. ethical governance

6. Which analogy most aptly captures Trump's CA strategy?

A. A tightrope walker testing gravitational limits

B. A gambler doubling down on a probabilistic bet

C. A sculptor chiseling public opinion

D. A chess player sacrificing pawns for strategic advantage