Two thousand years after it was pummeled by volcanic rocks and pumice, suffocated by sulfuric gas, buried in ash and then sealed with boiling mud and lava, the ancient Roman city of Pompeii still cannot rest easy. Archeologists began digging it up 250 years ago, but the job is only two thirds done. Now the poorly protected ruins, too long exposed to the elements, are fading fast. Local squatters plant vegetable gardens on the unexcavated parts, and wild dog packs roam the weedy city blocks. Yet 2 million tourists visit annually---on many days outnumbering the ghosts of Pompeii's 15,000 former inhabitants. With few guards about, some tourists deface walls with modem graffiti and take home bits of masonry or stone as souvenirs. Official corruption has taken a toll, too: Pompeii's last superintendent, Baldassare Conticello, is facing trial for allegedly carrying out excavations that were imaginary, except in cost.

In a country with an embarrassment of cultural riches, Pompeii is perhaps Italy's crown jewel. It is the world's most outstanding example of a complete ancient community, preserved right down to the ll5-piece silver service found on the table at Menander's house and the body caught halfway up the stairs at Fabius Rufus's place. The cobblestone roads show the ruts worn by chariot wheels, and political graffiti from Pompeii's last election decorate the walls on Via dell' Abbondanza---along with some rude remarks about a certain Ampliato's homosexual epiphany. Only the upper floors and roofs of most buildings are missing, carried away by the final lava flow that sealed Pompeii for hundreds of years.

The fugitives of Via Castrici are among many treasures that remain shut off to visitors who put up the usual $ 6 admission fee. Large sections of Pompeii are closed, sometimes to protect visitors from shaky walls but more often to protect the ruins, Some of the city's most famous sights have recently been closed or roped off, such as the House of the Tragic Poet, with its fine entryway mosaic showing a snarling dog with the Latin legend "Cave Canem"(Beware of Dog). Pompeii's staff is far too small to patrol the two-and-a-quarter-mile circumference of the town, let alone its densely built-up streets and alleys. The new superintendent, Pietro Giovanni Guzzo, infuriated much of the staff this year when he instituted a novel policy: workers would have to report to work every day, and guards could not sleep on duty. "Pompeii is in such peril," says British archeologist Sophie Hay. "I wouldn't like to be in charge of saving it."

Guzzo believes that the only way to save Pompeii is to stop new excavations. He

wants to channel resources into preserving what has already been dug up: "Our first objective is to pass this archeological treasure on to future generations." Conservationists say that Pompeii is so big that digging all of it up just becomes redundant. "We certainly have not learned how to protect what we have excavated, and we haven't even published what we have learned so far, so why dig up more?" says Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, an archeologist and headmaster of the British School of Rome. He heads a team working in Pompeii re-excavating a city block that had been sloppily cleared before---to quarry ash for building Italian expressways in the 1950s. There's enough work of that sort to keep archeologists busy for decades without new excavations. Already 800 houses have been exposed, yielding more complete rooms than most of the world's Roman ruins put together. Meanwhile, Latin graffiti fades in the sunlight, and rain pours in through open roofs, washing away frescoed stucco. "Every day a new bit of plaster is falling off," says Hay. "I find it quite depressing." Wallace-Hadrill proposes that digging rights to the whole city be distributed block by block to different universities to recorded and complete earlier work. Then, he suggests, some sections should actually be reburied to preserve them.

The pro-excavationitst regards that as archeological apostasy. "The whole point of a dig is to dig," says Antonio de Simone, the ebullient archeologist who presides, in sweaty white shirt and Panama hat, over the excavation of the Villa of the Papyri at nearby Herculaneum, a smaller town buried even more deeply in the eruption. "That's what archeology is." The huge villa, first penetrated by tunnels in the 1700s when huge collections of statues and artwork were taken out, is now being laid bare to its lower floors in a massive operation requiring pumps to fight off the seaside water table. The whole thing looks more like a 100-foot-deep strip mine than an archeological dig and is hugely expensive. The hotly disputed theory of De Simone and his colleagues at Naples's Frederick the Second University is that the Villa of the Papyri was a resort palace belonging to the family of Julius Caesar's wife. Early archeologists unearthed a library of hundreds of Greek papyrus scrolls there, mostly classical literature; eventually De Simone hopes to find the villa's Latin library, where similar scrolls with contemporary writings might shed light on Caesar's times, in the words of the key players themselves. Only a handful of Latin papyrus scrolls have ever been found intact. "We have to excavate," De Simone says. "There has never been such a villa discovered, ever." He estimates that it would take another decade or two to complete the Herculaneum dig. But Guzzo wants to close the six-year-old dig

when funding expires on Dec. 31, 1997. "We have to compare the costs versus the benefits," says Guzzo. "But ultimately it's a political decision, and since the time of the Medicis, cultural pursuits have been in the service of political power.

Saving Pompeii is a vast job. Guzzo reckons it will take $280 million just to stop Pompeii's deterioration---a hundred times his annual budget and far more than the $10 million or so deposited at the gate annually. (in fact, Italian authorities don' t reinvest admission fees in Pompeii---most of the money goes to subsidize other Italian cultural monuments.) And others who might help fund the efforts fear that money could be lost to corruption and mismanagement. Although hundreds of researchers come to Pompeii from all over the world, the only international money now being spent on preservation is a $100,000 grant from the New York-based, corporate-funded World Monument Watch to restore a frescoed tomb.

In the process of destroying Pompeii, Vesuvius inadvertently preserved it. "Of the many catastrophes that have afflicted mankind, few have given greater pleasure to posterity," Goethe wrote---150 years ago. Since then, posterity sometimes seems to be finishing what Vesuvius began.

13. What is the main theme of the passage?

A. Archeologists want to close Pompeii to visitors.

B. Political corruption is destroying Italy's culture.

C. Pompeii is suffering from poor protection.

D. Lava is eating away at the ruins of Pompeii.

14. Why does the writer introduce the passage with "the fugitives"?

A. To fill the reader with a sense of horror at the tragedy.

B. To highlight the damage being done to Pompeii's invaluable data.

C. To stress that corruption led to the destruction of the city.

D. To give the reader an insight into the customs of the Romans.

15. "An embarrassment of cultural riches" means:

A. Italy neglects its cultural heritage disgracefully.

B. Italy is ashamed of its lack of cultural progress.

C. Italy has more cultural treasure than it can look after properly.

D. Italy is too shy to ask other countries for cultural assistance.

16. Which of the following do NOT damage Pompeii?

A. Imaginary excavations. B. Vandals.

C. Wild dog packs. D. Tourists.

17. By calling Guzzo's policy "novel", the writer implies that:

A. Guzzo is determined to save Pompeii for posterity.

B. Pompeii's custodians will get no holidays from now on.

C. Only archeologists used to take care of the ruins.

D. Previously, Pompeii's custodians were lazy and negligent.

18. Further excavation work at Pompeii is opposed by:

A. Julius Ceasar's wife. B. Baldassare Conticello.

C. Antonio De Simone. D. Andrew Wallace-Hadrill.

19. The writer uses which simile to describe the excavation of the Villa of the Papyri?

A. Italy's crown jewel. B. Archeological apostasy.

C. A 100-foot-deep strip mine. D. A 115-piece silver dinner service.

20. In the context, "key players" is nearest in meaning to:

A. senior archeologists. B. Roman librarians.

C. leading sportsmen. D. important contemporaries.

21. The effect of the final paragraph is:

A. Ironic. B. Hilarious.

C. Tragic. D. Prophetic.

22. How would you describe the tone of the passage?

A. Light-hearted and jovial. B. Serious and concerned.

C. cynical and dismissive. D. Scholarly and detached.

V. Read the following paragraph and prepare to discuss it (16 分):

(1) What is the main idea of the paragraph?

(2) In what pattern are the specific details arranged?

If you pick twenty adults at random, the odds are that fifteen of them drink moderately, two are problem drinkers and one is a desperate alcoholic. Two who use alcohol are also using marijuana, a couple are taking tranquilizers on doctors' orders and one or two have been popping barbiturates to relieve insomnia and are perilously close to addiction. Three or four have taken amphetamines to stay awake or to lose weight and nearly all of them drink caffeine, another stimulant. Ten or twelve of this group of twenty continue to smoke tobacco even after the medical hazards of that habit have been amply documented. One has probably taken acid or mescaline. The children of some have sniffed glue or carbon tet for kicks (thereby risking brain and liver damage), more smoke pot and some have had an LSD trip. The drug culture, as the newspapers call it, doesn't just belong to the kids; everyone's in it together.