

THE SPIDERY WORLD

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Intent of the Fable

- ✓ To expose and explode some of the myths prevalent today in our socio-economical thinking such as “affluent society” “consumerism”, “omnipotence of science”, “indefinite progress” “Globalization”. Etc.
- ✓ To realize that in taking to consumerism and globalization and chanting the motto “produce more, consume more” we are following a suicidal course.
- ✓ To see that today, the real danger for the world is not capitalism or communism, or socialism, but consumerism. “Consumerist” societies carry within themselves the seed of destruction
- ✓ To recognize that the economical ideologies in vogue today, in practice are basically the same. All of them are based on world dominance, economic exploitation and cultural colonialism.
- ✓ To become aware of the tragic fact that modern man in his economical programs “cannibalize” on our planet. We are over-producing, over-consuming, and over-exploiting the earth’s natural resources.
- ✓ To realize that the only solution for world peace, justice and ecological safety lies in thrift, moderation, satisfaction of the basic needs of all, equitable distribution of wealth, rationalization of production, sustainable progress and proper husbanding of the world’s natural resources.

Short Introduction to an Interpretation of the Fable

- Modern consumerist society is symbolized by the world of the spiders A society based on the values of the market-place which revolve around a multiplication of purely material needs—cars, fridges, movies, tellies, videos, mobiles, beauty aids, whatever- needs which in reality are distractions and forms of escape from the serious business of living.
- They become less and less satisfying as they become more and more insistent, thus generating more product diversifications, sales gimmicks and a rigging of markets in a hopeless attempt to meet the apparently insatiable demands of a greedy consumers society.
- We see all around us a society **cannibalizing on itself** feeding on its own substance, sucking its own life-blood in order to survive its very superabundance, thus fostering within itself the seeds of decay and death.
- In the parable, the spiders stand for modern man spinning their webs from within their own entrails, and from the vitals and resources of the earth.
- The webs they spin are the “status symbols” our society worships
 - ✓ “the good life”,
 - ✓ a “lucrative job”,
 - ✓ “the happy home”,
 - ✓ “televised heroism”,
 - ✓ “escapist travel”,
 - ✓ “keeping up with the other Joneses
 - ✓ “elitist institutions”
 - ✓ “prefabricated pleasures”

THE FABLE

Narrator: Spiders all over the world for thousands of years spun their webs out of their own “inner” resources. They were a happy and contented lot. Some of their webs were large, others tiny. Some were thin, others thick. Each spider spun his web according to his strength and ability.

One day, one of the spiders began spying upon the behavior of men, a species regarded by all as the most rational and progressive among all living creatures. Our spider saw with a secret envy how developed man was! How human of beings did for ever improve their situation. How day by day, they grew more civilized, richer and powerful.

One day, he was stunned when he watched in the T. V. a telecast of the President of one of the most powerful Capitalist countries of the world speaking to his fellowmen.

President: Dear Countrymen, and fellow-citizens: We, the Government, and I, your President, have solemnly pledged ourselves before our nation and before the world to make of you an “Affluent Society”, and to banish for ever from your midst poverty and hunger and want. We have embarked on the course of “unlimited progress”. The accumulated wealth of our industry and agriculture will fill your homes with riches, comforts and happiness. We shall provide you all with abundant goods and services. Remember: We have embarked on the road of “unlimited progress”!

Narrator: Next day, our spider was equally, if not more stunned, when he heard the telecast of another speech, this time of the President of one of the fastest economically growing Socialist States in the world:

President: Dear comrades and fellow citizens, we have solemnly pledged the nation and ourselves to a glorious revolution, whereby we shall make our nation rich, affluent and powerful and banish all poverty and suffering, hunger and want from your midst for ever! Our country has embarked on the path of “unlimited progress”. We shall produce more and more goods for all our people. The accumulated wealth from industry and agriculture controlled by the State will be equally distributed to and shared by all the citizens. It will fill all our homes with riches, comforts and happiness. There will always be more and more goods and services for one and all. Remember we are embarked upon the course of “unlimited progress”.

Narrator: When our spider heard all that stuff, felt very, very small, even ashamed of the spidery world. He said to himself: Look at men, how clever, how determined they are to achieve progress. But we, wretched spiders! Where do we stand? We are now just where we were thousands of years ago! We have kept spinning the same webs for millions of years. Shame on us! We are underdeveloped, backward and unimaginative.

Narrator: Immediately our spider called an emergency meeting of the spiders and upbraided them:

Spider: My brother and sister spiders, fellow citizens of the spidery world, comrades. We are backward, underdeveloped and lacking both imagination and ambition. Just look at men, see how developed they are! Observe them carefully. They have pledged themselves to “unlimited progress”, to build an “affluent society”, to erect “prosperous and ever wealthier states”. They go ahead forging “a heaven on earth”! But, where are we? Shall we not follow in their footsteps and embark on the journey of unlimited progress? We, spiders, shouldn’t lag behind. Come on, comrades! We have to compete with men to build for us, an “affluent society”, a “spiders’ paradise”...

Narrator: Needless to say, all the spiders were touched to the quick and in an outburst of enthusiasm they shouted:

Spiders: Yea! Yea! You are right! We have to embark on that glorious course of “unlimited progress and endless development”. We too want to improve our lot and share in the blessedness of an affluent society, of a spidery paradise.

Narrator: After a heated debate the spiders adopted by absolute majority an image-boosting rally cry! On it they placed all their hopes. Spiders of the world be creative! Produce more, diversify, consume more! Hold on to the good life!

Narrator: The spiders began in right earnest: They decided that the first step in their way to unlimited progress would be to spin larger and stronger webs capable of stretching from tree to tree. Their spidery world, day by day, had to expand more and more. And they did it! With painful effort and exertion they brought out from their very entrails the resources needed to weave those newer, larger and stronger webs. It was a mighty feat! Looking from the top of the mountains you could see vast stretches of web covering and casting their shadows over whole forests, valleys and jungles. It was a real exploit of spidery science and technology. Yet, our spiders were not satisfied. They had pledged themselves to “unlimited progress” Not even the sky would set boundaries to their progress. In one of their meetings they shouted:

Spiders: Now, our next step is to expand our webs not from tree to tree, but from hill to hill, from mountain to mountain, from peak to peak; and after that, we shall stretch our webs from earth to heaven, from planet to planet, from star to star, and then beyond. Let us keep in mind our watch words: “unlimited progress” “spiders paradise”

Narrator: Again the spiders set out to build the biggest webs ever, the brightest, silkiest, toughest webs. They were seized by a consuming passion to spin the most extraordinary webs, the largest, laciest webs ever, ‘come what may’.

They set about their task in a frenzy of zeal, spending their inner resources with utmost prodigality. With an Herculean struggle and effort they brought out from their entrails more and more stuff to spin those webs. They dug out from the deepest depths of their being the very last ounce of strength left to them.

One day, when they had almost completed a gigantic web that encompassed the whole earth, they felt so triumphant. How proud they were of themselves!

Next day, however, when the sun rose in the sky, all the spiders were found dead; exhausted, dried up and withered in the biggest, most beautiful and luxurious webs any spiders could have ever dreamt of.

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