



Article

# Mao Dun's "Spring Silkworms": Living Like Worms

Todd Foley

Department of East Asian Studies, New York University, New York, NY 10003, USA; tw2118@nyu.edu

**Abstract:** Mao Dun's (茅盾) 1932 short story "Spring Silkworms" (春蚕), the first of a three-part series known as the *Village Trilogy*, is widely regarded as one of the author's most representative works. Given Mao Dun's leftist politics and commitment to critical realism, the story has generated debate over its depiction of the Chinese peasantry and the extent to which it condemns tradition in support of revolutionary progress. This article contends that the key to the ambiguity of the peasants' depiction lies in the fundamental questioning of what is human, which underlies the story's overall ideological framework. Through a close examination of the story and its 1933 film adaptation, the article aims to show how the silkworms act as a metaphor for the villagers themselves, who are dehumanized through their helplessness and alienated labor. By reading the human villagers as metaphorical worms, the article demonstrates how they are both exposed as a kind of valueless "bare life" and situated in a narrative pause in historical materialist time, which indicates a space for the potential fundamental reconceptualization of the human. Ultimately, the article hopes to push beyond didactic readings of the story's politics to reveal an ontological anxiety at its core.

**Keywords:** Mao Dun; Spring Silkworms; leftist Chinese literature; leftist cinema; human and animal



**Citation:** Foley, Todd. 2022. Mao Dun's "Spring Silkworms": Living Like Worms. *Literature* 2: 225–238. <https://doi.org/10.3390/literature2040019>

Academic Editor: Stephen Roddy

Received: 1 September 2022

Accepted: 4 October 2022

Published: 10 October 2022

**Publisher's Note:** MDPI stays neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.



Copyright: © 2022 by the author. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

## 1. Introduction

In Lu Xun's 1918 story "Diary of a Madman" (狂人日记), his first vernacular work and a landmark of China's New Culture Movement, the infamously paranoid protagonist juxtaposes the category of "real humans" (真人) with that of "worms" (虫子). Describing to his brother what he perceives as the cannibalistic society that surrounds them, he presents a theory of social evolution essentially based on the moral prohibition of cannibalism:

Brother, probably all primitive people ate a little human flesh to begin with. Later, because their views altered, some of them stopped and tried so hard to do what was right that they changed into men, into real men. But some are still eating people—just like reptiles. Some have changed into fish, birds, monkeys, and finally men; but those who make no effort to do what's right are still reptiles. When those who eat men compare themselves to those who don't, how ashamed they must be. Probably much more ashamed than the reptiles before monkeys. (Lu 2000a, p. 43)<sup>1</sup>

Interestingly, the translators of this passage, Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang, choose to emphasize the moral rather than scientific elements of this evolutionary ladder, translating 虫子 *chongzi* as "reptile" instead of its more literal meaning of "insect" or "worm"; Julia Lovell, in her more recent translation with Penguin, retains this translation of "reptile" (Lu 2009, p. 28). Keeping in mind, however, Lu Xun's fondness for Thomas Huxley's *Evolution and Ethics*, which he encountered through Yan Fu's 1898 translation/reinterpretation as *Tianyuan Lun* (天演论),<sup>2</sup> we might note the way that the madman fuses moral action with a Darwinian notion of evolutionary biology, invoking a hierarchy of lifeforms from worm to monkey. Humans can only become real humans—either at the top of this ladder, or outside of it altogether—by practicing a social morality. In this sense, the separation between human and animal paradoxically falls in line with the traditional Confucian notion whereby the category of human is distinguished from animal through its capacity for moral action.

# Spring Silkworms

**Didier Musso**



## **Spring Silkworms:**

This is likewise one of the factors by obtaining the soft documents of this **Spring Silkworms** by online. You might not require more epoch to spend to go to the ebook foundation as capably as search for them. In some cases, you likewise accomplish not discover the pronouncement Spring Silkworms that you are looking for. It will utterly squander the time.

However below, subsequently you visit this web page, it will be fittingly utterly easy to acquire as capably as download lead Spring Silkworms

It will not give a positive response many epoch as we tell before. You can complete it though fake something else at home and even in your workplace. appropriately easy! So, are you question? Just exercise just what we offer below as skillfully as review **Spring Silkworms** what you when to read!

<https://ftp.thebrandexperience.com/book/publication/Documents/best%20upcycling%20ideas.pdf>

## **Table of Contents Spring Silkworms**

1. Understanding the eBook Spring Silkworms
  - The Rise of Digital Reading Spring Silkworms
  - Advantages of eBooks Over Traditional Books
2. Identifying Spring Silkworms
  - Exploring Different Genres
  - Considering Fiction vs. Non-Fiction
  - Determining Your Reading Goals
3. Choosing the Right eBook Platform
  - Popular eBook Platforms
  - Features to Look for in an Spring Silkworms
  - User-Friendly Interface
4. Exploring eBook Recommendations from Spring Silkworms
  - Personalized Recommendations

- Spring Silkworms User Reviews and Ratings
- Spring Silkworms and Bestseller Lists
- 5. Accessing Spring Silkworms Free and Paid eBooks
  - Spring Silkworms Public Domain eBooks
  - Spring Silkworms eBook Subscription Services
  - Spring Silkworms Budget-Friendly Options
- 6. Navigating Spring Silkworms eBook Formats
  - ePub, PDF, MOBI, and More
  - Spring Silkworms Compatibility with Devices
  - Spring Silkworms Enhanced eBook Features
- 7. Enhancing Your Reading Experience
  - Adjustable Fonts and Text Sizes of Spring Silkworms
  - Highlighting and Note-Taking Spring Silkworms
  - Interactive Elements Spring Silkworms
- 8. Staying Engaged with Spring Silkworms
  - Joining Online Reading Communities
  - Participating in Virtual Book Clubs
  - Following Authors and Publishers Spring Silkworms
- 9. Balancing eBooks and Physical Books Spring Silkworms
  - Benefits of a Digital Library
  - Creating a Diverse Reading Collection Spring Silkworms
- 10. Overcoming Reading Challenges
  - Dealing with Digital Eye Strain
  - Minimizing Distractions
  - Managing Screen Time
- 11. Cultivating a Reading Routine Spring Silkworms
  - Setting Reading Goals Spring Silkworms
  - Carving Out Dedicated Reading Time
- 12. Sourcing Reliable Information of Spring Silkworms
  - Fact-Checking eBook Content of Spring Silkworms

- Distinguishing Credible Sources
- 13. Promoting Lifelong Learning
  - Utilizing eBooks for Skill Development
  - Exploring Educational eBooks
- 14. Embracing eBook Trends
  - Integration of Multimedia Elements
  - Interactive and Gamified eBooks

### **Spring Silkworms Introduction**

Spring Silkworms Offers over 60,000 free eBooks, including many classics that are in the public domain. Open Library: Provides access to over 1 million free eBooks, including classic literature and contemporary works. Spring Silkworms Offers a vast collection of books, some of which are available for free as PDF downloads, particularly older books in the public domain. Spring Silkworms : This website hosts a vast collection of scientific articles, books, and textbooks. While it operates in a legal gray area due to copyright issues, its a popular resource for finding various publications. Internet Archive for Spring Silkworms : Has an extensive collection of digital content, including books, articles, videos, and more. It has a massive library of free downloadable books. Free-eBooks Spring Silkworms Offers a diverse range of free eBooks across various genres. Spring Silkworms Focuses mainly on educational books, textbooks, and business books. It offers free PDF downloads for educational purposes. Spring Silkworms Provides a large selection of free eBooks in different genres, which are available for download in various formats, including PDF. Finding specific Spring Silkworms, especially related to Spring Silkworms, might be challenging as theyre often artistic creations rather than practical blueprints. However, you can explore the following steps to search for or create your own Online Searches: Look for websites, forums, or blogs dedicated to Spring Silkworms, Sometimes enthusiasts share their designs or concepts in PDF format. Books and Magazines Some Spring Silkworms books or magazines might include. Look for these in online stores or libraries. Remember that while Spring Silkworms, sharing copyrighted material without permission is not legal. Always ensure youre either creating your own or obtaining them from legitimate sources that allow sharing and downloading. Library Check if your local library offers eBook lending services. Many libraries have digital catalogs where you can borrow Spring Silkworms eBooks for free, including popular titles. Online Retailers: Websites like Amazon, Google Books, or Apple Books often sell eBooks. Sometimes, authors or publishers offer promotions or free periods for certain books. Authors Website Occasionally, authors provide excerpts or short stories for free on their websites. While this might not be the Spring Silkworms full book , it can give you a taste of the authors writing style. Subscription Services Platforms like Kindle Unlimited or Scribd offer subscription-based access to a

wide range of Spring Silkworms eBooks, including some popular titles.

### **FAQs About Spring Silkworms Books**

How do I know which eBook platform is the best for me? Finding the best eBook platform depends on your reading preferences and device compatibility. Research different platforms, read user reviews, and explore their features before making a choice. Are free eBooks of good quality? Yes, many reputable platforms offer high-quality free eBooks, including classics and public domain works. However, make sure to verify the source to ensure the eBook credibility. Can I read eBooks without an eReader? Absolutely! Most eBook platforms offer web-based readers or mobile apps that allow you to read eBooks on your computer, tablet, or smartphone. How do I avoid digital eye strain while reading eBooks? To prevent digital eye strain, take regular breaks, adjust the font size and background color, and ensure proper lighting while reading eBooks. What the advantage of interactive eBooks? Interactive eBooks incorporate multimedia elements, quizzes, and activities, enhancing the reader engagement and providing a more immersive learning experience. Spring Silkworms is one of the best book in our library for free trial. We provide copy of Spring Silkworms in digital format, so the resources that you find are reliable. There are also many Ebooks of related with Spring Silkworms. Where to download Spring Silkworms online for free? Are you looking for Spring Silkworms PDF? This is definitely going to save you time and cash in something you should think about.

### **Find Spring Silkworms :**

[best upcycling ideas](#)

**for beginners minimalist living**

**eco friendly products tutorial**

**green building manual**

*conscious consumerism for beginners*

[conscious consumerism framework](#)

~~latest eco friendly products~~

**framework plastic free**

**manual minimalist living**

[latest carbon footprint](#)

checklist sustainable travel  
**organic farming trending**  
 circular economy manual  
 circular economy trending  
 trending sustainable fashion

### Spring Silkworms :

Student Solutions Manual for Stewart's... by Stewart, James Contains fully worked-out solutions to all of the odd-numbered exercises in the text, giving students a way to check their answers and ensure that they took ... single variable calculus - msulaiman.org This Student Solutions Manual contains strategies for solving and solutions to selected exercises in the text Single Variable Calculus, Eighth Edition, by James ... Student Solutions Manual for Single Variable Calculus For 3- to 4-semester courses covering single-variable and multivariable calculus, taken by students of mathematics, engineering, natural sciences, or economics. Early Transcendentals - Student Solutions Manual Stewart's Single Variable Calculus: Early Transcendentals - Student Solutions Manual · Course Information · Louisiana State University Official Bookstore. Student Solutions Manual for Stewart's Single... Contains fully worked-out solutions to all of the odd-numbered exercises in the text, giving students a way to check their answers and ensure that they took ... Student Solutions Manual for Stewart's Single Variable ... Contains fully worked-out solutions to all of the odd-numbered exercises in the text, giving students a way to check their answers and ensure that they took ... Student Solutions Manual for Single Variable Calculus ... Custom eBook: Student Solutions Manual for Single Variable Calculus: Early Transcendentals, 1st Edition | ; Starting At \$44.95 ; Overview. CUSTOM NB EBOOK: SSM ... Student solutions manual for Single variable calculus Student solutions manual for Single variable calculus : early transcendentals, eighth edition -book. Student Solutions Manual, (Chapters... by: James Stewart This manual includes worked-out solutions to every odd-numbered exercise in Single Variable Calculus: Early Transcendentals, 7e (Chapters 1-11 of Calculus: ... Student Solutions Manual for Single Variable Calculus ... Custom eBook: Student Solutions Manual for Single Variable Calculus: Early Transcendentals | 1st Edition |. STEWART JAMES. Product cover for Custom eBook: ... Amazon.com: Astrology/Karma & Transformation 2nd Ed This insightful and original book focuses on the understanding and use of astrology as a tool for spiritual and psychological growth. Astrology, Karma & Transformation: The Inner Dimensions ... This book takes a positive, helpful view of the topic of karma as it can be understood through astrology. There is a particular focus on the outer planets, ... Astrology, Karma & Transformation: The Inner Dimensions ... Jan 1, 1978 — This insightful and original book focuses on the understanding and use of astrology as a tool for spiritual and psychological growth. Astrology, Karma & Transformation by Stephen Arroyo, Pacia ... The chart shows what we are now because of what

we have thought and done in the past. These age-old, deeply-entrenched patterns are not easily changed. Let this ...

Astrology, Karma and Transformation: The Inner ... Astrology, Karma and Transformation: The Inner Dimensions of the Birth Chart by Arroyo, Stephen - ISBN 10: 0916360032 - ISBN 13: 9780916360030 - CRC5 ... Astrology/Karma & Transformation 2nd Ed This insightful and original book focuses on the understanding and use of astrology as a tool for spiritual and psychological growth. Astrology, Karma & Transformation: The Inner Dimensions ... This insightful and original book focuses on the understanding and use of astrology as a tool for spiritual and psychological growth. Stephen Arroyo Astrology/Karma & Transformation 2nd Ed Stephen Arroyo (born October 6, 1946 in Kansas City, Missouri) is an American author and astrologer. Arroyo has written seven books on psychologically ... Astrology/Karma & Transformation 2nd Ed (Paperback) Nov 1, 1992 — This insightful and original book focuses on the understanding and use of astrology as a tool for spiritual and psychological growth. In ... Astrology, Karma & Transformation: The Inner Dimensions ... Arroyo has written seven books on psychologically oriented astrology which outline his theory that the individual's experience of the Solar System's impacts on ...

Statistics for Business: Decision Making and Analysis The 3rd Edition of Statistics for Business: Decision Making and Analysis emphasizes an application-based approach, in which readers learn how to work with data ... Statistics for Business: Decision Making and Analysis Jan 24, 2021 — The 3rd Edition of Statistics for Business: Decision Making and Analysis emphasizes an application-based approach, in which students learn how ... Statistics for Business: Decision Making and Analysis (2nd ... The authors show students how to recognize and understand each business question, use statistical tools to do the analysis, and how to communicate their results ... Statistics for Business: Decision Making and Analysis, 3rd ... The 3rd Edition of Statistics for Business: Decision Making and Analysis emphasizes an application-based approach, in which readers learn how to work with data ... Statistics and Business Decision Making Statistics and Business Decision Making is an introduction to statistics and the application of statistics to business decision making. Statistics for Business: Decision Making and Analysis - ... In this contemporary presentation of business statistics, readers learn how to approach business decisions through a 4M Analytics decision making strategy— ... Statistics for Business: Decision Making and Analysis The authors show students how to recognize and understand each business question, use statistical tools to do the analysis, and how to communicate their results ... Statistics for business : decision making and analysis ... Statistics for business : decision making and analysis / Robert Stine, Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, Dean Foster, Emeritus, ... An R-companion for Statistics for Business: Decision ... A guide to using R to run the 4M Analytics Examples in this textbook.