

The Age of the Marionettes

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I have just received a copy of a weird item written in Berlin. The author of that piece shall be identified only as a nameless German of the grim species which the French call “BoBos.” His name shall thus remain, in the Biblical sense, “Legion.” He is very grim, gruff, given to explosive fits of rage, and, given the opportunity, cruel. Like a real-life Jekyll and Hyde personality, he is sometimes intelligent, but known by some relevant persons on both sides of the Atlantic, as also brutally immoral in dealing with any vulnerable person he has chosen as a suitable target of his venomous intent to destroy yet another young citizen. He is, therefore, of a type not to be trusted with any position of authority over other persons. He is, in short, a thug.

In the concluding paragraph of the written item to which I refer, he launches a savage, threatening attack on what he alleges are the tyrannical tendencies of young adults, a species which he implicitly dedicates himself to destroying. Pity the poor young adult (or even women of his own generation) who falls undefended within the intended sweep of his murderous paws!

There are other persons, as in Hannover and Erbenheim, typical of the same moral defect; but, I focus on his case here. I choose that anonymous representative of the class of “Legion” as my implied subject here, because having a specific case or two of a certain type in mind, has the same function as a hunter’s aiming at a specific duck in a flock. Aim at the flock, you may bring down none, or, perhaps, like Dick Cheney, the man behind you; aim at one, and you may gain a day’s harvest.

Speaking strictly in terms of sociology, rather than merely age-interval as such, what the French call “BoBos” are, functionally, a sociological type, rather than an age-group as such. Like the unnamed subject of reference in this report, they are associated with the “68ers,” and are concentrated, in the Americas and in western and central Europe, within implicitly university-bound social strata born between approximately 1945 and 1956.

In the U.S.A., for example, these 68ers hated “blue collar” workers, modern family farming, and technological progress. In Europe, they were associated with the influence of the Congress for Cultural Freedom and the German and

French existentialists of the school of one-time Nazi professor Martin Heidegger and his protégé Jean-Paul Sartre in France.

On both sides of the Atlantic, they were a generation, or, should we say, de-generation, produced as offspring of what came to be called “The Cold War.” Their trans-Atlantic connection, as belonging to a common, trans-Atlantic, “Cold War” type, is most clearly illustrated by the leading voice of cultural decadence known as *The Paris Review* of Teddy Goldsmith and my personal adversary John Train. Train’s connections ran to their intersection with John Dewey’s intellectual offspring, my personal adversaries Professors Sidney Hook and his British associate Abba Lerner. In general, these trans-Atlantic connections were to the international collection of the riff-raff cast off by the followers of Bukharin and certain “Cold War” ex-Trotskyist circles there, as in France.

These BoBos of the trans-Atlantic community have undergone a series of sociological metamorphoses since the 1950s. They exploded violently into “revolutionary rage,” when privileged students attending leading universities were suddenly confronted with the prospect of being drafted into military service in Vietnam. They wrecked the Democratic Party constituency-basis, by pitting themselves with hatred against “blue-collar” family strata. They became the anti-science fanatics of the 1970s, whose effects were of crucial significance in the destruction of the lawful edifice of the successful form of the U.S. economy over the 1970-1981 interval and beyond. As the great part of my own generation moved out of leading executive positions in political, academic, and business life, beginning the end of the 1980s, the BoBo ideology continued its rampage of wrecking of the economies of the Americas and Europe, from the inside, including the looting, virtually into the ground, of the economies of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.

The essential transition in the cultural characteristics of the behavioral outlook of the BoBos, was from “We are revolting,” to the triumphalist “We are the future” of the 1970s and 1980s, to “We are the triumphant ‘Golden Generation’ ” of the 1990s, to the grumpy, “We hate you—we will suck your blood dry before you see the end of us” generation of the current decade. Anyone in the older generation, notably those past retirement age: “Watch out! The BoBos will get the last ounce out of you, even after you are dead!” Our case from Berlin, precisely.

On both sides of the Atlantic, the BoBo is recognized not by his biological age, but, rather, these revealing cultural-behavioral traits. Such is the typical, if slightly extreme example from Berlin.

The Strategic Issue Posed

With the BoBos on both sides of the Atlantic, we have the case of a sociologically-culturally encysted generation.

There was a somewhat comparable phenomenon on both sides of the Atlantic, during the 1920s; as the Mussolini and Hitler, and other assorted types of counter-cultural mass-insanity typified the phenomena expressed then. There are two most notably broad distinctions between the mass-insanity of the '20s and now. First of all, the social stratum in which the relevant middle-class phenomenon was situated, was a qualitatively smaller ration of the total population. Second, the social-economic environment has been shifted from a premium on promoting the wealth of agriculture and industry, to the post-industrial orientation and transformation of the social composition of the total population today.

All of these factors combined in effect, for today, in presenting us with a BoBo class which is its own dead end. It hates the past, and hates the generation, especially the young adults in their twenties, who are the voice of the future. The BoBo’s cry is, “Therefore, let them eat cake! After us, the Deluge! Take everything from them before we leave the premises!”

On that account, the subject from Berlin, typifies his immediate set of co-thinkers throughout Germany, in particular. They hate what they regard as the insolence of the young-adult generation which is insisting that the nation have a future. The BoBos explode with a defiant: “No! We will kill you, first, if we have to! You are trying to dictate morality to us, and we will kill you before we will tolerate it.”

Ah, but the tocsin has sounded for such BoBos. The surge of voters from the 18-35 age-brackets, transformed a doubtful Democratic victory in the recent mid-term U.S. election into a landslide victory in the House of Representatives. This coincides with the implications of the Baker-Hamilton report, and with the reality of the onrushing general collapse of the world’s present monetary-financial system. Tectonic upheavals in the U.S. political process are now rumbling along the way to sudden and profound changes, as President Bush proceeds in status, from lame duck to politically dead duck, carried, cursing like the legendary cartoon-character, ex-President “Daffy Duck,” off to safe repose in the appropriate loony-bin, even as Vice-President Dick Cheney now tries desperately to play the role cast originally for Mrs. Woodrow Wilson.

The BoBos reacted to the recent U.S. electoral triumph with rage and attempted denial. The decisive margin of victory produced by the 18-25 generation, signals the end of the tyrannical reign of the BoBos. Sane BoBos will depart the company of the fools of their generation, to join the trail of the work of the Baker-Hamilton Commission; the world is changing, board the Ark sailing into the future, and you will now soon leave the doomed past, without regret, behind. Our poor wretch from Berlin will probably not accept the offer to bring him on board; his rage is much too great to do anything as sane as what the present signs forewarn him as the actually “inevitable.”

What the social engineering which created the BoBo degeneration did, was to generate a net product of their efforts which is relatively unique in modern European history, a generation whose inbred dedication has no efficient link with either the previous or subsequent generations, a “lost generation,” dedicated to what now appears as a fanatical, lemming-like adherence to a no-future society. We, who are agreed, in solidarity with our young adults, that civilization shall outlive the present world crisis, must reluctantly leave the fools, such as the BoBo from Berlin, behind, as the legendary Noah’s family might have waved to the stay-behinds as the Ark lifted for its voyage into the future.