



The Gramsci Stratagem The Blessed Mother and the Feminist Attack on Women

Feminists around the world owe an enormous debt to Sardinian Communist Antonio Gramsci for his paternal role in their movement's origins. Gramsci realized that Marxism as an economic system was an abject failure. In Italy, he noted women were deeply attached to their Catholic faith and their families. His formula for destroying the West was a persistent *long march through the culture* with women as the central target

The Drumbeat of Destruction

Gramsci's cultural strategy of making war on women and the family found ready acceptance in the notorious Frankfurt School. Because of Nazi persecutions, most of its Jewish members fled to the United States where they introduced ideas that would eventually undermine the stability of the family. It was a disciple of Herbert Marcuse, Betty Friedan whose 1959 book *Feminist Mystique* summarily dampened the hope of suburban family happiness for many women.

In her 1991 book, *Ungodly Rage*, Catholic author Donna Steichen exposed the deleterious affects of Friedan's Marxist philosophy on women. In masking their agenda of opposition to traditional marriage, sexual fidelity and chastity for young women in the false rhetoric of women's rights and oppression, feminists have been able to fortify a toxic beachhead in the heart of American culture that has poisoned the souls of many women including Catholics.

In addition to Catholic women, others bought the godless philosophy. They quickly shed their exalted position in society, symbolized by the *pedestal effect*, which age-old chivalry had designated for virtuous women and mothers. Consequently generations of women leapt from their lofty position to mire themselves in the competitive world of men, fraught with the health-endangerments of the corporate world and the inevitable disruption of family life. No longer the gatekeepers of civilization, women stopped holding men to a high standard of sexual behavior and respect. The historic battle of the sexes turned into a gender war of attrition. These women quickly found out that contrary to the popular

wisdom they could not *have it all*. Something had to give and it was usually their families. Adultery, divorce, illegitimacy, widespread poverty, and the confusion of bewildered children became the scripted detritus of the *Gramsci Stratagem*. The Gramsci drumbeat is still ever-present. In June of 2011, Al Gore challenged world leaders to stabilize the earth's population and pollution by empowering and educating women in *fertility management* so they could choose how many children they would have.

A Sanctifier of the Culture

Amid the rubble that was once the happy American family, there is an antidote for modern feminism that can restore them to the grace of their natural habitat. As the *Mediatrice of all Graces* the Blessed Mother is the perfect answer to the human havoc that feminism has inflicted on American women.

According to the late Father John Hardon, on the 2000th anniversary of Mary's birth, Pope John Paul II emphasized the importance of a true devotion to the Blessed Virgin. He proposed a consecration to Christ through the hands of Mary, as an effective means for Christians to live faithfully their baptismal commitments. In his 2004 Apostolic Letter *The Rosary of the Virgin Mary* Pope John Paul II called upon theologians to probe, just as a 17th century Capuchin monk St. Lawrence of Brindisi 17th had done, the depths of Mary's role in the life of Christ and the Church.

Given the state of women and the family, her role as a sanctifier of the culture stands out as a timely way to stem the tide of the Gramsci Stratagem. As the intermediary to Christ, Mary serves as a reminder to American women of what their true nature is and how feminism has diverted them away from their path of salvation. Pope John Paul II knew too well that only supernatural means could halt the advance of unbelief in *the materially super-developed nations* in Western society.

The Blessed Mother as Cultural Warrior

Not only is the American family in dire straits, the world lingers in the throes of serious economic default. To make matters worse, the Catholic Church is living in an

age of *dry martyrdom* in which the faith is slowly and subtly being relegated to the dark shadows of irrelevancy without so much as a whimper from a majority of believers. The dangerous times echo a clarion call for bishops and priests to summon a similar heroic trust that Blessed Virgin Mary had or join the ranks of casualties in the Christless culture of this century.

In these historic times, the devil's influence is globally pervasive, as western cultures seem to be imploding. It has become clear that God so perceived this dire situation that he entrusted to Mary great power over all devils. Since the rebellion of Lucifer, the Blessed Virgin has played a vital role in this spiritual warfare. The faithful must implore her to exercise that power over modern feminism, as illustrated in the Book of Genesis (3:15): *I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed; she shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel.*

From the moment of his rebellion against his creator, Satan established himself as the bearer of pride, lust, and moral darkness. He became the eternal enemy of God, and with that, the enemy of the woman whose womb produced the God-made-man. The Blessed Mother only impresses upon the faithful of their need to use her intercession to ask the Father for the grace to stem the tide of cultural destruction.

According to the September 1999 issue of *Mary's Touch* it was no coincidence that about the same time the Blessed Mother intensified her battle against the devil in the 16th Century by appearing in Guadalupe, the devil launched a major assault on the Church during the Protestant Reformation. The battle has intensified ever since as the devil has been frantically spreading errors and moral decay, *drugs, pornography, violence, broken families, abortions, and moral laxity almost everywhere*, while the Blessed Mother has been appearing to young people from Paris and Lourdes to Akita, Japan.

Historic Pregnancies

Sex has been the chief weapon in the Gramsci Stratagem. Through the powerful means of cultural conditioning women have fallen prey to countless men with their *Playboy philosophy* of male charm and seduction. This has alienated too many women from their religion and their families. As a necessary adjunct to free love, available contraception and abortion rights quickly became the necessary accoutrements that made sexual encounters more casual, even on the college campuses.

By doing so American women and girls declared war on the natural processes of their own bodies. This produced collateral damage that bound them in a prison of guilt, emotional anguish, sterility, as well as drug and alcohol abuse.

In his book, *The World's First Love*, Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen

wrote of one of the most beautiful moments in history relating the Visitation of Blessed Virgin Mary to see her cousin, Elizabeth, who was with child in her advanced years, beyond the normal age of conceiving.

In becoming the Mother of Jesus, Mary was genetically, emotionally and spiritually connected to her Son's divine destiny. Elizabeth, however, would not live to see her son lose his head to Salome, the dancing stepdaughter of Herod. But Mary would live to suffer the sight of her Son dying. Her role in keeping with the divine plan was to sympathetically endure with her only begotten Son the intensity of his suffering, while joining herself with his bloody sacrifice on the cross.

In a culture that solves its social problems with death, this celebration of life in Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Elizabeth shines like a beacon of hope for all people. These related child bearers — one very old and one very young — became the first heralds of the Christ the King. Since then Christians have been the most dedicated defenders of the family and the unborn.

A Tolstoyian Oxymoron

The Blessed Virgin Mary was an ever-present grace in Bishop Sheen's life. Like the sun that sends its rays upon the earth from its rising to its setting, so the love of the Blessed Mother shone like a bright light over his entire life. She left an indelible mark on his soul that remained with him until his death in 1979. In his autobiography, *Treasure in Clay* he recounted how his mother had laid him as an infant *on the altar of the Blessed Mother in St. Mary's Church, El Paso, Illinois, and consecrated me to her.*

After making his first Holy Communion at the age of 12, Fulton Sheen started reciting the Litany of the Blessed Virgin nightly, a practice he continued up to his death. After becoming a priest he resolved to offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass every Saturday—when the Liturgy permitted—in honor of *Our Lady*. It was his special way of renewing his love for her and of seeking her powerful intercession.

As an adult Sheen extended his compassion, thanks to his relationship with the Blessed Mother, to those suffering under the Communist yoke. In Gaelic *Fulton* means *war* and *Sheen* means *peace*, a Tolstoyian oxymoron that had to be inspired by the *Lord of History*. Because of Marxism the world is obsessed with the love of the body and in denial of the spirit. This is at the essence of the culture war. One side seeks the constant pleasures of an artificial earthly paradise while the other yearns for eternal life with God.

A Godless Cross

Sheen dedicated his life to the defeat of Soviet Communism and its hold on America. Because of his devotion to Mary, Sheen made ten visits to Our Lady's shrine in Fatima. Of Mary's many apparitions, Fatima had the most significance.

Unlike Lourdes where the location warranted the focus, the importance of Fatima centered on its message. Sheen saw four things in Fatima. First, he came to realize that Communism was an evil that was trying to conquer the world and destroy the Catholic Church. This warning has taken on a more ominous tone during the tenure of the more subtle disruptions of the Marxist culture war.

Sheen believed in the Blessed Mother's ability to combat the evils of the world. One of his favorite parables reminded people that on dark nights they are grateful for the moon for when they see it shining they know there must be a sun. So, in this dark night of the soul of the world, when men turn their backs on the Light of the World, people need to look to Mary to guide them while they wait for the sunrise.

Sheen believed that *Our Lady* called for constant conversion from the world to Christ. For him, the West had Christ, but without the cross, it lacked the necessary discipline, self-denial, and mortification. He called this Western conception *a soft, effeminate Christ Who cannot save us!* In contrast, the Communist world had the godless cross of oppression, persecution, and suffering.

At Fatima the Blessed Virgin spoke about the battle being waged in these perilous times, ravaged by wars, economic hardships and worst of all, a malaise of religious faith. The worst death is that of a soul who loses faith, isolating himself from the healing power of God's love. Bishop Sheen also saw in Fatima a hope for the Muslim people. He regarded Fatima as, not just an invitation for the conversion of Russia, but also the Muslim world as well. Fatima then, also speaks to another aspect of the culture war with Islam that disguises itself as the *war on terror*.

Bishop Sheen recognized the importance of the Rosary in the Fatima message. The Blessed Mother asked in each of her appearances: *Pray the Rosary every day!* She also stressed the power of the Rosary. *The Rosary can end wars! The Rosary can bring peace!* The Rosary is a weapon in the Catholic arsenal that has not been used as frequently as needs be. Those familiar with Catholic history should recall that it was Pope Pius V's invocation of the Rosary that has been credited with the overwhelming European victory over the Muslims' fleet at the Battle of Lepanto on October 7, 1571. This date is now celebrated as the Feast of the Most Holy Rosary.

Sheen prayed the Rosary daily from his childhood with his family until he died. The Rosary capsulates the Christian Faith in language and prayers inspired by the Bible. Pope Pius X wrote *among all the devotions approved by the Church, none has been favored by so many miracles as the devotion to the Most Holy Rosary.*

The Weapon of Faith

Wars are won with powerful weapons. God has willed that the peace of the world depend on the ardent filial obedience of the Pope and of the bishops to the commands of His Most Holy Mother in the 21st century. At Fatima, the Blessed Mother compelled Catholics to say a rosary every day, make sacrifices, and reparations to *obtain peace for the world*. She said that if people did not stop offending God, He would punish the world severely by means of war, famine, persecution of the Church, and persecution of the Holy Father. This also means a cultural peace where the minions of the *culture of death* surrender to the eternal forces of life.

This great battle Christians are waging today is not just about the destruction of human life, but also the destruction of the soul. The Church is still suffering from its sex abuse crisis that has shaken the rafters of vaulted edifices. Since the early sixties, the Church has been under attack from variegated heresies that choke its flock with the *smoke of Satan*. The Virgin Mary offers Christians and others Her Heart as a simple refuge, while demonstrating how in these deadly times *God has entrusted to the Immaculate Heart the peace and conversion of the world*.

The faithful are compelled to look to Mary, especially in August, the month of her Assumption into Heaven, as a powerful antidote to evil as Jesus predicted in the Gethsemane garden. The Blessed Virgin can achieve a powerful victory over the Satanic *culture of death* through the ultimate triumph of her Immaculate Heart over evil. In his 1995 book, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope* Pope John Paul II writes about a statement of Cardinal August Hlond on his death bed: *The victory if it comes will come through Mary*. Catholics can trust and count on those words.



William A. Borst, Ph.D. can be contacted at BBPROF@sbcglobal.net.

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Eleanor Schlafly, *Publisher*
William A. Borst, Ph.D., *Feature Editor*
e-mail: info@mindszenty.org
web site: www.mindszenty.org

“Pregnancy is Not a Disease”

*Following is the July 19, 2011, Statement of **Cardinal Daniel DiNardo**, pro-life activities chairman, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB)*

I strongly oppose the Institute of Medicine’s (IOM) recommendation today that the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) mandate coverage of three particular practices in almost all private health plans: surgical sterilization; all FDA-approved birth control (including the IUD, “morning-after” pills, and the abortion-inducing drug Ella); and “education and counseling” promoting these among all “women of reproductive capacity.”

Pregnancy is not a disease, and fertility is not a pathological condition to be suppressed by any means technically possible. The IOM report claims it would have good reason to recommend mandatory coverage for surgical abortions as well, if such a mandate were not prevented by law. But most Americans surely see that abortion is not healthy or therapeutic for unborn children, and has physical and mental health risks for women which can be extremely serious. I can only conclude that there is an ideology at work in these recommendations that goes beyond any objective assessment of the health needs of women and children.

The single largest abortion provider in the United States, Planned Parenthood, is celebrating the IOM’s report. If the HHS does likewise and implements its recommendations, these controversial practices will be mandated for all insurance plans – public and private – without co-pay from anyone receiving them. The considerable cost of these practices will be paid by all who participate in health coverage, employers and employees alike, including those who conscientiously object to Planned Parenthood’s agenda.

Without sufficient legal protection for rights of conscience, such a mandate would force all men, women and children to carry health coverage that violates the deeply-held moral and religious convictions of many. This new threat to conscience makes it especially critical for Congress to pass the “Respect for Rights of Conscience Act” introduced by Reps. Jeff Fortenberry and Dan Boren (HR 1179). I am writing to all members of Congress to urge their co-sponsorship.

The IOM missed an opportunity to promote better health care for women that is life-affirming and truly compassionate. I once again urge the Department of Health and Human Services to focus on the need of all Americans, including immigrants and the poor, for basic life-saving health coverage – not on mandating controversial elective practices in ways that undermine the good of women and children, the consciences of employers, employees and health plan providers, and the common good

Cardinal Daniel DiNardo
Archbishop of Galveston-Houston

Louisville, KY Conference 2011

Once more the Eternal Life program, “Church Teaches Forum,” was held in Louisville, July 15-16. It was attended by over 400 persons who were spiritually encouraged by the notable Cardinal Francis Arinze, *The Centrality of the Sacred Liturgy in the Evangelizing Mission of the Church*, and the popular Cardinal Raymond Burke, formerly of St. Louis, now in Rome, *Reform of the Reform*.

Also on the program: Bishop Daniel Thomas, *Christ and His Church: The Mystery of This Dialogue in the Roman Missal*, Fr. Roger Arnsparger, *Restoring the Sacred Liturgy: Building a Culture of Holiness and Salvation*, and Archbishop Joseph Kurtz, celebrant of Mass. Eternal Life President Fr. Edmund McCaffrey was flawless as M.C.

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