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Gymobssesionism part II

If you study the Art and lifestyles of the ancient Greeks, you will see that the obsession with the perfect human body dates back thousands of years. A culture based on physical agility, strength, and superiority. They invented weight lifting in order to perfect their physics as well as The Olympics designed to display the varieties of strength within the culture through competition. All methods made to weed out those who fall short of perfect and glorify those who fit the definition. None more notoriously known within the culture than the Spartans, who took drastic measures maintain perfection among the culture such as slaughtering infant babies with physical imperfections. The Spartans developed a belief that compared their bodily perfection to that of the Gods becoming the seed of later events in history such as the holocaust and Gymobssesionism itself.

One could argue that people join the religion of Gymobssesionism to improve their physical and spiritual health. However in reality, it is the pressure of the U.S. society and their obsession with the perfection of the human body that pushes them into it—a belief as old as the Spartans themselves making its comeback in the 21st century. In my recent studies I explained to you the structure of the Gymobssesionostic church as well as its members and the roles they play. In this round of research I decided to speak with the natives themselves in order to acquire their personal outlook on their religion as well as revealing their individual rituals and routines. The church was rather open to allowing me to study the natives. I was able to convince two women members and one male member to allow me to study them in depth as well as ask them questions

concerning their beliefs. I began with the two young women of the church who both confessed attending church 4 to 6 days a week. When asking the two young ladies about the rituals that they both practiced in order to prepare themselves for their daily worship, they both had similar answers. One woman said that she makes sure she gets enough sleep (she attends the early morning service) as well as has her church apparel as well as packing a change of clothes since she works directly after service. She does this like clockwork 4 days a week. The other young lady attends the mid-day service to avoid the largest crowd who attends the late afternoon service in order to receive their holy teachings. This young lady also said that she too packed a change of clothes in order to change into her work attire which she attended directly after service. It was rather interesting when I asked the young gentleman what he did to prepare for church service, his answers were very different than that of the women believers. Before attending church he would perform slow concentrated movements believed to enhance spiritual holiness by elongating the muscles. He then drank of a special holy elixir filled with sacred vitamins believed to allow the muscles to absorb spiritual blessings and become stronger, all of this taking place before he even dresses himself for service. His approach seemed to be much more physical as where the women's were more intellectual. I couldn't help but to notice this trend often being portrayed within society.

Never have I seen another religion advertised as much as Gymobssessionism. I can see ads trying to convince people of joining the religion on sides of walls, bus stops, on the pages of magazines, even on television. I have even seen some of their Holy advisors out in public places persuading people to join the religion, reminding me very much of the Jehovah's witnesses who are required to do so. I found the use of advertisement to be

a prevalent factor in the reasoning's the members I interviewed decided to join. They all three compared the want for perfect physiques to those displayed in the advertisements. Did the Ancient Greeks not do this themselves through their art? The two being all too similar, I couldn't help but to agree with the natives on this issue. Often times I have found myself browsing through a magazine or watching the television and comparing my physique to that portrayed to me. The church knows this all too well and draws most of its worshipers through the strategy of comparison to that of the "ideal" American figure. However, what is ideal and who said that it was ideal in the first place? Once again dating back to the Spartans who believed an ideal figure to be six heads tall and very muscularly defined, making the most "ideal" viewed to be the sons of Gods. What interested me the most however is how intently the natives bought into this belief and how through great faith they believe that each new day they are becoming closer to the epitome of the "perfect body."

After acquiring the answers to the first questions I asked, I was extremely eager to shadow these believers during their service to see exactly what they did for their routines. I began with the first young lady. This young lady fell under the category of advanced; her routine reflected this very well. Her lifting stones were much heavier than any of the other women followers in the room. She carried them in her hands during all of her exercises in which she used strategies that focused on balance (perhaps to balance her inner spirits). She squatted as if sitting in an invisible chair while standing on one foot the whole time carrying these heavy lifting stones in her hands. Next she would do a lunging move; still holding the lifting stones in her hands and would continue for the entire length of the room. Next she would move to one of the weighted benches where she would sit

underneath a weighted platform and lift it using only the strength of her legs to push it up(remember I had mentioned that the women liked to worked in a very proportioned manner). The entire time I stood to observe her holy routine I couldn't help but to notice the background action. One man started at her intently, while another nearby showed of his superior physique to himself as he stared at his flexing muscles in a nearby mirror, another close by spoke quietly to himself as he picked up a very heavy lifting stone. She however seemed to be oblivious to her outside surrounding and focused solely on the "sermon" of the day.

The second young lady fell under the category of beginner. She spent much of her time testing her faith on one of stationary bicycles on which she stayed for an entire 30 minutes riding with great speed and getting absolutely nowhere. After that she met with a religious leader who would help her better learn the ways of the religion. I was unfortunately not allowed to follow in on this routine due to distractions from her not yet fully developed spirit. I then moved on to follow the young man I interviewed and found his routine to be very interesting. He exercised with a mini electronic device with little wire protruding from hid ears. His routine fell under the category of intermediate when it came to the males of the church. He lifted very heavy lifting stones above his head while sitting back (much like the young woman did). He then would move to a flat bench in which he would lie on his back and lift a bar with lifting stones attached to the ends over his chest breathing in and out loudly as he did so. He then would put the bar down and pick up two other lifting stones and lift them directly up and down repeatedly. After finishing this routine he would then stop and admire himself in the mirror before starting

another set. He continued intently only stopping a few times to flash a smile at some of the pretty church girls walking about the room.

After observing them each individually as they went through their ritual routines, I decided to ask them another important question, I wanted to know if they thought that too much emphasis is put into obtaining bodily perfection. Their answers were rather shocking considering that they are believers of Gymobssessionism themselves. The Youngest woman replied that she indeed felt that there is a bit of an obsession with “perfection” in general causing groups of people to either lean towards one extreme or the other. Either they try to be too perfect or simply become too imperfect. The other lady also believed that there is too much emphasis put on “perfection” and believes that younger generations being “imperfect” may be the root of obsession within the older groups and the constant pressure put on them to be a positive example for future believers. The young man's answer sided much more strongly with Gymobssessionism. He replied that he did not believe too much emphasis is put on “perfection” because if there was too, because if there was there would not be so many people who still remain “imperfect” in order of the religion's standard. A mind set very reflective of Spartan like qualities. The women who did not have to go out to battle put less emphasis on bodily perfection than the Spartan military did. Men were expected to be in superior physical shape in order to be considered a true warrior. So now the question that stands is; is Gymobssessionism directly related to the beliefs and culture of the Spartans? After my in depth studies of this complicated religion that seems to be making its impression on the population everywhere, I would have to conclude that Gymobssessionism got its root from that of the Spartans. This could be a good topic for my further studies.

When I was young I was always taught that there was no such thing as “perfect.” This may be a reflection of my own religion or maybe just a reality. However, the people of this religion believe that the only gateway to true harmony can be obtained through that of bodily perfection. The questions that will linger with me regarding are what happens to those who never reach bodily perfection? And like the Spartans did, does Gymobssessionism also exclude the physically disabled from spiritual purity and the right to ascend to the heavens? Gymobssessionism, a religion based loosely on that of perfection and superiority, is a dominant religion nonetheless.

Bibliography

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