
Hellenism



Hellenism (Greek: *Ellinismós*, Latin: *Hellenismus*), also less frequently called **Olympianism** (Greek: *Olympianismós*, Latin: *Olympianismus*) or **Dodekatheism** (Greek: *Dodekatheïsmós*, Latin: *Duodecimdeismus*), is the traditional polytheistic and animistic orthopraxic religion, lifestyle, aesthetics, and ethos of the ancient Graeco-Roman world, and is the indigenous religion of the common Greek and Latin cultural sphere. Hellenism proper is Minoan-Mykenaian in its origins, and it came to be practiced not only by those who were born Greek by genos, but also by other peoples that came to be shaped and/or influenced by the Hellenic ethos and, ultimately, adopted the Hellenic ethnos. However, this process of non-Greeks becoming Hellenes truly flourished on a global scale during what contemporary historians call the Hellenistic period, an era which began following the death of Alexander the Great in 323 BCE. Beginning during this time, Hellenic culture and practices would be spread by Alexander's successors, the Diadokhoi, and later on eventually Rome, leading Hellenism to become the dominant religion of the ancient Mediterranean and Near East. The term *Hellenism* was first coined in its proper religious sense by the blessed Emperor [Flavius Claudius Iulianus Augustus](#) to refer to the general entirety of Graeco-Roman tradition as it was fundamentally derived from the Greeks, or *Hellenes*. Central to Hellenism is the universal desire to achieve and satisfy the human striving, or *telos*, for *eudaimonia* (Latin: *Felicitas*), the divinely inspired contented state of having a good indwelling spirit in which we are healthy, happy and prosperous.

Broadly speaking, Hellenism is a polytheistic religion that understands the Gods are unchanging, unbegotten, eternal, and not in space. It is primarily a devotional or votive religion, based on the [exchange of gifts between the divine and mortals](#) typically through correctly performed sacrificial rituals. However, it is not just a system of orthopraxic devotion and supplication of the divine, but rather is an entire everyday lived ethos and system of morality which encompasses a person's entire lifestyle; a *modus vivendi et operandi*, or "way of living and operating." The ethical convictions of Hellenes are inspired by ancient Graeco-Roman virtues such as reciprocity, hospitality, and moderation.

Hellenes worship a large number of [deities](#), which includes:

- The Ouranic/Dii Superi, or Olympian deities (e.g., Zeus-Helios, Hera, etc.)
- The Einalic/Dii Mari, or Sea deities (e.g., Poseidon, Coventina, etc.)
- The Khthonic/Dii Inferi, or Underworld deities (e.g., Plouton, Hermes, etc.)
- The Protogenic/Primordi, or Primordial deities (e.g., Ouranos, etc.)
- The Titans (e.g., Kronos, Meter Theon, etc.)
- Terrestrial Daimons/Genii (e.g., Daktyloi, Satyrs, Nymphs such as Nereids and Dryads, etc.)

- Heroes (e.g., Prometheus)
- Ancestors and ancestral divinities (e.g., Lares, Penates, etc.)

Those who practice Hellenism are called Hellenes, which in this context is not the same as citizens from the contemporary Christian nation in Greece who likewise call themselves Hellenes but partake in a “Christian Hellenism” invented by the Romiosyni (i.e., Greek Christians) 200 years ago. Rather, Hellenes in the context of the Hellenism this page discusses is the **ethnos** that had been born in ancient antiquity and survived through the centuries, from ancient Hellas through Byzantium and has survived all the way to the modern day. Merely worshiping the Gods does not make one a Hellene, because if it were so then superstitious Wiccans would be considered Hellenic simply for their lipservice to the Gods. Rather, to be a practitioner of Hellenism, one must embrace the Hellenic ethos via a process of education where one Hellenizes themselves and ultimately participates in the ethnos. This process is mandatory to practice Hellenism, but it is available to all who wish to join the Hellenic tradition.

Hellenism is simultaneously an Ethnikos, Universal Religion, and more than a religion

Hellenism can be described as a form of **Paganism**, also called **Ethnism** (Latin: **Paganismo**, Greek: **Ethnikos**), which means it is an **ethnos**. It is not to be used synonymously with eclectic New Age religions. It is not vague, undefined “earth-based” spirituality. It also is not “religion without rules.” And it especially is not a “religion of one’s blood” that is to be confused with the chauvinistic and brainless concept of “ethnicism.” Ethnic/Pagan religions such as Hellenism are said to be concerned with an ethnos, yes, but this is not to be confused with “race” or “blood,” as an ethnos has nothing to do with one’s blood or anything remotely similar to contemporary social constructs invented by European imperialists such as “race.” “Race” is merely a social construct based on physical attributes – and Hellenes are not of a single type: there are Hellenes who came from Egyptian backgrounds, Hellenes who came of Syrian backgrounds, Hellenes who came from Latin backgrounds, and so on. Furthermore, it cannot be confused with a secular notion of “culture” because one can be Hellenic in ancestry, speak Greek and Latin, and undertake every Hellenic cultural aspect – but if you convert to a religion incompatible with Hellenism you are not a Hellene anymore, as demonstrated by medieval “Greek Christians” who took to identifying themselves as “Rhomaioi” (i.e., Roman, Byzantine) instead of “Hellene” once they converted away from Hellenism and into Christianity (Howatson 1989, 264), rejecting the cultural force of Hellenism and explicitly classifying Hellenes as a distinct people with a separate identity (Malatras 2011, 425-427). This is demonstrated with Hellenic-born Christian apologist Aristeides, who picked out the Hellenes as one of the representative Pagan peoples of the world alongside Egyptians (Aristeides, *Apology*), and Hellenic-born Christian apologist Clement of Alexandria, who specifically identified the Hellenes with Paganism (Clement of Alexandria *Miscellanies*, 6, 5, 41). This identification of Hellenes as a separate peoples continued into the Medieval era, with Procopius writing that the Christian Emperor Justinian tried to destroy Hellenism, even within private life, with new decrees and lawcodes such as his Corpus Juris Civilis, stating that “he [Justinian] turned the persecution against the ‘Greeks’ [Hellenes], torturing their bodies and looting their property. Many of these decided to assume for appearance’ sake the name of Christian in order to avert the immediate threat; but it was not long before they were for the most part caught at their libations and sacrifices” (Procopius 1935, 137-141). Late Byzantine *History of Emperors* describes the devout and pious Pagan, Emperor Diokletianos, as “Roman Emperor, Hellene and idolater” (Iadevaia 2005, 9). This identity of Hellene meaning Graeco-Roman polytheist continued into the reign of the much later Constantine VII (r. 913-959 ACE), who in his *De Administrando Imperio* makes explicit reference to the last public Hellenes, the Maniots (Greenhalgh & Eliopoulos 1985, 22), in such a manner:

“Be it known that the inhabitants of Castle Maina are not from the race of aforesaid Slavs (Melingoi and Ezeritai dwelling on the Taygetus) but from the older Romaioi, who up to the present time are termed Hellenes by the local inhabitants on account of their being in olden times idolaters and worshippers of idols like the ancient Greeks, and who were baptized and became Christians in the reign of the glorious Basil. The place in which they live is waterless and inaccessible, but has olives from which they gain some consolation.”

Instead, we can begin to understand what an *ethnos* designates by looking at its etymology. In the Greek New Testament those ascribing to pre-Christian religions are called *ta ethnē*, meaning “the tribes” or “the nations” (Luke 24:47, Matthew 25:32, Matthew 28:19). As such, religions of “the tribes/nations” were deemed *ethnikos* (“ethnic,” but this does not have the same connotation as the English word), as pertaining to a tribe or nation (not to be confused with the contemporary notion of a nation-state), in opposition to Christian *katholikos*, “catholic” or “universal.” In the Latin West, the term *Paganus*, or Pagan, was coined in the religious sense by Christians in Late Antiquity as a translation of *ethnikos*. The term *paganus*, coming from Latin *pagus*, “district,” also relates to the idea of nationhood. This word continues to have this meaning in the derived French word *pays*, which implies “a nation” or “country.” As such, we can understand that an *ethnos* denotes a “tribal identity.” An *ethnos* can be understood to designate a group of people who share a common *ethos* (Latin: *Mores*) meaning “character” or “culture.” This includes language, literature, history, philosophy, science, morality, unwritten moral codes which stem from common habits, socially acceptable behavior, and so on.

An *ethnos* can be understood as an identity that, rather than being “constructed” based on the point of view of society as a whole, is “constructed” based on the point of view of the traditions and laws of the tribe. Participation in an *ethnos* is defined by having acceptance in a community and participating in the life of that community. A Hellenic community’s acceptance of you as part of the *ethnos* is based Herodotos’ categorization of what makes up the Hellenikon (Herodotos *Histories*, 8.144.2):

- **Homoglōsson**, or common language, as in Greek (and optionally Latin): This is the best place to start. A proper grasp of the contemporary Hellenic language will allow you to chat with other Hellenes and join them in their communal activities without the distorting filter and cultural baggage of another language. A proper grasp of the ancient Hellenic language will allow you to read ancient Hellenic works without an over-reliance on the translations of others which might have skewed interpretations thanks to their individual cultural baggage.
- **Homótropon**, or common customs: Adopting Hellenic cultural practices, such as [xenia](#).
- **Homothriskos**, or common religion: Understanding how to perform the formal body of rituals done to maintain our receptiveness to the light of the Gods.
- **Homóaimon**, or common blood: The child of a Hellene will also be assumed to be a Hellene; typically this is patrimonial. This is the most optional of all.

The more of these you have, the more of a Hellene one can be considered. One cannot be considered a Hellene simply because they were born into a family that was Hellenic by *genos*, nor simply because they adopted the religion divorced of its *ethos*. Rather, one must embrace the Hellenic *ethos* to truly become a practitioner of Hellenism. Someone who is not born in Hellas and not born by Hellenic parents, but has a Hellenic education and thus has thoroughly Hellenized themselves, can be considered “more Hellenic” than someone who had the two prior but was deprived of the latter. This is because though Pagan traditions such as Hellenism are *ethnikos* because they originated with a group of people, they are at the same time *katholikos*, or universal, because anyone can join them via adopting the *ethos*. Hellenism has a history of welcoming people of diverse backgrounds,

including several famous Hellenes such as Plotinos (a Egyptian), Iamblichus (a Syrian), Emperor Julian (a Illyro-Thracian), and so on, who were each not born as Hellenes. One does not become part of a *ethnos* simply by birth. Rather, one becomes part of an *ethnos* through *work*. This is a clear understanding from the ancient world, as the divine Emperor Julian tells us: “though my family [the Constantinian dynasty] is Thracian, [I] am a Greek in my habits,” or in other words, *logos* displaces *genos* (Flavius Claudius Iulianus, II 501). Participating within a *ethnos* does not designate a people of common descent (*genos*), but a mind-set (*logoi*) (Libanios, Or. II.184) (Kaldellis 2011, 54). This notion goes back to ancient Athens as Isokrates tells us: “Athens has made it so that the name of the Greeks designates not a people [*genos*] but a mind-set, and those are called Greeks who share in our culture rather than our common stock [*physis*]” (Isokrates: Panegyric 50). One acquires culture through a process of civilizing education called *paideia* (Elm 2012, 378-379), where one Hellenizes themselves and thus adopt the *ethos*, or “character,” of Hellenism (e.g., language, history, philosophy, etc). If you undergo a process of *paideia* and this cultivates into a conversion to Hellenism, where you participate in the Hellenic community, then you are a Hellene. As stated prior, Hellenism on a global scale began after the death of Alexander the Great and the spreading of Greek culture throughout the Mediterranean. Hellenistic and Hellenized culture interacted and mingled with local cultures throughout the region and created new, diverse traditions. Hellenism can and will manifest in different forms in different regions and adopt itself effortlessly to the religious customs of the area where it becomes absorbed— so long as they do not conflict with Hellenism— though with a consistent Hellenic tone at the foundation. A prime example of this is the eternal city of Rome, which though having had distinctive Latin elements in many regards both linguistically and religiously, nonetheless participated in the Hellenic *ethnos* and had established and maintained sacred rites and pious belief in the Gods which were nonetheless, from beginning to end, Greek— all acknowledged by the divine Emperor Julian (Flavius Claudius Iulianus, I 419). Another notable example is ancient Athens, which Herodotos tells us had actually began as a pre-Hellenic Pelasgian settlement that had become Hellenized through a process of *paideia*, where its inhabitants learned the Hellenic language (Herodotos *Histories*, I.57). It is thus very straightforward to understand that Hellenism was the world’s first universal religion. This makes sense as and by its very nature Hellenism reflects the reality and universal principles of the *Kosmos* itself, and as such it is an eternal religion. Any freethinking and intelligent person who is observing the *Kosmos* with an analytical and imaginative eye is capable of deriving the essential principles of it. As such, Hellenism is self-revelatory.

We can find an understanding of Hellenism as both universal (*katholikos*) as well as an *ethnikos* in the very Gods Themselves. It is well known that the Living Immortals dwell on Mount Olympos, but only the uneducated would actually think that the location of Mount Olympos was synonymous with the mountain in northern Greece. That mountain is merely one of at least nineteen other peaks in the ancient world also named Olympos, which were each named after the real Mount Olympos because of their awe-inspiring height, not vice versa. Homer writes that the real location of Olympos is bathed by King Helios with His radiant and benevolent light (Homer *Odyssey*, XII, 380), which the divine Julian writes shines upon and perfects the Gods’ Ousia, or Being (Flavius Claudius Iulianus, I 372-373). In fact, the word Olympos itself derives from the primary verb *λαμπο*, “lampo,” meaning “to shine.” Olympos is “never shaken by the wind, or wet with rain or blanketed by snow; A cloudless sky is spread above the mountain, white radiance all around” (Homer *Odyssey*, VI 42-46) (Philostratus the Elder *Imagines*, 1. 26). This would not only exclude every mountain on Earth, but it would also rule out every landmass too. Therefore, according to the divine Homer, while the Gods rule over our *kosmos* and all things inhabiting them, Their abode isn’t a place in our mundane realm (Aldridge 2016). There is only one place we know of where there are no winds, rains, snows nor clouds, but where the all-ruling sun is still present, bestowing radiance upon the Gods to perfect them, and this place is far beyond our mundane realm. It’s given notice by Agamemnon in his

prayer to Zeus: “Zeus, most glorious, supreme, that dwells in the sky [**aither**], and rides upon the storm-cloud” (Homer *Iliad*, II, 412 ff). Aither, the fifth element that is connected to the dodekahedron, is written by Plato to be what “God [Zeus-Helios, the Demiurge] used in the delineation of the universe” (Plato *Timaeus*, 55c). In short, Zeus used this element for binding the whole together and arranging the heavens. And that’s just where Olympos sits: the heavens. Zeus is not merely some lowly regional deity of the peoples of Southern Europe, but rather He is the King of Heaven, and thus He is the King of the All, who rules everything in our Kosmos, from the lowest pits of the Earth to the highest vaults of the heavens. One name that He is also referred to by is Hypatos, “the highest,” for He is not only merely the highest God of the Hellenic religion, but in truth He is the highest and most supreme God in the entire Kosmos. A similar logic can be applied to the Olympian Gods, who are the Hypercosmic Powers who overlook each of the Zodiac Houses. Furthermore, the Gods are not bound by any mortal society and belong to no one, as They are not mere culture nor objects— They are real, living and eternal Beings who have agencies of Their own, and thus cannot be reduced to mere “trinkets” that belong to a culture, as this stupidly substitutes human judgment over that of the Gods and would thus commit the sin of hubris. And because the Gods are real, living Beings, with agencies of Their own, They are not bound to any one culture and can not be subject to cultural appropriation, as They can manifest Themselves to any peoples or particular persons that They please. At the same time, of course, the Highest God, in His particular manifestation as Zeus, presents Himself in a particular form and in a particular mythology that is unique to Hellenism, and is perceived of, arrived to, worshiped in, and had His cultus spread throughout the world, in a distinctly Hellenic context and manner. As such, when engaging with Zeus, or any Hellenic manifestation of divinity, They should be worshiped in distinctly Hellenic cultural systems of worship, which includes sacred rites, methods, attire, and traditions. Hellenism must therefore, by definition, be simultaneously both a universal religion *and* a ethnikos.

Hellenism’s universality is further made evident by Orpheus, a sage who lived during the Age of the Heroes who is the primary and most foundational theologian of the Hellenic religion. In his eternal teachings, known as the Mysteries, Orpheus taught the origin of the Kosmos, the Gods, and ourselves. His teachings hold a great appeal in our world, which is often turbulent, difficult, and even painful. For Orpheus’ teachings tell us of the great compassion of Zeus and of how He devised a plan to deliver us from our anguish by sending His divine son Dionysos to deliver us from our misery. Orpheus had taught that Dionysos has come to save all those who desire Him; to transform and ultimately free our souls from the painful cycle of metempsychosis (reincarnation) and the suffering of lower realms of matter, to return us back into the heavens. This is “the providence of the King of Gods and men, the design and solution of Zeus for all his creatures, not just for a few” (HellenicGods.org 2010, THE ANCIENT GREEK RELIGION IS A UNIVERSAL RELIGION).

Overall, as Herodotos tells us, though religion is part of Hellenism, Hellenism is more than a religion. When one converts to Hellenism, they are not merely adopting certain dogmas, beliefs, and praxis, but are becoming a member of the Hellene ethnos, too. Hellenism is more than a religion, but religion is part of it.

Hellenism is more than a religion, but religion is part of it

On that note, it is important to address certain individuals who, thinking that religion and lifestyle must be separate, have come to assert that Hellenism is “not a religion, but a way of life.” This is a dangerous mistake for two reasons. Firstly, because it allows atheists (i.e., monotheists) to be the one who define what is and what isn’t a religion, which can have enormous ramifications, both against Hellenes and non-Hellenes alike. This can be seen in much of colonial history, where by defining religion in a way that was incompatible with certain religious traditions (e.g., defining that it must have a holy book and a prophet) colonialists were able to levy themselves on

those without “real religion,” as seen with the conquest of the Americas. Secondly, it has consequences at a legal level, because it means Hellenes cannot ask for the rights of a religion, which including the right to construct temples, enroll their children into a Hellenic education ([paideia](#), a pillar of the Hellenic religion) or conduct Hellenic marriages, which many countries in the world, even Greece until recently, still do not grant them. This additionally means that they forfeit the claim to their sacred sites, which currently lack the legal rights of a religion and are thus often deemed secular and state property.

As such, we understand that Hellenism is a religion, which at the same time as an orthopraxic tradition, is not merely confined to a temple in an artificial divorce from secular life. As stated, Hellenism is not merely a system of orthopraxic devotion and supplication of the Gods, but rather is an entire ethos which encompasses one’s entire lifestyle and is thus lived every day.

The place of those who are Hellenic by genos

In today’s day and age, despite the history of Hellenism’s universalism and its wide spread from Britain to Afghanistan, with there having been Hellenes of every colour and background, and despite the fact that since the days of ancient Athens anyone could join the Hellenic ethnos so long as they underwent the Hellenizing process of paideia, there are some people who are Hellenic by genos who try to deny the religion to those born outside of the genos. This can be understandable to a certain degree when we find the current political situation of Greece and its inhabitants today. There exists economic strife in the country, and its heritage is often subject to attack from all sides thanks to a kind of internal colonialism within Europe. Its sense of ownership over the “Classics” is often challenged either by particular deluded “academics” from Western Europeans or equally foolish political organizations, who frequently feel a misled necessity to stress some kind of “inferiority” of present-day Greeks to their classical forebears, or even wholly erase their identity. This can thus produce a certain anxiety among those who are Hellenic by genos that a precious possession of theirs, a very birth-rite of the Hellenic people, their religious tradition, is being stolen from them.

However, this could not be further from the truth. The reality is that by sharing their religion, those who are Hellenic by genos glorify and ennoble themselves, occupying a unique and venerable position. Because despite the fact that Hellenism is a universal religion, with the Hellenic ethnos able to be joined by anybody who is willing to undergo that Hellenizing process of paideia, those who are of Hellenic genos will nonetheless always retain a special place within the tradition, for it was their ancestors who first discovered the practices of the eternal religion and understood it. And it was their ancestors who preserved so much of what we retain of it today. And today, the greatest of the Hellenic teachers living at this very moment in Athens, tell us that Hellenism is for everyone, as it is the religion of the kosmos, declare that “the Gods do not only dwell in the mountains of Greece. They are the Gods of all people and have dominion over everything” (HellenicGods.org 2010, *THE ANCIENT GREEK RELIGION IS A UNIVERSAL RELIGION*). As such, Hellenism and its practices are applicable to all peoples, and this is one of the reasons for the tradition’s heavenly majesty. And to those of Greek genos who feel threatened by this great diversity of peoples coming once again into Hellenism, let it be known that “those of us who are not of your blood, but who love the Gods, are also Philhellenes, friends of the Greeks, a new generation like those of the great war for independence, those like Lord Byron and Percy Bysshe Shelley” (HellenicGods.org 2010, *THE ANCIENT GREEK RELIGION IS A UNIVERSAL RELIGION*).

Origin & Etymology of Hellenism

The name “Hellene” is exceptionally ancient, far predating Julian’s usage. The term dates all the way back to the Age of Heroes, though it’s understood that it took quite awhile for the term to take hold as a common identifier for all Hellenes. Thucydides tells us that “before the Trojan war there is no indication of any common action in Hellas, nor indeed of the universal prevalence of the name; on the contrary, before the time of Hellen, son of Deucalion [i.e., one of the only humans, along with his wife Pyrrha, to survive the deluge which ended of the Age of Bronze], no such appellation existed, but the country went by the names of the different tribes, in particular of the Pelasgian. It was not till Hellen [son of Deucalion] and his sons grew strong in Phthiotis, and were invited as allies into the other cities, that one by one they gradually acquired from the connection the name of Hellenes; though a long time elapsed before that name could fasten itself upon all. The best proof of this is furnished by Homer. Born long after the Trojan War, he nowhere calls all of them by that name, nor indeed any of them except the followers of Achilles from Phthiotis, who were the original Hellenes: in his poems they are called Danaans, Argives, and Achaeans” (Thucydides *History of the Peloponnesian War*, 1.1.3). Homer only uses the term Hellene twice in his works (*Homer, Iliad*, II.2.530; II.2.653).

The precise etymology of Hellenism is uncertain, and mostly speculative. One theory is that the ancient Hellenes originally called themselves Selloi, and that through time the initial sigma in Proto-Greek became aspirated in ancient Greek, turning /s/ into /h/ in initial positions. As such, Sell probably led to “Hellene” through regular sound change. This is supported by Aristotle in *Meteorology* 1:14, who writes: “The deluge in the time of Deukalion, for instance, took place chiefly in the Greek world and in it especially about ancient Hellas, the country about Dodona and the Achelous, a river which has often changed its course. Here the Selli dwelt and those who were formerly called Graeci and now Hellenes.” As such, the Selloi became the Helloi, though again no one is absolutely certain. Another, perhaps more mystical approach, builds off of the previous example. Here, the myth of Deukalion and Pyrrha tell us of how following the great deluge, they repopulate the land by casting stones which become people, the first being Hellen, the eponymous King of the Hellenes who would come to be the progenitor of the Greek peoples. This can directly relate to another etymological theory, where the word Hellene comes from the prefixes *el/ελ* (meaning “sun, bright, shiny,” related to elios, “sun”) and *las/λας* (meaning “rock, stone”). As such, Hellas, the Greek word for Greece, means “the land of the sun and the rock;” Hellenism means “the culture and/or religion of the sun and the rock;” and the word Hellene can be understood to mean “person of the sun and the rock.”

Hellenism Today

Historically, Hellenism went on to continue on for many centuries, even after Christians took control of the Roman Empire and begun bloody persecution against Hellenes. Persecution was harsh, however, with our temples often either being destroyed or, worse, desecrated and converted into churches. Many who held dear our sacred tradition were eventually forced to abandon them, either for implicit or practical reasons such as rising in society, or for explicit reasons such as violence. Others, however, were driven underground and forced into an unsure secrecy, enduring a long period of trial. However, despite the colossal effort to dismantle and exterminate our religion, it continued to persist. The Greek region of Laconia in particular resisted conversion for an extended period of time and the last public Hellenes were the Maniots in 875 ACE, though they continued to practice their religion until the 10th-11th centuries, which was noted by Constantine VII’s in his work *De Administrando Imperio*. Although publicly Hellenism was seemingly defeated, it continued on for several more centuries in two forms. On one hand, many of its practices continued on in folk practices across Southern European countries like Greece, Spain, France, Portugal and Italy, and though largely de-contextualized from their original tradition they are often used today to reconstruct a contemporary living Hellenism. On another hand, Hellenism was continued

in sporadic attempts at revival among intellectuals. The renown Hellenic philosopher Gemistos Plethon (c. 1355 – 1452/1454 ACE) founded a Platonic school in the Peloponnesian city of Mystras which is said to have had students (themselves sometimes persecuted for being Hellenes) often praying to statues of Hellenic deities, and wrote a piece, the *Nómoi*, which called for the reorganization of the Byzantine Empire and the return to Hellenism, and had students such as Raoul Kabakes. Another Hellene was Michael Tarchaniota Marullus (c. 1458 – 1500 ACE), a Hellene either from Sparta or Constantinople who became a mercenary in medieval Italy, who privately translated many ancient Hellenic works such as the Orphic Hymns, and wrote the *Hymni naturales*, devotional hymns dedicated to the immortal Gods. And an additional Hellene was a certain Julius Pomponius Laetus, also named Pomponio Leto (c. 1428 – 9 June 1498), who started an academy that aimed to restore the traditional Hellenic religion of Rome, whose effort was violently shut down by Pope Paul II in 1468.

Today Hellenism sees a large revival movement which largely grew out of the various folk traditions which have survived since ancient antiquity. With its divine kernel preserved, Hellenism resurfaced in the public sphere in Mediterranean countries such as Greece and Italy during the 1980s and 1990s. The religion makes use of [reconstructionist methodology](#) to revive Hellenism and form a living tradition and uphold proper practice appropriate to the modern day.

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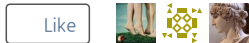
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