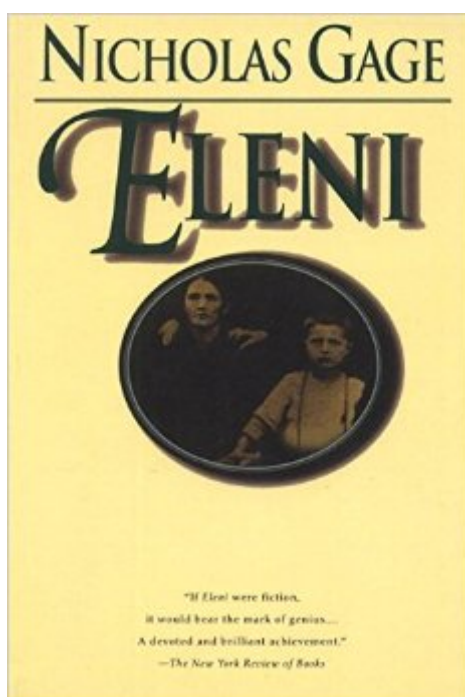


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# Eleni



## Synopsis

In 1948, as civil war ravaged Greece, children were abducted and sent to communist "camps" inside the Iron Curtain. Eleni Gatzoyiannis, forty-one, defied the traditions of her small village and the terror of the communist insurgents to arrange for the escape of her three daughters and her son, Nicola. For that act, she was imprisoned, tortured, and executed in cold blood. Nicholas Gage joined his father in Massachusetts at the age of nine and grew up to become a top New York Times investigative reporter, honing his skills with one thought in mind: to return to Greece and uncover the one story he cared about most: the story of his mother. Eleni takes you into the heart of a village destroyed in the name of ideals and into the soul of a truly heroic woman.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (114 customer reviews)

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## Customer Reviews

I'm half Greek but only recently heard of "Eleni" and the author Nicholas Gage ("Gatzoyiannis" in Greek). I'm not sure how I missed them growing up, though I think my parents may have read this story when I was little. "Eleni" is the moving story of Gage's mother Eleni (the Greek form of "Helen") and their family in war-torn northern Greece near the Albanian border. It recounts the effects of the Greek civil war (when Greek communists were fighting Greek nationalists for control of the country, post- WWII) on their village, Lia, and on their entire family. I cried a lot during the book. Not necessarily because it was sad, but because it was so moving and beautiful. Eleni the person can be summarized in one word: love. She took the necessary steps to help her children escape from communist-controlled Northern Greece, and for her efforts the communists (fighting "for the people," mind you) murdered her, along with 4 other villagers that they felt were not "for the communist

cause." Eleni's faith, devotion to her family, and continued struggles throughout her life are very inspiring for me. I am an Orthodox Christian, and I regularly pray to her now for intercessions to help me. I firmly believe that she is among the saints as a "New Holy Martyr of Greece," just like the Russians have new martyrs that died as a result of communist persecution in their country. Her 5 children (4 girls and one boy), Olga, Kanta, Glykeria, Fotini, and Nikola (who is now Nicholas Gage) are devoted to their mother. It is worth noting that if it weren't for Eleni, the 5 would probably have been shipped to an Eastern bloc country to be raised by communists, which was done in Northern Greece during that time.

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