

## Ach Eléni

(Greek style)

Ach Eléni (AHK eh-LEH-nee) means “Ah, Helen.” This dance was choreographed by Tineke and Maurits van Geel using traditional motifs to a Greek song by Dímos Anastasiádis.

- Music: 4/4 meter Available for purchase at [tinekevangeel.nl](http://tinekevangeel.nl).  
An internet search for “Ach Eleni mp3” yields several sites.
- Video: Available for purchase at [tinekevangeel.nl](http://tinekevangeel.nl). A search on YouTube for “Ach Eleni” yields multiple results.
- Formation: Open mixed circle, hands joined in W-pos, facing CCW.

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Meas	4/4 meter	PATTERN
4 meas		INTRODUCTION. No action.
1		Bounce on L and lift R knee (ct 1); beg R, three steps fwd (cts 2-4).
2		Repeat meas 1 with opp ftwk.
3		Turning to face ctr, step R to R (ct 1); hold (ct 2); step L behind R, leaving R in place (ct 3); step R in place, in front of L (ct 4).
4		Step L to L (ct 1); hold (ct 2); step R in front of L, leaving L in place (ct 3); step back onto L (ct 4).
5		Touch R to R (ct 1); hold (ct 2); touch R fwd (ct 3); touch R to R (ct 4).
6		Step R in front of L, leaving L in place (ct 1); step back onto L (ct 2); step R to R (ct 3); turning to face CCW, step L fwd (ct 4).

Sequence: Repeat dance as noted above until the music ends.

### Lyrics

Eleni, I can't raise my eyes up high,  
My little and jealous one.  
And give comfort to my poor heart.  
You've driven me crazy, poor one.

I saw all the world from your lips.  
You've taken my heart,  
And you don't hurt for me.

Ah, be sorry for me and stop  
Tyrannizing me.

It was you who said,  
If I don't see you, I am dying,  
My small and jealous one.

But now you walk and say,  
Where did I see you, where do I know you?  
Ah, what bad thing will happen?

### From John Pappas, the translator:

Songs are actually poems with melodies and rhythms. As such, there can be different ways of translating songs from Greek to English. This song, “Ah, Eleni” was originally sung by famous Greek Thracian singer Hronis Aidonidis. His organization of the lyrics is a little different, but it is basically the same.

In Greek folk songs there are often what I call filler words, formulaic phrases that don't necessarily add to the story. Such filler words are present in this song; for example: “my small and jealous one.”

Finally, there are some phrases and words that are idiomatic and not easily translated into English. I have tried here to translate in a way that keeps the Greek meaning without slavishly following the original syntax, which might make the English version more awkward.