



Summary :

Military officer and collector of folklore material from Pontus, also known under the pen-name "Xenos Xenitas". He collaborated with several journals, while he was the director of the journal *Chronika tou Pontou* throughout its publication. His major work *Laographika Kotyoron* (Folklore Material of Kotyora) established him as one of the most important writers on Pontus.

Other Names

Xenos Xenitas

Date and Place of Birth

1895, Samsun (Sampsounta)

Date and Place of Death

December 1961, Athens

Main Role

Scholar

1. From Kotyora to the National Defence

Xenophon Akoglou, son of Kosmas and Aphrodite Grigoriadis, also known under the pen-name 'Xenos Xenitas', was born in [Samsun](#) (Sampsounta, Amisos) in 1895. He spent his childhood in [Kotyora](#) (Urdu),¹ where he completed primary education, before he studied in the high school of Amisos. In 1915 he fled from the Ottoman Empire and went to Thessaloniki, where he joined the forces of the National Defence as a volunteer in the following year. After 1918 he was trained at the School of Reserve Officers, which he completed as a second lieutenant. He then took part in the operations of the [Asia Minor campaign](#). Akoglou became a permanent military officer and remained in the army until 1935, when he retired as a major. He was recruited again, however, in 1940-1941, and became a correspondent of the journal *Neoellinika Grammata*, sending news from the Albanian front. He completed and republished his reports in 1945 in Athens under the title *The Miracle of Albania from the Viewpoint of the III Division*.

2. Works - Collection of Folklore Material

Akoglou published a great number of articles in various journals (*Archeion Pontou*, *Mikrasiatika Chronika*, *Pontiaki Estia*, *Neoellinika Grammata* and particularly *Chronika tou Pontou*,² which he directed throughout its publication) and four books. He usually used the pen-name 'Xenos Xenitas'. Apart from the *Miracle of Albania from the Viewpoint of the III Division*, he also published the *Diigimata Ethografika*, a collection of short stories on the milieu of taverns and fishermen (Athens 1939), as well as the play *Akritas* in the [Pontic dialect](#). This work (an historical drama in five acts and a scene), for which Akoglou received a honorary mention at the Kalokairineios contest in 1945, concerns the activity of Pontic chieftains and guerrillas in 1914-1923. The writer originally aimed to prepare a study but, since he lacked the necessary primary sources, he composed a play; under the circumstances, it is not surprising that the play does not seem to have been particularly successful on stage, apparently due to its seriousness.³

However, his most important work is the two-volume *The Life of Pontus, Laographika Kotyoron*" (Folklore Material of Kotyora). Produced after a long and arduous⁴ period of collecting folklore material provided by people from Kotyora who lived all over Greece (Athens, Piraeus and suburbs, Thessaloniki, Katerini and Kilkis), the book was described as one of the finest of the kind.⁵ Akoglou, apart from the full and detailed image of life in [Kotyora](#) he provides (life cycle, communal and economic organisation, customs and popular beliefs), which meets the requirements of Greek folklore studies (*laografia*), tries to be objective, an effort quite exceptional in similar collections. The *Laographika Kotyoron* does not provide an idyllic image of his birthplace: it frequently refers to intracommunal conflicts, class struggles and the restricted intellectual life of the area. In brief, in comparison to respective works by



other collectors, Akoglou's book provides the reader with the feeling that it describes a real and active society rather than a utopian reconstruction of the lost homeland.

Akoglou died in Athens in December 1961.

1. Akoglou, who never mentioned Samsun in his works, considers himself a native of Kotyora. Besides, it results from his book *Laographika Kotyoron* that his family came from Kotyora.
2. *Chronika tou Pontou* the monthly folklore journal of the Club 'Argonautai Komnenoi', was in circulation from September 1943 until February 1954. However, only 24 issues were published, which as a rule were printed after a considerable delay. Thus, the last one is dated 'July-August 1946'.
3. See the quotation "Review of Akritas".
4. See the quotation 'The "tekelteas"'.
The "tekelteas" is a traditional Greek folk song, a form of riddle or wordplay, often used in folk songs and dances.
5. Among several favourable reviews is that by Giannis Kordatos in *Neoellinika Grammata* of 8th July 1939.

Bibliography :

	Ακογλου Ξ., <i>Από τη ζωή του Πόντου, Λαογραφικά Κοτυώρων, τόμ. Α</i> , Αθήνα 1939
	Ακογλου Ξ., <i>Από τη ζωή του Πόντου, Λαογραφικά Κοτυώρων, τόμ. Β</i> , Αθήνα 1964
	Ακογλου Ξ., <i>Το θαύμα της Αλβανίας απ' τη σκοπιά της ΙΙΙ Μεραρχίας</i> , Αθήνα 1945
	Θεοδωρίδης Χ.Α., <i>Διακριθέντες του ξεριζωμένου ελληνισμού, τόμ. Α'</i> , Αθήνα 1975
	Λαμπιδης Ο., <i>Γύρω στο ποντιακό θέατρο. Υπόσταση και Ιστορία του (1922-1972)</i> , Αθήνα 1978
	"Ξενοφών Ακογλους (Νεκρολογία)", <i>Μικρασιατικά Χρονικά</i> , 10, 1963, 499-500

Quotations

Review of *Akritas*

«...παρ' όλο που ο συγγραφέας ασχολήθηκε τόσο πολύ και με τη νεοελληνική και με την ποντιακή λογοτεχνία [...] το τυπωμένο του θεατρικό έργο δεν μπορεί να θεωρηθεί γνήσιο προϊόν θεατρικού είδους. Πάρα πολλές φορές ο συγγραφέας ξεχνά ότι στο θέατρο η δράση διαδραματίζεται πάνω στο σανίδι και δεν είναι αντικείμενο διηγήσεων. Ακόμα, ο συγγραφέας κάθε τόσο θέλει να ενημερώσει το θεατή πάνω στην εξέλιξη της εσωτερικής πολιτικής καταστάσεως της Ελλάδας στα χρόνια 1914-22. Έτσι βάζει τους ήρωές του να μετέχουν σε διαλόγους που θα μπορούσαν να είχαν θέση αλλού αλλά όχι σε θεατρικό έργο. Απόδειξη ότι το έργο αυτό δεν είναι θεατρικό είναι το γεγονός ότι κάθε φορά που ανεβάστηκε στη σκηνή και παίχτηκε, διασκευάστηκε, όπως ξέρω, αρκετά δραστικά από το σκηνοθέτη, για να μπορεί να σταθεί [...]».



Λαμψίδης, Ο., *Γύρω στο ποντιακό θέατρο, υπόσταση και ιστορία του, 1922-1972*, (Athens 1978), p. 43, footnote 2

The "tekelteas"

«Αλησμόνητα θα μου μείνουν τα κυνηγητά που έκανα της μάνας μου με το μολύβι στο χέρι από δωμάτιο σε δωμάτιο του σπιτιού, για να συνεχίσω την... ανάκριση, που βαριότανε κάθε τόσο κ' ήθελε ν' αποφύγει. Και με μακροθυμία θα θυμάμαι τις ειρωνείες ευαρίθμων συμπατριωτών, που όταν με βλέπανε να κατεβαίνω στους συνοικισμούς του Πειραιά ούτε λίγο ούτε πολύ με λυπότανε για τη... ματαιοπονία μου και με είχανε χαρακτηρίσει και σχολαστικό και «τεκελτέαν», [ποντιακή λέξη που σημαίνει αργόσχολος, σχολαστικός, χαζός] κι' ακόμα κόβαν... ρόδα μυρωμένα για να μη μπλέξουν μαζί μου και πλήξουν με τις ερωτήσεις και τις έρευνές μου».

Ακογλου, Ξ., "Από τη ζωή του Πόντου", *Λαογραφικά Κοτνώρων*, vol. I (Athens 1939), p. 14.