

Excerpt from the speech by
Peter Kraaijmes
Head of the then artists' group
ARTSCLUB STOUPA
at the opening of the first
commemorative festival
"Kazantzakis & Zorbas in Stoupa…
100 Years Later"
organised by the then newly established
Cultural Association
for Art and Nature "NARTURA"
in collaboration with the artists' group
ARTS CLUB STOUPA
Friday, 22 September 2017 · 19:00

[…]
"Why do Nikos Kazantzakis and Alexis Zorbas have such a strong appeal to people? Most people are aware of the importance of Nikos Kazantzakis as a writer, philosopher, erudite politician and traveller around the world, as well as of his role as the man who helped save 150,000 Greeks from starvation in the Caucasus.

The characters and mentality of Kazantzakis and Zorbas are reflected in the way they lived and acted. It is a way of life reminiscent of that of the ancient Greek philosophers, based on respect and on the fair and equal treatment of others.

A guiding principle for Kazantzakis was to use his artistic and literary talents — he wrote more than 20 books — for the benefit of people in general.

Through humour and laughter, dance and philosophical statements, Kazantzakis and Zorbas created a deeply human, universal and unpolished appeal that can be recognised by everyone, regardless of nationality, age, social status or background. Instinctively, people recognise the authenticity of human values, as well as the value of nature and the environment. Instinct speaks the truth.
[…]
A key factor in the success of tourism is taking proper care of the local residents, as well as of the people who work and live in the Mani region and, more specifically, in Stoupa and Kalogria.

I would like to thank all the people who worked so hard to prepare this festival and who helped make this Kazantzakis Festival a reality."
[…]