

Amos Oz

Quotes

*Writing, Israel, Dream, People, Thinking, Literature, Years, Two, Country,
World, Different, Language, Musical, War, Book, Compromise, Novel, Mean,
Ideas, Hebrew*

Every single pleasure I can imagine or have experienced is more delightful, more of a pleasure, if you take it in small sips, if you take your time. Reading is not an exception.

~Amos Oz

Fundamentalists live life with an exclamation point. I prefer to live my life with a question mark.

~Amos Oz

Writing a poem is like having an affair, a one-night stand; a short story is a romance, a relationship; a novel is a marriage-one has to be cunning, devise compromises, and make sacrifices.

~Amos Oz

Words create conceptions and self-conceptions and ultimately nations. They can start and stop wars. They can wound and heal. Choosing words carefully is a moral responsibility.

~Amos Oz

A conflict begins and ends in the hearts and minds of people, not in the hilltops.

~Amos Oz

All of my novels are democracies.

~Amos Oz

The only way to keep a dream, any dream at all, to keep a dream perfect and rosy and intact and unsullied is never to live it out.

~Amos Oz

The opposite of compromise is not integrity. The opposite of compromise is not idealism. The opposite of compromise is fanaticism and death.

~Amos Oz

I wrote *The Same Sea* not as a political allegory about Israelis and Palestinians. I wrote it about something much more gutsy and immediate. I wrote it as a piece of chamber music.

~Amos Oz

Democracy in many parts of the world is undergoing a very deep crisis. Politics is becoming a branch of the entertainment industry. People vote not for the best leader, but for the funniest candidate.

~Amos Oz

Now, Israel is a fulfillment, and as a fulfillment, it is flawed. The fact that it is flawed is not so much a testimony about the failures of Israel. No, it is a testimony about the nature of dreams.

~Amos Oz

One of the things I wanted to introduce in *The Same Sea* beyond transcending the conflict, is the fact that deep down below all our secrets are the same.

~Amos Oz

In my vocabulary, the word "compromise" is synonymous to the word "life".

~Amos Oz

If you steal from one book you are condemned as a plagiarist, but if you steal from ten books you are considered a scholar, and if you steal from thirty or forty books, a distinguished scholar.

~Amos Oz

The [political] left are people with an imagination and the right are those without an imagination.

~Amos Oz

I find the family the most mysterious and fascinating institution in the

world.

~Amos Oz

This bloody conflict has been going on for much too long. It is doing terrible things to Israelis, to Palestinians. One of the terrible things it is causing is indifference.

~Amos Oz

I have seen for the first time in 100 years of conflict, the two peoples - the Israeli people and the Palestinian people - are ahead of their leaderships.

~Amos Oz

I wrote a novel about Israelis who live their own lives on the slope of a volcano. Near a volcano one still falls in love, one still gets jealous, one still wants a promotion, one still gossips.

~Amos Oz

Literature may open a third eye in the middle of the reader's forehead.

~Amos Oz

My dream for Israel is peace, external and internal peace. I want Israel to live in peace with its neighbors and in peace with itself.

~Amos Oz

Well, my definition of a tragedy is a clash between right and right.

~Amos Oz

Every decent man had to be against fascism, period.

~Amos Oz

But for 30 years, Orthodox leaders have tipped the balance between hawks and doves, and have been in a position to determine who forms a coalition and who runs the country.

~Amos Oz

In many ways, I regard Sharon and Arafat as birds of a feather.

~Amos Oz

I recommend the art of slow reading.

~Amos Oz

If you change your diet, someone will call you a traitor.

~Amos Oz

The gift of literature is that, in some lucky cases, reading a novel or a story makes the reader more curious, more open-minded.

~Amos Oz

The actual gap between Labor, Likud and the new central party is microscopic.

~Amos Oz

Over 70 years after Hitler, a German chancellor, a woman, is the leader of the free world. So don't talk to me about irrevocable.

~Amos Oz

I was born and bred in a tiny, low-ceilinged ground-floor apartment.

~Amos Oz

Different musical instruments provide for different music.

~Amos Oz

I'm a great believer in compromises. I do not believe in capitulation.

~Amos Oz

When people have peace, they hate it and long for excitement, and when they have excitement, they want peace.

~Amos Oz

The Old Testament is full of poetry, prophecies, chronicles, documentations, storytelling, fairytales.

~Amos Oz

Dreams fulfilled are imperfect.

~Amos Oz

We have to carry through to the next day and hope that we will be okay tomorrow as we are today and in the meantime, enjoy life.

~Amos Oz

I am an old man and I have seen things get revoked. Things which looked very irrevocable.

~Amos Oz

I write about reconciliation, but not as a miracle, as a slow, gradual process of mutual discovery - discovering one another.

~Amos Oz

Literature is about telling stories.

~Amos Oz

The English language took in many many fertilizations, many many genes, from other languages, from foreign languages - Latin, French, Nordic languages, German, Scandinavian languages.

~Amos Oz

Everybody comes from somewhere.

~Amos Oz

Imagination needs food like every dog and every cat and every bird and every fish.

~Amos Oz

Never cut loose from your longings.

~Amos Oz

I want Israel to live in peace with its neighbors and in peace with itself.

~Amos Oz

We all begin much much much earlier. In fact, every one of us - every nation, every individual begins hundreds, perhaps thousands of years prior to the date that appears in the passport.

~Amos Oz

No human being really begins on the day which appears in the passport as their date of birth. We all begin much much much earlier.

~Amos Oz

That's my gutsy advice to any young writer: write only about what you know well.

~Amos Oz

The morning I woke up and it was announced that Trump was the elected president of the United States, I wrote to Angela Merkel. I said that she - at least for me - is now the leader of the free world.

~Amos Oz

In fact, every one of us - every nation, every individual begins hundreds, perhaps thousands of years prior to the date that appears in the passport.

~Amos Oz

Israel is a fulfilled dream. Nothing that exists here existed here a hundred years ago.

~Amos Oz

The very same book, even if it is translated very accurately, let's say from Hebrew into English or from English into Hebrew, becomes a different book because language is a musical instrument.

~Amos Oz

Literature belongs first and foremost to the language in which it is being written.

~Amos Oz

I prefer to talk about the gift of literature rather than its role or task.

~Amos Oz

In the same way in which music is made of notes and a painting is made of lines of colors, the matter of literature are words.

~Amos Oz

Literature exists inside the language. It's made of words.

~Amos Oz

Literature is not made of ideas and it's not made of concepts, of psychological analysis. It's made of words.

~Amos Oz

On my parents scale of values, the more Western something was, the more cultured it was considered.

~Amos Oz

I'm a great believer in compromise. I know it's not popular among young idealists.

~Amos Oz

"The State of the Jews" was not a title of a country. It was a title of a futuristic novel.

~Amos Oz

All you can see, if you look through the window - everything you see is a fulfillment of dreams, different dreams.

~Amos Oz

I'm not sure I'm happy with words such as "task" or "role" when they are attached to literature.

~Amos Oz

I write in words. I don't write in sounds or in shapes or in flavors.

~Amos Oz

The whole Zionist project was based on a whole spectrum of different and even conflicting dreams and visions.

~Amos Oz

My dream for Israel is peace, external and internal peace.

~Amos Oz

Almost every modern literary form existed in Hebrew two thousand years ago. And, yes, it existed even during the middle ages.

~Amos Oz

I write in words. And my words are Hebrew words.

~Amos Oz

Almost without exception, my novels are rooted in Israel because that's the place I know well.

~Amos Oz

The place of my novels is Israel, almost without exception. All of them take place in Israel - in Jerusalem, in the desert, in the kibbutz, in small towns, in villages.

~Amos Oz

I know one or two things about fanaticism and death, and I reject them.

~Amos Oz

If people are pro-Israel, they are pro-Israel one-hundred-and-twenty percent. If they are anti-Israel or pro-Palestinian, they tend to be pro-Palestinian one-hundred-and-twenty percent.

~Amos Oz

My dream is much more modest than the dreams of the founding fathers. My dream is for Israel to live in peace with its neighbors and at peace with itself. This will be sufficient for me.

~Amos Oz

I don't write novels about expeditions to the planet Mars because I haven't been there and I don't know anything about it.

~Amos Oz

Don't write about that which you don't know.

~Amos Oz

Do not cut lose from your longings - for what are we without our longings?

~Amos Oz

Out there, in the world, all the walls were covered with graffiti: "Yids, go back to Palestine," so we came back to Palestine, and now the worldatlarge shouts at us: "Yids, get out of Palestine."

~Amos Oz

The battlefield is first and foremost horrible stench, not sights, not sounds, but stench. They don't travel well into literature.

~Amos Oz

We lived through a relatively golden age between the end of World War

Il and Sept. 11, 2001.

~Amos Oz

Israel has obviously not liberated the Palestinians in Gaza or the West Bank. We have occupied them, but we have not liberated them.

~Amos Oz

A long war is degenerating - it ruins the mind and the soul and psyche of individuals and nations.

~Amos Oz

My musical instrument is Hebrew and, to me, this is the most important fact about my writing.

~Amos Oz

Universally, not only in Israel, people want to feel good about themselves. We all want to feel good to some extent.

~Amos Oz

Every language has influences and is an influence.

~Amos Oz

Hebrew is deeply inspired by other languages.

~Amos Oz

Things can be translated, but they become different.

~Amos Oz

There are certain concepts, which exist in English, and are unthinkable, untranslatable into Hebrew and vice versa.

~Amos Oz

There is a document in every novel in the world. Even in the most fantastic novel, even in science fiction, there is a documentary side.

But, this side is not the crux of the matter.

~Amos Oz

You know, gynecology has a role; sex is a gift. And literature is not about sending messages.

~Amos Oz

All my novels are rooted in their time and in their place.

~Amos Oz

I often write about reconciling. Reconciling, or maybe half-reconciling between antagonists, between people who are deadly enemies.

~Amos Oz

I don't think a decent person has to choose between being pro-Israel and pro-Palestine. I think you have to be pro-Peace.

~Amos Oz

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