

Tahar Ben Jelloun

Quotes

*People, World, Country, Writing, Friendship, Views, Different, Voice, Real,
Morocco, Men, Night, Speaks Out, Continuing, Touching, Army, Natural,
Injustice, Artist, Feels*

My hope is that countries like Morocco will have investment to create work, so people don't have to leave.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

Real friendship, like real poetry, is extremely rare - and precious as a pearl.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

We must stop posing as victims of the West and behaving negatively towards the West. We must participate with the West on an equal footing in the reconstruction of the world.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

In Morocco, it's possible to see the Atlantic and the Mediterranean at the same time.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

This universe can very well be expressed in words and syllables which are not those of one's mother tongue.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

Emigration is no longer a solution; it's a defeat. People are risking death, drowning every day, but they're knocking on doors that are not open.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

The power of the word in Morocco belonged to men and to the authorities. No one asked the point of view of poor people or women.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

The mistake we make is to attribute to religions the errors and fanaticism of human beings.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

Beauty is first and foremost an emotion.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

An individual voice can be heard in a choir that otherwise sings in unison. This is something that is not excused.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

I have written about the dispossessed, immigrants, the condition of women who do not enjoy the same legal rights as men, the Palestinians who are deprived of their land and condemned to exile.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

Be vigilant, for nothing one achieves lasts forever.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

I read a poem every night, as others read a prayer.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

I am a guest of the French language. My poems in French are born of my interaction with the French language, which is not the same as that of a French poet.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

We have no Arab intellectuals of international stature because we live in a state of generalized mediocrity. We are suspended in the pit without touching the bottom.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

Religion has to stay in the heart, not in politics. It is private.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

It is impossible to disregard such an important medium as television. We should know how to use it, learn to work in it and express new values in it.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

Poetry is not only a set of words which are chosen to relate to each other; it is something which goes much further than that to provide a glimpse of our vision of the world.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

I write about wounds, the eternal treasons of life. It's not very funny, but it's sincere. My commitment is to sincerity.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

What have we achieved since the end of the Second World War? We have allowed petty, bourgeois regimes in which everything is average, mediocre.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

Egypt has suffered more ordeals than the other countries to get where it is.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

It is through accepting other people in our own countries that we shall come to respect our neighbours and be respected in our turn.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

A modern civilization is only possible when it is accepted that singular beings exist and express themselves freely.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

At 21, I discovered repression and injustice. The army would shoot students with real bullets.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

I don't feel guilty about expressing myself in French; nor do I feel that I am continuing the work of the colonizers.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

Poetry is a form of mathematics, a highly rigorous relationship with words.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

My sensibility steers me toward writers who are out on their own.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

For me, poetry is a situation - a state of being, a way of facing life and facing history.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

I love life in spite of all that mars it. I love friendship, jokes and laughter.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

In the Arab world, there is no link between the cultural habits of peoples and the ways of thinking and creating of modern intellectuals. They are two separate worlds.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

In the 70s I was in exile; every time I went back I wondered if they'd take my passport away.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

People must insist on the right to say no, to be alone, to stand out from the herd. Creative artists can say all this in their own way and in their own field, by hard, rigorous work.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

Intellectuals try to keep going. But their situation is very difficult. Those who have had the courage to voice their opposition have often paid a very high price.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

My characters are driven by a passionate desire for justice. They are rebellious and incorruptible.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

There is an important erotic element in *A Thousand and One Nights*, which is one of the keys to understanding the Orient.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

I'd thought sexuality was instinctive or natural, but it's profoundly linked to inner security and cultural context.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

I am glad to have found a readership, but one can't write only what is likely to sell. A writer is not a shopkeeper. A writer creates an imaginary world that he transmits to others.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

New ideas should confront old ideas. We must refer to the example of Europe. People have fought to make Europe what it is today. Freedom is not something that is served up on a plate.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

We do not have many intellectuals who can speak out for us internationally. We have no writers who are recognized, respected and loved outside the Arab world.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

I liked Sartre's views but not his writing.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

I belong to a specific category of writers, those who speak and write in a language different from that of their parents.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

To lead a country, you must periodically hold a national consultation in which people representing different programmes can make a bid for power.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

I do not use the language of my people. I can take liberties with certain themes which the Arabic language would not allow me to take.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

I am a Moroccan writer of French expression.

~Tahar Ben Jelloun

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