

Literature and Society Quotations

Writer: F. R. Leavis | Generated: Jan 26, 2026

Quotes

"I might have said the truth that it is only in individuals that society lives."

Explanation: Leavis means that society does not exist separately; it lives and expresses itself through individual human beings.

"Full consciousness is genius, and manifests itself in technical achievement, the new use of words."

Explanation: He defines genius as complete awareness and creativity that shows itself through fresh, powerful use of language.

"Without the individual talent there is no creation."

Explanation: Leavis stresses that all literary creation depends on individual talent; without it, art cannot exist.

"It is only in individuals that society lives."

Explanation: He repeats that society's true spirit and values are found in individuals, not in abstract systems or governments.

"No one seriously interested in modern literature can feel that it represents a satisfactory cultural order."

Explanation: Leavis criticizes modern literature for losing moral depth and cultural balance.

“A humane masterpiece resulted because he belonged to the civilization of his time.”

Explanation: He praises earlier writers like Bunyan and the Augustan authors who created great literature because they were deeply rooted in their society and culture.

“Wordsworth’s interest in rustic life was something external to the world he belonged to and remote from it.”

Explanation: Leavis criticizes Wordsworth, saying his focus on rustic life was disconnected from the real moral and social issues of his time.

“The individual writer is to be aware that his work is of the literature to which it belongs.”

Explanation: Leavis says every writer must understand that his work is part of a literary and cultural tradition.