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Martin Amis in fresh attack on Islamists

By Nigel Reynolds, Arts Correspondent
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The novelist Martin Amis renewed his attack on militant Islam last night, calling it a "poisonous death cult" and "a murderous ideology".

Undeterred by the recent attack on him by the Marxist academic Terry Eagleton, who compared Amis's views to those of a "British Nationalist Party thug", the novelist was critical of Western liberals who did not condemn outright an extreme ideology that, he said, sought to murder apostates and beat women.

Amis said that some in the West could not or would not see that extreme Islam was "an armed doctrine that radically reduced the value of human life".

Taking part in a discussion in London at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, the author of novels including London Fields and Money said that moderate Muslims who failed to take on extremists "tacitly legitimise the extreme position".

Amis compared Islamic fundamentalism to Naziism, Trotskyism and Maoism and said that he feared the West was in for a long war against al-Qa'eda.

He said of suicide bombing: "It's a pathetic spiritual act. It signifies nothing and it's done for vulgar gain. It is the most disgusting sophistry."

The author declined to respond to a question about Professor Eagleton's attack on him.

The Marxist critic also described the novelist's father, the late Sir Kingsley Amis, as "a racist, anti-Semitic boor, a drink-sodden, self-hating reviler of women, gays and liberals".



Martin Amis and his father Sir Kingsley recently came under attack

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