Abstract
The Christians' animosity towards Islam and the Muslims began with the mission of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). However, things became worse after the Crusades of 1000-1216 when negative images of the Muslims and their religion started to circulate and consequently to prevail in English Literature. From early English writings of the Anglo-Saxon period, through the Medieval literature, up to the twentieth century, literature in Christian countries reflected Western fear and contempt of the Islamic East. The twenty first century witnessed an increase of the Western interest in the Islamic Orient but many genres of English literature continued to use stereotypes to portray certain elements of the Muslim East such as Eastern events, settings, characters, customs, costumes, diction and especially religion.

This paper is a study of four modern novels portraying certain aspects of the Islamic East. These novels are Virgins of Paradise 1993 by Barbara Wood, Hideous Kinky 1992 by Esther Freud, I Know Many Songs But I Can not Sing 1998 by Brian Kiteley, and The Empty Quarter 1995 by David Wilkinson. The paper is divided into four parts: the first part shows how early English literature as well as the four modern novels portray Islam as an unconvincing faith with hollow and isolating rites, and full of support for violence and ignorance. The second part discusses the image of Muslims in both early literature and the novels as backward Bedouins, lazy, hypocrite, immoral, sexually obsessed and cruel to their women. The third part shows how Muslim women are persistently portrayed as being suppressed by the dictates of their religion and laws of their society; they react against that oppression by turning lascivious and immodest. The last part shows how Arab countries are viewed as unattractive poor places run by tyrant governments and as being politically censored. The numerous examples of early English literature followed by examples from these four contemporary novels illustrate how the writers of the four novels, instead of forming their own view of Islamic East, drew upon the Western heritage of structured stereotyping of Islam and the Muslims.