

The New Criterion

Features January 2008

The conservative response to Islam

by Daniel Johnson

On how the West should react to the growing strength of Islam.

My first experience of Islam, exactly thirty years ago, was a spectacular one: the Dome of the Rock. This is the place on Temple Mount in Jerusalem whence Mohammed was, according to the Koran, taken up into heaven, and the golden shrine which was built there in 691–692 A.D. by Caliph Abd al-Malik is the earliest and most elegant example of Muslim architecture extant. Non-Muslims are not permitted to visit the Dome today, but since last year they have been readmitted to the Temple Mount, or Noble Sanctuary, as Muslims call it. In the last generation the whole situation in Jerusalem has changed. Muslim leaders and scholars now routinely deny that the Temple of Solomon ever existed in Jerusalem, and the Christian population of the Old City has fallen from more than half to less than 10 percent, the rest driven out by Muslim persecution. Back in 1977 non-Muslims were still allowed not only onto Temple Mount, but inside the Dome too....

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This article originally appeared in The New Criterion, Volume 26 Number 5 , on page 13

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