DIANA SORENSEN, EDITOR

TERRITORIES *and* TRAJECTORIES

Cultures in Circulation

INTRODUCTION *by* HOMI K. BHABHA

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Edited by Diana Sorensen · Introduction by Homi Bhabha

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Chapter 5

Genealogies of Whitewash: "Muhammedan Churches," Reformation Polemics, and the Aesthetics of Modernism

FINBARR BARRY FLOOD

In 1928, in the course of repairs to the Friday Mosque of Damascus after a fire that had taken place in 1893, it was noticed that thick plaster on some of the walls of the court of the mosque covered an area of glass mosaic (see figure 5.1). The realization led the French Orientalist Eustache de Lorey to oversee its removal. The results were spectacular. From under the plaster, a 115 foot (35 meter) long panel of gold-ground mosaic emerged, the largest panel of wall mosaic to have survived from antiquity (see figure 5.2).[1] Against a scintillating gold ground, an elegant pastoral scene appeared, in which pearl-strung pavilions and multistoried buildings were disposed in a landscape punctuated by carefully tended trees (see figure 5.3). The mosaics, which were frequently praised in medieval sources, formed part of the original decoration of the mosque when it was completed in AD 715 as the Friday Mosque of the administrative capital of the Umayyads (r. 661–750), the first Islamic dynasty.

Both at the time of the discovery and subsequently, few paused to consider when and in what circumstances these remarkable mosaics had been plastered over and whitewashed. Yet the case of the Damascus mosaics was not unique. Until the late nineteenth century or early twentieth century, the Umayyad mosaics in the interior of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, built in 692, and some or all of those in the adjoining Aqsa Mosque were also wholly or partially obscured by plaster or whitewash. The eventual concealment of the Umayyad mosaics is especially ironic in light of the status that they have assumed as evidence for the adoption of aniconism as a core aesthetic value of early Islamic

sacred space; the fact that mosaics in both Damascus and Jerusalem were devoid of anthropomorphic or zoomorphic figures, consisting of architecture, trees, vegetation, and vessels, renders the reasons for their later whitening even more curious.

The date at which these masterpieces of early Islamic art were whitewashed is uncertain, although circumstantial evidence suggests that they were obscured in the sixteenth or early seventeenth century. Although it is tempting to see the whitewashing of the Damascus and Jerusalem mosaics as occurring simultaneously, part of a common programmatic reaction against the Umayyad ornaments in the shrines of both cities, the available evidence would not appear to support this scenario. The Damascus mosaics were certainly visible in the fourteenth century, when their content and renown was discussed by a number of Mamluk chroniclers.[2] References to the mosaics in sixteenth-century texts appropriate and recycle these fourteenth-century descriptions rather than adding to them, which suggests that they may no longer have been visible by the late 1500s. An extensive eyewitness account of the restoration of the Damascus mosque following a disastrous fire in 1479 tell us that the ceiling of the western portico—that is, the area that houses the mosaic panel uncovered in 1928—was burned in the fire but makes no mention of any mosaics. Noting this peculiarity, Doris Behrens-Abouseif remarks, "This raises the question as to whether the walls at that time were coated with plaster, which would have preserved the mosaics underneath."[3] If this is the case, then the mosaics in Damascus may have been whitewashed even before the Ottoman conquest of Syria and Egypt 1516–17.

If we can be more certain about when the Damascus mosaics were recovered than when they were covered in plaster, in Jerusalem the situation is reversed. Based on accounts of the Dome of the Rock by historians and travelers, the mosaics may have disappeared before 1634.[4] Writing between 1724 and 1744, the Franciscan friar Eleazar Horn gives a description of the interior of the Dome of the Rock culled from textual sources and contemporary eyewitness accounts in which he reports a process of selective whitewashing, stating, "The walls in the upper parts are adorned with mosaics; those that represented the figures of Angels etc. the Moslems caused to be whitened with lime, but those showing flowers were left intact." He adds that this was undertaken some years previously at the behest of a qadi, or judge.[5] I have been unable to determine either the exact date or the circumstances in which the mosaics of the Dome of the Rock were uncovered again, but some or all were visible four decades later, in the 1860s, when Melchior de Vogüé studied the monument and photographs of its interior were taken.[6]

FIGURE 5.1: Felix Bonfils, western portico wall of the Friday Mosque of Damascus around 1860, with its wall mosaics plastered and whitewashed. Myron Bement Smith Collection, Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, FSA_A.04_02.6.1.11.

What is especially interesting about the whitewashing of the Umayyad mosaics in Damascus and Jerusalem during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is the temporal coincidence with the events of the Protestant Reformation in Europe. Even as these events were transforming the appearance of northern European churches, rewriting sacred space by means of hammers and whitewash, the glittering ornaments in a number of key late antique mosques and churches were being obscured by similar means in the Ottoman lands of the eastern Mediterranean. In fact, in later centuries the whitewashed interiors of the early Islamic shrines of Palestine and Syria struck a chord with European Protestants who visited the Umayyad monuments of Syria. The English physician Robert Richardson, who visited the Dome of the Rock around 1817–18 (at which time the mosaics were evidently still whitewashed), noted, "The inside of the wall is white, without any ornament, and I confess I am one who think ornaments misplaced in a house of prayer, or any thing to distract the mind when it comes there to hold converse with its God."[7]

FIGURE 5.2: Western portico wall of the Friday Mosque of Damascus with the original eighth-century mosaics revealed. Photograph, Manar al-Athar Photo Archive, MAA21827_052_IMG_2381.

FIGURE 5.3: Friday Mosque of Damascus, detail of the eighth-century mosaics in the western portico of the courtyard. Photograph, Manar al-Athar Photo Archive, MAA21841_066_IMG_2213A.

Such perceptions of a resonance between the aesthetics of reformed Christian churches and the altered, whitewashed interiors of certain mosques and shrines may not be entirely serendipitous. During the Protestant Reformations of the sixteenth century, Catholic iconophiles consistently accused Protestant reformists of transforming churches into mosques through their instrumentalization of iconoclasm and whitewash. I return to this theme later.

Richardson was probably unaware of the fact that the whitewashed interior he so admired was itself the result of a dramatic aesthetic transformation, but the likely reasons for it undoubtedly would have struck a chord as deep as its transcendental resonances. From as early as a year or two after the completion of the Damascus mosque in 715, objections were raised to the ostentation of its ornamentation and the expense that it had incurred. These anxieties about the ornaments of the mosque came to the fore in Damascus just before 720, in the wake of a failed attempt to capture Constantinople. The pious caliph ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAziz, or ʿUmar II (r. 717–20), is even reported to have gone as far as to temporarily cover its mosaics with white canvas or drapes and melt its golden lamps to remonetize their metal components.[8] Conversely, despite its ultimate failure, that campaign came close to succeeding and seems to have galvanized a sense among some Byzantine Christians that the proliferation of image veneration in Byzantium was responsible for the rise and military prowess of Islam.[9]

Debates about the appropriate ornamentation of sacred space that swirled in eighth-century Damascus were perpetuated in medieval Islamic juridical texts concerning the mosque, in which they assumed a paradigmatic role. The jurists adopted a variety of attitudes to the ornamentation of mosques—some even going as far as to prohibit the presence of Qur'anic inscriptions. Assuming a dialectical tension between unadorned piety and the elaboration of the mosque, objections to the aniconic ornament of the mosque are threefold: that the gold, marble, and mosaics attracted the gaze of the worshipers and distracted them from prayer; that gold should be used to mediate exchange rather than fetishized in its own right; and that the monies expended on the ornamentation of the mosque would have been better served in service of the *umma*, the transnational Muslim community.

The relationship of juridical norms to social practice was erratic, but it is clear that at certain times and in certain places anxieties about fancy ornaments in mosques, even aniconic ornaments, led to their destruction or their occlusion by plaster or whitewash.[10] It seems likely that the plastering of the mosaics in Damascus (see figure 5.1) and the whitewashing of those in Jerusalem represents a moment in the early modern period in which those who objected to glittering ornaments in mosques gained the upper hand.

Pious objectors not only contrasted the elaboration of the mosque with the simple piety of the Prophet Muhammad's time but worried that the use of fancy ornaments would lead to confusion, creating mosques that resembled churches and synagogues and undermining the articulation of a distinct Muslim identity. This concern with identity assumes a particular irony in light of the fact that it was the whitewashing of mosque ornaments that enabled a perceived homology with Christian sacred space on the part of post-Reformation visitors to the Middle East. This homology was, of course, itself enabled by the tumultuous events of the sixteenth century and the dramatic rearticulation or rewriting of sacred space that it produced in European Christendom. Just as in the Islamic world the application of whitewash could be represented as a reversion to a purer, prelapsarian practice, so Protestant revolutionaries frequently portrayed their actions as a reversion, a practical reform of corrupted sacred space.

There are, in fact, striking similarities between the precise nature of Islamic and Protestant objections to ornament and the remedial actions that they inspired. These commonalities reflect a shared debt to late antique discourses on ornament, images, and bodies, highlighting a relationship that is genealogical rather than truly serendipitous and in which concerns about aesthetics, economics, and ethics intersected within the "economy of piety."[11]

In a volume concerned with remapping cognitive frontiers, it may seem somewhat paradoxical to address the hoary topics of aniconism and iconoclasm, especially given the long-established clichés about Islam on this score. However, the past few decades have seen an exponential rise in articles and monographs on the topic of iconoclasm in general, and its role in the events of the Protestant Reformation in particular. What is especially striking to me, as an Islamicist, is the fact that Islam is largely, if not entirely, absent from this spate of publications on images, iconoclasm, and the Reformation.[12] One searches in vain in the indexes of these publications for "Islam," "Ottomans," or "Turks." In other words, for all their merits, they have added little or nothing to our understanding of Reformation image polemics as cross-culturally inflected. Yet as I will demonstrate, the experience and representation of Islam are deeply implicated in Reformation debates about aniconism, images, and the aesthetics of sacred space.

At a time in which the role and very visibility of Islam in European public life is again in contention, it is worth drawing attention to aspects of a historical entanglement that are both occluded in most modern scholarship and riddled with contradictions and paradoxes that are quite familiar from current discourses on Islam and the nature of European identity. Those contradictions were typified by the discursive representations of Islam and Muslims in the recent controversy over the Danish caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad,

which reminded us that it is not only images and objects that circulate, remapping space and time in ways that alter, confound, consolidate, or undermine cultural or geographic imaginaries and the reified or stratified identities that underwrite them. No less important are the discursive formations that enable or impede the circulation and reception of artifacts, concepts, and practices, formations that condition both inter- and intracultural perceptions and representations of sacred space. When it comes to the polemics of aniconism, both images and discourses concerning their ontological status and epistemological value can be and have been mobilized in service of European identities defined relationally. In fact, from the perspective of the *longue durée*, one of the most striking features of this mobilization has been the inconstancy and instability of Islam's perceived aniconism and iconoclasm, despite the historical centrality of both to etic representations of Muslims. As the material presented here suggests, there is in fact a demonstrable correlation between historical moments of European angst about either Muslims or images (or both) and the production, modification, or reinvestment of discourses on Islamic aniconism and iconoclasm.[13]

If I offer here a very schematic reconstruction of one moment in a diachronic history that often appears agonistic, it is largely because of the importance that this moment has assumed in narratives of Europe's march toward modernity. This importance may, in part, explain the failure to interrogate the ways in which the experience of Islam was relevant to the Reformation and its discursive frameworks. In narratives of the emergence of European modernity, there is universal agreement that events of the sixteenth century mark a significant watershed. Depending on the narrative, the resulting break with an archaic medieval past was marked by the flourishing of humanism, a new spirit of scientific inquiry related (at least in part) to the experience of new worlds, major artistic innovations that promoted the autonomy of the image, a reformulation of the role of religion in public life that enabled the eventual emergence of a public sphere, and even a fundamental shift in the semiotic regimes of European cultures that rewrote the relationship between images, words, and their referents as arbitrary rather than essential or necessary.[14] This is a history from which Islamic cultures are generally excluded, reflecting a general agreement that they have not benefited from the same historical trajectory, now universalized as a transcendental necessity. The omission is all the more striking when one considers that many of these Reformation-era developments were promoted by a formative iconoclasm that was both figurative and literal; histories of image breaking are the one domain in which Islamic cultures are traditionally depicted as avant-garde.

When it comes to what traditionally has been called the Renaissance, recent scholarship has done much to redress the balance, pointing, for example, to the deep engagements between the Ottomans and the humanistic culture of peninsular Italy.[15] By contrast, the continued marginalization of the experience of Islam from accounts of what—from a European perspective, at least—was a foundational development of the sixteenth century is, I suspect, closely related to the central role that the events of the Reformation have assumed in narrative accounts of the emergence of European modernity, a phenomenon often seen as both historically unique and sui generis. Yet if the Reformation marks a crucial stage in the emergence of European modernity, the experience of Muslims (directly or in the form of rhetorical representations) as proponents of a particular belief system, mercantile allies or adversaries, military opponents, polemical figures, and even pietistic models was deeply implicated in that process.

A point of entry into this neglected history is provided by a remarkable sermon delivered on October 2, 1586, almost seventy years after the first shots of the Reformation are traditionally believed to have been fired. The preacher was the Anglican clergyman Meredith Hanmer (d. 1604), and the venue was the Collegiate Church of St. Katharine, next to the Tower of London. The occasion of the sermon was unique in the history of the Anglican church: it commemorated the baptism into Anglicanism of a Muslim Turk from Euboea, in Greece, whose name is given as Chinano and who had recently been rescued by Sir Francis Drake from decades of enslavement on a Spanish galley in the Caribbean. In Hanmer's sermon, Chinano's conversion to Anglicanism is said to have been prompted by an intense dislike of two essential Spanish characteristics: cruelty and "Idolatry in worshipping of images." Appropriately, Hanmer's sermon discussed the possibility of converting the Turks, emphasizing that the Turks scorned the pope and reviled unreformed churches for their idols and images, citing (if a little vaguely) a Turkish embassy that refused the invitation to convert to unreformed Christianity, since this was "the religion of idle persons, of faint, and weake people, and of Idolaters, worshipping of Images."[16] According to Hanmer, image worship had been a stumbling block to the earlier conversion of the Saracen Arabs in Spain. With its abolition in Protestantism, he expressed a common Protestant hope that heathens, Jews, Turks, and Saracens would soon be converted. Aniconism was thus presented as a virtue that not only excluded Catholics, but (rhetorically, at least) had the potential to bring Muslims into constellation with, and perhaps even transform them into, Protestant Christians.[17]

The hope that the common rejection of idolatry might draw together Arabs, Jews, Turks, and Protestants was something of a commonplace in Reformist

polemics. In *A Treatise Declaring and Showing That Images Are not to Be Suffered in Churches* (1535), for example, the Strasbourg-born Martin Bucer denounced images as providing ammunition to Jewish and Muslim critics of Christianity while impeding their conversion. Similarly, in 1543, the French ecumenist Guillaume Postel (d. 1581) outlined twenty-eight points of resemblance between Islamic and Protestant beliefs and practices, the fourteenth of which was a rejection of images in places of worship.[18]

On occasion, Protestant aspirations for Muslim conversion even found a counterpart in the aspirations for Protestant-Muslim convergence that inform Ottoman realpolitik, which equally engage the question of the image. A letter addressed by sultan Selim II, successor of Suleiman the Magnificent, to the Lutheran law school or sect (*Lūtharān mezheb*) in 1574, when the Ottomans were contesting the western Mediterranean with the Hapsburgs, makes much of the common rejection of idolatry while mistakenly assuming that Protestants rejected the divinity of Jesus, as Muslims do:

> As you, for your part, do not worship idols, you have banished the idols (*būt*) and pictures (*ṣūrat*) and bells (*nāqūs*) from churches, and declared your faith by stating that God Almighty is One and Holy Jesus is His Prophet and Servant, and now, with heart and soul, are seeking and desirous of the true faith; but the faithless one they call Pāpā (i.e., the Pope) does not recognize his Creator as One, ascribing divinity to Holy Jesus (upon him be peace!), and worshipping idols and pictures which he has made with his own hands, thus casting doubt upon the Oneness of God and instigating how many servants of God to that path of error.[19]

The letter seems to have formed part of an Ottoman strategy to inspire a common anti-Hapsburg front consisting of Ottoman Muslims in North Africa; Moriscos (Spanish Muslims converted to Catholicism) in Spain, who had rebelled in 1568; and Dutch Protestants, who had led an iconoclastic revolt against Spanish rule in the Netherlands in 1566.[20] A letter reportedly written from the Moriscos to the Turkish bey of Algiers in 1568 and intercepted and translated by the Castillian rulers puts particular emphasis on Christian attempts to force the converted Muslims into image worship, one reason that crucifixes, paintings, and sculptures in the churches of Al-Andalus were specifically targeted by the Moriscos during their revolt.[21]

Sultan Selim's emphasis on a common rejection of the signs of idolatry finds a counterpart in the diplomatic protocols used by Elizabeth I of England in a letter written to his successor, Murad III, in 1579, in which she begins by styling herself as the defender of the Christian faith "against all kinde of idolatries,"

and ends by invoking the blessings of God, "a most severe revenger of all idolatrie," and false gods, upon the Ottoman sultan.[22] The exchanges between the Ottoman court and that of Elizabeth I reflect a common recognition of each as the enemy of idolatry, an understanding that was both economically and strategically beneficial. The emphasis on bells (literally, the *nāqūs* or *semantron* used by eastern Christians) in Selim's letter to the European Protestants, for example, assumes a special irony in light of the brisk sixteenth-century trade in bell metals—metals derived from the broken bells, images, and ornaments of Catholic churches and abbeys—between England and Ottoman Turkey, where the metals were used for Ottoman munitions, including those used against the Hapsburgs.[23]

The invocation of Protestant aniconism in an imperial Ottoman communiqué and an Anglican conversion sermon crafted within a decade or so of each other provides a dramatic illustration of the way in which Islam's relation to the image featured in both inter- and intra-sectarian polemical exchanges of the sixteenth century. Despite its palpable presence in these exchanges, as noted earlier, Islam is entirely absent from the spate of publications on images, iconoclasm, and the Reformation that have proliferated over the past three decades. Yet representations of Islam are inextricably linked to Reformation debates about aniconism, images, and idolatry, often in ways that appear contradictory or paradoxical to modern observers.

The function of Islam in these polemical exchanges is characterized by a dialectic of alterity and identity in which even perceived commonalities could be qualified to assert difference in similarity. The idea of a common bond between the aniconic worship of English Protestants and that of Ottoman Muslims did not, for example, find universal or unqualified appeal among many Reformers, for whom the use of images in secular contexts was a matter of indifference. By contrast, the inveterate opposition of the Turks to figurative imagery is a common trope. If, for example, bell metals could travel freely between Protestant Europe and the Ottoman sultan, other commodities proved more problematic, at least according to European observers. Writing about the reception of European clocks bearing figurative imagery, Salomon Schweigger, a member of the Hapsburg Embassy in Turkey between 1578 and 1581, reports, "They like the small striking clocks which are brought from Germany; but if they show engraved figures, the Turks have them removed and replaced by flowers."[24] In light of such generalized qualms about images even outside the realm of worship, Reformists such as the English Calvinist Bishop Gervase Babington (d. 1610) saw Turkish opposition to pictorial representation in all contexts as excessively superstitious.[25] In other words, while Protestant Reformers might invoke a shared belief in the

necessity of aniconic worship, this was as the product of a rational approach to the question of religion not shared by the Turks, who were creatures of superstitious impulses that informed their suspicion of images in general, even outside the context of worship.

The endeavor to assert difference in commonality, to both reconfigure and reassert boundaries of belief and practice, is in fact illustrated by Hanmer's sermon of 1586, with which I began. While acknowledging the utility of aniconism to Protestant efforts to convert the Turks, Hanmer goes on to offer a genealogy of Muslim worship that locates its origins in worship of the pagan goddess Aphrodite/Venus at Mecca. This is a claim first made by John of Damascus in the eighth century, rare in Christian anti-Muslim polemics of the post-Crusade period, which tend to depict Muslims as heretics rather than pagans. Developing his theme, Hanmer distinguishes between the rejection of images by both Muslims and Protestants and Muslim practices that he sees as having more in common with those of unreformed Catholicism. For example, Hanmer asserts that Catholic devotion to pilgrimages, relics, and tombs is "Turkish and Mahometicall" by virtue of its resemblance to the veneration afforded the holy places of Arabia by Muslims and the "idolatrous priestes of Mahomet." The ambiguities revealed here—the notion that, in its rejection of images, Islam has something in common with the reformed church, while the veneration of holy places by Muslims evokes a simultaneous association with idolatrous Catholic practices—is central to understanding how, in the polemics of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the specter of Islam could be invoked by and against both Catholics and Protestants respectively.

Although 1517, the year in which Martin Luther pasted his ninety-five theses to the door of Wittenberg's Schlosskirche, is conventionally given as the start of the Reformation, the question of the image that was so central to these exchanges was in contention long before 1517. The issue had been rendered pressing by the experience of a newly resurgent Islam on the eastern borders of the European principates. It is worth remembering that the early events of the Reformation took place against a burgeoning Ottoman power that rapidly expanded westward during the reign of sultan Suleiman the Magnificent (r. 1520–66), whose reign saw the fall of Belgrade in 1521, the defeat of the Hungarians at Mohacs in 1526, the sack of Buda and the consequent occupation of Hungary, and the siege of Vienna in 1529.

Christian doubts about image worship preceded this zenith of Ottoman expansion, being first raised as part of the mood of introspection that followed the fall of Constantinople to the Ottomans in 1453. A treatise on the Turks published in 1481 by George of Hungary, who had been an Ottoman prisoner

between 1438 and 1458, emphasizes the Turks' lack of ostentation in religious matters and their rejection of images, sculptures, and representations of all sorts. George goes on to elaborate contemporary perceptions of the relation between the aniconism of Islam, its potential appeal to Christians, and the successes of the Ottomans: "When simple folk understand that the Turks hate idols, reject every representation and image as they do hell-fire, profess and preach so constantly the cult of a single God, then their last suspicions about the Turks disappear. But certain men of letters have also said that the endurance of this sect in relation to other sects and heresies derives from the fact that they detest idols and worship a single God."[26]

George rejects the (evidently widespread) idea that Islam is Christianity's bad conscience in respect of images, asserting that the sin of idolatry is less serious than that of the Turks, who worship God falsely by rejecting his holy mysteries. Nevertheless, the idea was clearly being mooted decades before the traditional date for the start of the Reformation. Just as some Byzantine Christians of the eighth century had seen Arab victories against Byzantium as a sign of divine disfavor, so some German and Swiss Christians of the sixteenth century contrasted the aniconic worship of Islam with the image-rich culture of contemporary Christianity, concluding that Christian iconolatry was a sin that had led God to favor the Ottoman Turks and use them as an instrument of punishment against idolatrous Christians.

Luther initially opposed resisting the Turks on the grounds that they were God's chosen instruments of punishment for the vices of Christians, which needed to be addressed before the Turks could be defeated.[27] The theme was elaborated by Luther's follower Philipp Melanchthon (d. 1560), who proposed a causal chronology that related the corruption of Christianity through the worship of images and the promulgation of the doctrine of transubstantiation (the doctrine that the eucharistic gifts are literally transformed into the body and blood of Christ) and the rise of the Turks, noting (erroneously) that the idolatrous doctrine of transubstantiation was promoted by the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215, while Othman, the founder of the Ottoman dynasty, ascended the throne in 1250. He wrote, "The power of the Turks came to increase so that the world would be chastised because of the idols, the adoration of the saints, and the profanation of the Supper of the Lord."[28] Linkage between Christian idolatry and Turkish scourge is also made by the Lutheran authors of the Türkenbüchlein, the anti-Ottoman polemical pamphlets and tracts that proliferated in sixteenth-century Germany.[29]

The aniconic worship of the Turks provided a convenient stick with which to chastise Catholic iconolatry, but it could also be deployed against fellow

Reformists. An ironic passage in Luther's *Vom Kriege wider die Türken* (On War against the Turk), published in 1529, three years after the fall of Buda to the Ottomans and the same year that Suleiman the Magnificent laid siege to Vienna, cites the strict aniconism of Islam as a pious virtue that contrasts with the hypocrisy and inconsistency of Protestant iconoclasts, chief among them Andreas Karlstadt, with whom Luther had clashed a few years earlier on the subject of images and iconoclasm: "It is part of the Turks' holiness, also, that they tolerate no images or pictures and are even holier than our destroyers of images. For our destroyers tolerate, and are glad to have, images on gulden, groschen, rings, and ornaments; but the Turk tolerates none of them and stamps nothing but letters on his coins."[30]

That the aniconism of Islam could be deployed to polemical effect against both Catholics and Karlstadt, mobilized variously as virtue or vice, serves as a reminder that representations of Islam's relation to the image in premodern and early modern Christian texts consistently articulate intra-Christian anxieties about images and their status in worship, anxieties amplified by the experience of an expansionist Muslim polity.

While Reformists might acknowledge the virtue of aniconic worship in Islam, Catholics could equally invoke the specter of its correlate, Islamic iconoclasm, in their denunciations of the material changes through which Protestant aniconism was enacted. The Catholic author of one of the Türkenbüchlein genre, published in 1527 in response to the fall of Hungary, asserted, "The Turk tears down churches and destroys monasteries—so does Luther. The Turk turns convents into horse-stables and makes cannon out of church bells—so does Luther."[31]

Writing in 1573, the English Catholic John Fowler noted that, although the Turkish military victories were physically remote from England, through the actions of the Protestant Reformists, "Turkish fashions and persecutions" were brought into the heart of Christendom itself.[32] The metaphorical remapping of the boundaries of Christian practice implied here sometimes found more literal expression in imperial realpolitik: in 1566, for example, the French ambassador to the Ottoman court proposed to assume control over Moldovia and Wallachia (in what is today Romania) in a rear-guard action that would extend Valois influence to the east of its Hapsburg rival by settling the area with hundreds of French Huguenots, whose aniconism meant that they would be easily assimilated and become Turks.[33] In this way the perceived confessional proximity of French Protestants to Islam might mediate a reconfiguration of political geography designed to cement an anti-Hapsburg bond between the Sublime Porte and the Catholic king of France.

Like the sermon of 1586 commemorating the conversion of a Turk seized from a Spanish galley in the Caribbean, these kinds of projects provide a dramatic illustration of the way in which the European kingdoms, including the Ottoman sultanate, were remaking and remapping (quite literally in terms of contemporary cartography) the boundaries between Africa, Asia, the Americas, and Europe during the sixteenth century and early seventeenth century. Yet the omission of Islam from narratives of the Reformation and the reform of the image in particular finds interesting parallels in accounts of contemporary European expansion, which tend to marginalize or neglect the extent to which the experience of Islam shaped the responses of European Christians to the new worlds to which they laid claim. This was not merely a question of providing a functional paradigm of alterity vis-à-vis religious belief and practice. In some cases, it manifested a deeper resonance in which the very protocols of conquest employed against and modes of taxation imposed on the subjugated *Indios* of the New World were adapted from those previously employed against Christians in the Arab principalities of Al-Andalus—protocols that had been adopted by Christians during and after the *reconquista*. This debt to Islamic practice was readily apparent to at least some sixteenth-century Spaniards, who questioned whether it was appropriate for a Christian empire to "mimic Muhammad" in its protocols and rationalizations of New World conquest.[34]

The kinds of geographic and temporal displacements attested by such adaptations are integral to understanding the representation and role of Islam in the image polemics of the Reformation. While in earlier centuries the trope of the Muslim as idolater facilitated the distinction of Christian icons from idols, the exploration of new worlds enabled the charge of idolatry to be displaced onto new pagans at the very moment that it was being leveled at Catholics by Protestant Reformers.[35] It is not by coincidence that New World spectacles of destruction involving ritual paraphernalia and "horrible idols" (*simulacros horrendos*) such as that described and depicted by Diego Muñoz Camargo in his *Descripción de la ciudad y provincia de Tlaxcala* (1584) (see figure 5.4) echo those illustrated in the paintings and prints then circulating in Europe depicting the destruction of idolatrous Catholic artifacts and images and the whitewashing of churches (see figure 5.5). These events were occurring even as the Aztec temples of Mexico, identified as mosques by the first Spaniards to encounter them, were being cleansed of their idols, whitewashed, and dedicated to the Virgin following a formula established earlier for the conversion of both Muslim believers and sacred space in medieval Iberia.[36] The fall of Granada in 1492 and the subsequent conversion or extermination of Iberian Muslims facilitated this displacement, but even as political Islam waned in the West, it waxed in the East with the

FIGURE 5.4: Franciscan friars burning the clothes, books, and paraphernalia of the Aztec priests. Diego Muñoz Camargo, *Historia de Tlaxcala*, 1584. © Glasgow University Library/Bridgeman Art Library, Ms. Hunter 242, fol. 242r.

FIGURE 5.5: A scene of iconoclasm at Zurich in 1524 by Heinrich Thomann (1544–1618). In Heinrich Bullinger, *Reformationschronik*, 1564, Zentralbibliothek Zürich, ms. B 316, fol. 134r.

victories of the Ottomans and the concurrent rise of the Safavids and Mughal empires beyond.

In the contemporary rhetoric of the Catholic Counter-Reformation, both space and time were relevant to the cultural and political boundaries being refigured by Turk and Protestant. In *That One Should not Remove Images of Saints from the Churches* (1522), a treatise published in response to the influential tract *On the Removal of Images*, written by the arch-iconoclast Andreas Karlstadt, the German Catholic Hieronymous Emser situated the iconoclasm of the Reformists within a long tradition of attacks on the church led by heretics, Jews, Turks, and Arabs (Saracens), following a line of thought first used by supporters of images during the period of Byzantine iconoclasm. Conflating Arabs and Turks under the sign of iconoclasm, Emser reinvests an old notion that Jewish aniconism informed Islamic iconoclasm, explaining how "the Jews first attached themselves to Mohammed, the Lawgiver to the Turks, and attempted to destroy Christian images."[37]

As Emser suggests, for many defenders of images against Protestant critics, their rejection indicated not only a conceptual or genealogical link with the aniconism of earlier Jewish and Muslim opponents of Christianity but also actual affinities with the religious ideas of the contemporary other par excellence: the Ottoman Turks. The theme was amplified in the rhetoric of the Catholic Counter-Reformation. Writing in 1567, the English Catholic priest Nicholas Sander provides a genealogy of iconoclasm that originates in the persecutors of the Old Testament and proceeds through Julian the Apostate, the heretical followers of Arius, Byzantine iconoclasts, Jews, devil worshipers, and the Saracens, "who now worship Mahomet," to Reformist iconoclasts such as Wycliff, Huss, Luther, and Calvin.[38] Just as Jews and Muslims were mutually implicated in both iconoclasm and idolatry in earlier Christian polemical writings, so now in the sixteenth century a constellation of Arabs, Jews, Turks, and Protestants was implicated in the heresy of iconoclasm. As late as the 1670s, European tracts penned in defense of image veneration were addressed to "Jews and heretics and Muslims who say we adore idols."[39]

Jews, Turks, and Protestants alike thus appear as reiterations of the originary iconoclasts, those who tortured the body of the living Christ when it hung on the cross. The theme resonated as far away as Mexico, or "New Spain," where Moors or Saracens (i.e., Arabs) and Turks were often conflated in theatrical spectacles of defeat and victory.[40] An extraordinary image of the Mass of St. Gregory executed in the indigenous medium of rare bird feathers as a gift for the pope in 1539 (see figure 5.6) shows a turbaned Turk and a Protestant working in concert to torment the suffering Christ (see figures 5.7 and 5.8),

FIGURE 5.6: Mass of St. Gregory, feather painting (68 cm × 56 cm), Mexico, 1539, Musée des Jacobins, Auch. Photograph by Benoît Touchard. © RMN-Grand Palais/Art Resource, New York.

FIGURE 5.7: Detail of Mass of St. Gregory, feather painting.

FIGURE 5.8: Detail of Mass of St. Gregory, feather painting.

FIGURE 5.9: Iconoclasts attacking an image of the *Adoration of the Magi*, oil on wood panel (104 cm × 140 cm), Flanders, late sixteenth or early seventeenth century. Douai, Musée de la Chartreuse, inv. 1598. Photograph by Daniel Lefebvre.

recalling earlier Byzantine visual polemics in which the centurion torturers of Christ were equated with Christian iconoclasts.[41]

Among the Old World variants on this theme is a large-scale oil painting on wood produced in Flanders toward the end of the sixteenth century (see figure 5.9). In it, we see a large painting of the adoration of the Magi. To the right of the painting is a bearded and turbaned figure lunging at the painted throat of the Virgin with a sharp pike. Behind him, a figure in contemporary European dress wields an ax against the painting, restrained by the hand of a tonsured cleric.[42] The painting entails a Gestalt, a meta-commentary on both images and iconoclasm, in which the painting of the painted image of the Virgin appears, at first glance, as a depiction of her living body, so that the casual viewer registers the attack on the painting as an attack on the Virgin rather than on her representation. The attack represents a coordinated effort of destruction by the Turk and the figure of a Protestant Reformist, but its iconography lends it a strongly intertextual dimension. For example, the garb of the Turk and the lance that he wields recall the centurion that tortured Christ on the cross, collapsing the distinction between Roman and Muslim attacks on Christianity, on the one hand, and images and incarnated flesh, on the other.

The iconography of the painting was adopted from a depiction of an infamous purported attack on a statue of the Virgin in the nearby convent of Notre Dame de Cambron (Belgium) by a converted Jew in 1322, during which the image was stabbed with a pike multiple times and is said to have bled (see figure 5.10).[43] Here, the theme is reworked in light of the events of the Reformation, including the well-documented outbreak of Protestant iconoclasm that took place in the Low Countries in 1566.[44] The complex iconography of the painting reflects not just a temporal collapse but also the reinvestment of a late medieval anti-Semitic trope of Jewish attacks on Christian images to address the perceived threats posed by the combined forces of Ottoman Islam and Reformed Christianity.

At the end of the sixteenth century and beginning of the seventeenth century, the kinds of polemical accusations visualized in this painting were canonized through the coining of hyphenated neologisms, such as Calvino-Turk, Luthero-Turk, and Turko-Papist, to name the supposed Islamic affinities of Calvinism, Lutheranism, and Catholicism respectively. In an influential anti-Protestant tract published posthumously in Antwerp in 1597 (and again in 1603), the English Jesuit William Rainolds initiated this phenomenon by coining the hybrid term "Calvino-Turcismus" (see figure 5.11) to naturalize and popularize the idea that the theology of Calvinism and Ottoman Islam were imbricated and mutually implicating. Rainold's tract found an immediate response in the Anglican

Matthew Sutcliffe's *De Turcopapismo* (first published in 1599 and again in 1604), which put into circulation a corresponding neologism (see figure 5.12).[45] In *De Turcopapismo*, papists and Turks are described as brothers, the pope and Muhammad compared, and Muslims in general and Muhammad in particular are described as partaking of the heresies of Arian and Marcion—early church heresies centered on whether or not Christ had a divine nature and that, not coincidentally, had found their epicenters in lands now under Muslim control. Enabled by print technology (a key point), this rapid-fire exchange set the pattern for a subsequent pattern of attack and response that popularized hybrid terms implicating Islam in Christian schism.

Forged as part of an aggressive intra-Christian dialogue, these etic representations of Islam served to construct boundaries that were no longer reducible to the gulf between Christian and Muslim. The polemical force of medieval representations of Islam often derived from the mapping of practices associated with pagans, those irredeemably outside the fold, onto those of Muslims. In Reformation-era debates about images, by contrast, the polemical value of Islam derived from its ability to be mapped onto the practices of fellow Christians in a complex dialectic of alterity and identity that depended on the perception of Muslims as heretics and, thus, not entirely other.

In *Calvino-Turcismus*, Rainolds depicts both Calvinism and Islam as modes of Christian heresy, detailing a number of parallels between the beliefs of Muslims and of Protestants, suggesting that Calvinist doctrines concerning the Trinity may have been inspired by the Qur'an and comparing Reformist rejection of religious images as idols to critiques leveled by Muslim Turks against Christian iconolatry.[46] In a particularly dramatic passage, the assault by followers of Jean Calvin and Huldrych Zwingli on religious images and church interiors in Geneva and Zurich (see figure 5.5) is compared with the destruction of the altars and divine images by Ottoman iconoclasts in the churches of Buda, the Hungarian capital, after it fell to Suleiman the Magnificent in 1526. A similar accusation had appeared in an anti-Protestant tract published in Antwerp in 1566, which compared the assault of Reformists on the materiality of Christian worship to the iconoclasm of the Turks after the fall of Constantinople in 1453.[47] By analogy, Rainolds accuses Protestant Reformists of effecting through iconoclasm the de facto transformation of Catholic sanctuaries into "Muhammedan Churches" (Ecclesias Mahumetanis).[48] The phrase establishes a homology (if not a genealogical relation) between the image-free, whitewashed spaces of Reformed Christianity (see figure 5.13) and the iconoclasm and whitewashing through which Christian cathedrals and churches were converted for use as Ottoman mosques (see figure 5.14). It also recalls eyewitness accounts of

FIGURE 5.10: Detail of an engraving of a medieval twelve-image panel painting narrating the Miracle of Notre-Dame de Cambron, ca. 1890, J. van Péteghem, Brussels.

CALVINO-TVRCISMVS,
ID EST,
CALVINISTICÆ PERFIDIÆ, CVM MAHVMETANA COLLATIO, ET DILVCIDA VTRIVSQVE SECTAE CONfutatio:

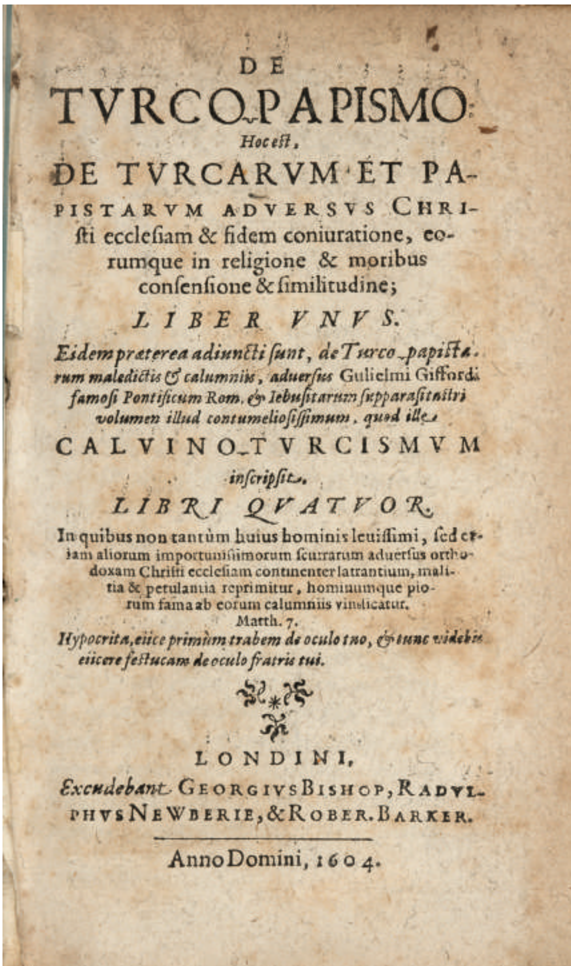
Quatuor libris explicata,

Ad ſtabiliendam, S. Romanæ Eccleſiæ, contrà omnes omnium hæreſes, fidem orthodoxam, accommodatiſſima.

Authore GVLIELMO REGINALDO *Anglo, ſacræ Theologiæ quondam in collegio Pontificio Anglorum apud Rhemenſes profeſſore.*

COLONIAE AGRIPPINAE,
Apud Antonium Hierat, ſub Monocerote. Anno M. DC. III.
Cum priuilegijs Cæſareo & Regio.

FIGURE 5.11: Frontispiece in William Rainolds, *Calvinoturcismus* (Cologne, 1603).


DE

TVRCOPAPISMO:

Hoc est,

DE TVRCARVM ET PA-
PISTARVM ADVERSVS CHRI-
ſti eccleſiam & fidem coniuratione, eo-
rumque in religione & moribus
conſenſione & ſimilitudine;

LIBER VNVS.

*Eidem præterea adiuncti ſunt, de Turco-papiſta-
rum maledictis & calumniis, aduerſus* Gulielmi Giffordi
*famoſi Pontificum Rom. & Iebuſitarum ſupparaſitaſtri
volumen illud contumelioſiſſimum, quod ille*

CALVINO-TVRCISMVM

inſcripſit.

LIBRI QVATVOR.

In quibus non tantùm huius hominis leuiſſimi, ſed et-
iam aliorum importuniſſimorum ſcurrarum aduerſus ortho-
doxam Chriſti eccleſiam continenter latrantium, mali-
tia & petulantia reprimitur, hominumque pio-
rum fama ab eorum calumniis vindicatur.

Matth. 7.

*Hypocrita, eiice primùm trabem de oculo tuo, & tunc videbis
eiicere feſtucam de oculo fratris tui.*

LONDINI,

Excudebant GEORGIVS BISHOP, RADVL-
PHVS NEWBERIE, & ROBER. BARKER.

Anno Domini, 1604.

FIGURE 5.12: Frontispiece in Matthew Sutcliffe, *De Turcopapismo* (London, 1604).

the fall of Constantinople 150 years earlier, which describe the transformation of Hagia Sophia into the "House of Muhammad" through the removal of its images. The accusation appears to have been common; in 1595, a Spanish raiding party referred to a Catholic church in Cornwall converted to Protestant worship as a "mosque" (even as the Aztec temples of Mexico were being referred to in similar terms), refraining from sacking it only because of its former Catholic associations.[49] A century later, the English Presbyterian Joseph Pitts, who had been enslaved in North Africa between 1678 and 1693, noted that Muslims favored Protestants over Catholics on account of a common preference for aniconic simplicity in their places of worship: "But they have nothing of any *fine Ornaments* in these their *Geameas* or *Mosques*, neither any *Pictures,*

FIGURE 5.13: Pietr Jansz Saenredam (1597–1665), St. Catherine's Church, (116.8 cm × 95.9 cm), Utrecht, 1636. Upton House UPT.P.128 © NTPL/Christopher Hurst.

FIGURE 5.14: Whitewashed interior of the Selimiye Mosque, the former Cathedral of St. Sophia, Lefkoșa/Nicosia, begun in 1209 and transformed into an Ottoman mosque in 1570. Photograph courtesy of Nicholas Kaye.

Images or any thing of *that* Nature; but the walls are *naked white*, for they utterly abhor *Images*, or any thing *like* them. They blame the Papists for having so many *Trumperies* in their *Churches*, and have a greater respect for *Protestants*, because they have not the like."[50]

What is particularly interesting about these polemical exchanges is not only the role that the destruction or negation of the image plays within them. Rather, it is the intertwining of aesthetics and ethics in the mutual appeal ascribed to the religious forms and practices of Islam or Reformed Christianity and the complex relationship between mosques and the spaces of Reformed worship that arises from it. A practical expression of these aesthetic intersections flourished in Transylvania, an Ottoman protectorate known for sheltering heterodox Christians, where large quantities of imported aniconic Turkish rugs (including prayer rugs) were hung on the whitewashed walls of churches converted to Protestant use during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[51]

Following David Freedberg's landmark study of 1991, there has been much discussion of the "power of images" in recent years.[52] However, neither the currency of this idea nor its own familiarity with the aesthetics of modernism should blind us to the "power of aniconism," its profound aesthetic and moral appeal, especially when posed as an alternative to the corruptions of an established order. Zwingli's celebration of the churches of Zurich as "positively luminous" and "beautifully white" in their transformed state after 1524 may have cut little ice with a contemporary Catholic observer,[53] but it offered the possibility of seeing in the whitewashed churches not merely a negation of the image but the positive assertion of an alternative aesthetic with moral overtones (see figure 5.13). The power of aniconism was doubled by its ability to index the transformation of Catholic space, both by the absence of images (whose defacement or destruction often left telltale traces) and the application of whitewash and words.[54] Just as the reforms could be presented as a reversion to an originary Christianity corrupted through time, the new aesthetic could be seen as the restoration of a primal or prelapsarian aesthetic obscured through the proliferation of images.[55] However, the resonances of the new Christian aesthetic with that described in mosques by fourteenth-and fifteenth-century travelers to the Middle East (who often referred to mosques as "Saracen churches") and the common use of iconoclasm in the transformation of pre-existing churches were no less clear to contemporary observers, whether glossed in positive or negative terms.[56]

In these polemical exchanges, we witness the intertwining of aesthetics and ethics in the perception of a relationship between mosques and the spaces of Reformed worship. Calls for Protestant-Ottoman collaboration, such as that found in sultan Selim's letter of 1574 or appeals for Muslim conversion

such as that heard in Hanmer's sermon of 1586, assert the common appeal of image-free practices and spaces of worship, couching in aesthetical-ethical terms a rapprochement that might even culminate in identity. However, this was a double-edged sword, not only because it risked providing ammunition to Catholic polemicists seeking to smear Reformists with the charge of being crypto-Muslims, but also because it acknowledged the potential appeal of Islamic doctrines and aesthetic forms. In 1542, the German Lutheran Heinrich Knaust published the pamphlet *On the Lowly Origin, Shameful Life, and Ignominious Death of the Turkish Idol Mahomet*, which, he explained, was addressed to those Christians who might fall into Ottoman hands and be tempted to apostatize, "led astray by the false glitter of the Turkish religion," a theme common to other Türkenbüchlein of the period.[57] Similarly, Luther's writings on the Turks acknowledge the rational appeal of a religion that lacks the ineffable mysteries of Christianity (a point of attraction for contemporary anti-Trinitarian Christians) and that is marked by the devotion to prayer of the Muslim Turks, their piety and rejection of extravagance and ostentation in both dress and the ornamentation of their buildings. In his 1530 introduction to an edition of a late-fifteenth-century tract on the religion and customs of the Turks, for example, Luther praises the author for presenting both negative and positive aspects of Islamic beliefs, customs, and practices, contrasting the discipline and simplicity of Ottoman religious ceremonies and worship with the empty ceremonies of the papists, which appear as profanely elaborated displays, "mere shadows," by comparison with the disciplined sobriety of the Turks. "This is the reason," Luther explains, "why so many persons easily depart from the faith in Christ for Muhammadanism and adhere to it so tenaciously. I sincerely believe that no papist, monk, cleric, or their equal in faith would be able to remain in their faith if they should spend three days among the Turks."[58]

Ultimately, however, it is this very clarity, simplicity, and rationalism that enables Luther, like Hanmer, to reprise the theme of Muslim idolatry, despite the aniconic nature of Islamic worship. Although Luther acknowledges this as a virtue, in its radical monotheism and its rejection of all expressions of anthropomorphism it is an empty kind of monotheism that appeals to natural reason, a kind of lowest common denominator that excludes the ineffable mystery of the Incarnation and the dogmas of Christ's divinity that lie at the heart of Christianity. In doing so, Luther argues, Islam reiterates the absence at the heart of idolatry. Luther's follower Melanchthon asserts that in the absence of belief in the divinity of Christ, the God of the Muslims is an idol. Similarly, in a volume on the Turks co-written with Matthias Erb in 1567, the Zurich Reformer

Heinrich Bullinger (d. 1575) explains, "Although the Turks do not represent God by images, and although they do not have and do not worship other types of images, their heart is, all the same, full of horrible idols and false beliefs, and they will not be received by God and his saints."[59]

In this way, the Reformists squared the circle, reconciling apparently incommensurate notions of Islamic worship as both aniconic and idolatrous that had circulated for several centuries before the Reformation. However, doing so required a shift in emphasis from the materiality of idolatry, a central feature of Protestant critiques of Catholic beliefs and practices, to its semiotic implications—that is, from the crafted image as an inert form erroneously invested with sacred presence to the mental image as an illusory immaterial presence lacking any referent in an external reality. Perhaps the clearest exposition of this is in Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religions* (2:6.4), in which he argues that, through their rejection of the divinity of Christ, the Turks substitute an idol (*idolum*) for the true God, despite their vociferous assertions that God is the Creator of heaven and earth. Elsewhere, Calvin explains that, once the name of God is separated from Christ, it becomes an empty idea so that in semiotic terms the void at the heart of Islam is a signifier with no signified.[60]

The shift from a material to a semiotic explanation of idolatry in the work of Calvin and others is in keeping with the promotion of a theory of semiosis that has come to be seen as a hallmark of early modernity, a theory in which signs (whether images or words) are distinct from and only contingently related to their referents.[61] This was one reason, of course, that Protestants rejected the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation, the ritual transformation of bread and wine into the actual body and blood of Christ. Despite attempts to depict Muslims as wedded to superstitious forms of reference that conflated images with their referents or failed to distinguish fact from fiction, it is worth emphasizing that for a significant number of Protestant intellectuals, Islam offered a more rational alternative to the doctrines in contention between Christians, an appeal that in some cases led to a mobility not only between theological concepts but also between faiths and polities. One might mention, for example, the infamous Adam Neuser, who began as the anti-Trinitarian pastor of a parish church in Heidelberg, fled to Ottoman Transylvania, and ended his life living at the court of the Ottoman sultan Selim II, after having apparently converted to Islam; Rainold's *Calvino-Turcismus* invoked Neuser as an example of the slippery theological slope that led from Christian heresy to Islamic conversion.[62] The biography of Neuser might in fact be considered paradigmatic of the complex entanglements among empires, faiths, and individuals in the

sixteenth century, as demonstrated in recent work on Ottoman self-narratives of religious conversion by Tijana Krstić, who argues the need to acknowledge "Ottoman participation in the age of 'confessionalization.' "[63]

The point I am making is not merely the perceived mutability of religious identity in intra-Christian polemics of the sixteenth century, or even the acknowledged appeal of Islam in a push and pull that threatened the sacralized authority, aesthetic values, and ethical legitimacy of Christianity, reformed or not. Instead, I would lay stress on the constellation of imperial expansionism, diplomatic realpolitik, subaltern aspirations, and theological anxieties that shaped perceptions of Islam in sixteenth-century Europe and the shifts that these occasioned in contemporary cultural and geographic imaginaries. Contemporary Christian discourses on images and Islam offer especially suggestive evidence of the ways in which this constellation was implicated in and by the events of the sixteenth century, providing a cogent reminder that if the Reformation marked a milestone in the emergence of European modernity, as is often claimed, the phenomenon was far from sui generis. In fact, what is particularly striking about this neglected history is that it was not confined to the realm of polemics. Catholic suggestions that Protestants were converting churches into mosques find a counterpart in the hope of many Reformists that the whitewashed spaces of reformed worship might facilitate the movement of Muslims toward a purified Christianity, a hope reflected not only in positive Ottoman perceptions of image-free Protestant churches, but also in Protestant concerns that the lack of ostentation in Ottoman sacred space and practice might attract Christian converts.

As a coda, one might consider the aesthetics of whitewash itself, returning to the Syrian mosques and shrines with which I began. For several hundred years, the splendid Umayyad mosaics lay hidden, occluded from the view of those worshiping within the Umayyad mosques and shrines of both Damascus and Jerusalem (see figures 5.1 and 5.2). Although their plain white appearance was radically at odds with that envisaged by their original patrons, it enabled modes of reception that they never could have imagined. Serendipitously, perhaps, the whitewashing of the Umayyad mosques and shrines seems to have occurred at almost exactly the same time that the Protestant Reformation was radically transforming the interior appearance of Christian sacred space in Europe, at a time that Catholics were accusing Protestant Reformists of achieving through iconoclasm the de facto transformation of Catholic sanctuaries into Muhammedan Churches, even as Protestants sometimes expressed the hope that the banishment of the image from reformed churches would facilitate a rapprochement with Muslims drawn to the image-free worship of reformed

Christianity. The affinities between the aesthetics of whitewash and its moral resonances in both Islamic and Protestant spaces of worship (see figures 5.13–5.14) were sometimes recognized by European Christians, as Robert Richardson's admiring appraisal of the whitewashed interior of the Dome of the Rock in 1817–18 suggests.

Richardson's perception of a link between ornament, prayer, and distraction is perfectly in keeping with the sensibilities of those who whitewashed the glittering mosaics that lay beneath the blank surface visible to him and may reflexively invoke contemporary comparisons between Protestantism and Islam.[64] It highlights the fact that both in its theorization of materiality and consumption and its practical effects, the iconomy of theological Islam reiterates early Christian and Jewish critiques of materiality and anticipates the Protestant Reformists of the sixteenth century who (often drawing on the same late antique sources) rejected excessive expenditure on and ostentation in architecture, ornamentation (of bodies and buildings), food, and language to assert the primacy of interior adornments over an investment in worldly embellishments.[65] Considering the legacy of this Protestant tradition, the anthropologist Webb Keane notes that, "to the extent that their worries about fleshly language articulate with their worries about other aspects of the 'external' world like showy clothing, the forms of etiquette, liturgical rites, architectural ornament, or religious icons, they are part of a more general representational economy."[66] In "its celebration of function over appearance, its rejection of surfaces not just as superfluous but as immoral," Keane sees a continuity of aesthetic tradition between the plain white churches and unadorned speech of nineteenth-century Protestantism and the high modernism of the twentieth century, emblematized by common suspicion not just of ostentation but also of semiotic mediation *tout court* in favor of a representational economy characterized by unmediated transparency.[67]

In fact, one might go further, sketching an aesthetic genealogy from the rejection of ornamented bodies and spaces in early patristic literature through concerns with ornament and the related promotion of whitewash by Protestant reformers (who often drew directly on such literature), among them Zwingli, who wrote around 1520, "In Zurich we have churches which are positively luminous; the walls are beautifully white," and Le Corbusier, whose enthusiasm for whitewash was elaborated in his 1937 book *Quand les cathédrales étaient blanches* (*When the Cathedrals Were White*), and who famously exclaimed, "Whitewash is extremely moral."[68] Between the two lies Adolf Loos's (in)famous 1908 essay "Ornament and Crime," arguing an inverse correlation between ornamental elaboration and civilizational development. Loos's prescriptive aesthetics of modernism not only inspired Le Corbusier, but also echoed Zwingli's celebration of whitewash

as embodying a positive aesthetic rather than negation four centuries earlier. Externalizing the interior aesthetic of the Protestant church, Loos transposed its radiant transcendental blankness onto the urban landscapes of modernity: "We have gone beyond ornament, we have achieved plain, undecorated simplicity. Behold, the time is at hand, fulfillment awaits us. Soon the streets of the cities will shine like white walls! Like Zion, the Holy City, Heaven's capital. Then fulfillment will be ours."[69]

The promotion of correct aesthetic form in certain strands of theological Islam anticipates not only Zwingli's, Loos's, and Le Corbusier's enthusiasm for whitewashed walls, but also a rhetoric of whitewashing as an act of restitution or restoration common to late antique Christianity and its legacy to both Protestant and modernist aesthetics.[70] It comes as little surprise, therefore, that just as the whitewashed interior of the Dome of the Rock struck a chord with the young Protestant Robert Richardson when he visited in 1818, the whitewashed aesthetic of Islamic vernacular architecture and mosques resonated deeply with Le Corbusier, who was to insist that "whitewash exists wherever peoples have preserved intact the balanced structure of a harmonious culture." Writing about his encounter with the Ottoman mosques of Istanbul during a visit in 1911, he enthuses about their brilliant white domed exteriors and the blue-glazed tiles of interiors also "clothed in a majestic coat of whitewash."[71] These resonances between the aesthetics of the classical Islamic mosque architecture and Le Corbusier's conception of modernism did not go unremarked. Writing in 1931, Hubert Lyautey, the French governor-general of Morocco whose modernization programs did much to transform the appearance of many Moroccan cities, explained that "Islam gave me a taste for great white walls and I could almost claim to be one of the forerunners of Le Corbusier."[72]

While the intricate gilded ornament rejected by modernist aestheticians and purveyors of religious purity alike instantiates and performs its own intrusive materiality, whitewash, by contrast, appears as a type of cladding or clothing that effaces itself while acting (however paradoxically) as an index of beauty, morality, purity, and truth.[73] More significant, the liberating universalism of whitewash is closely related to questions of temporality, to a paradoxical interplay between the historical and the transhistorical that manifests itself in the rhetoric of restitution. Following a similar logic, Islamic and Protestant reformists could represent the inscription of blankness or whiteness on existing sacred space as a reformation of sacred space that reinstituted a pristine state corrupted through innovation and ostentation. In certain modernist perceptions, as in earlier theological discourses, the white surface is no less imagined as a kind of restoration or restitution of a formal purity subverted by the pro-

liferation of a representational excess manifest in images and ornament. While lavishing fulsome praise on the whitewashed aesthetic of Ottoman mosques, for example, Le Corbusier went on to denounce the painted decorations recently introduced to their interiors, "the ignominy of repugnant and revolting painted ornamentation," which he attributed to contemporary campaigns of modernization. Paradoxically, for Le Corbusier (who here echoes Loos), the purity, simplicity and inherent modernity of this historical aesthetic was being eroded and masked by the application of surface ornament introduced by the "Young Turks . . . ashamed of the simplicity of their fathers." In other words, a true aesthetic of modernity was being effaced by early twentieth-century campaigns of modernization. By contrast, those places "where the twentieth century had not yet arrived" remained bastions of a whitewashed aesthetic soon to be driven out by mass-produced paper, porcelain, and metal ornaments. This attack on "the morality of centuries of tradition" by the virus of industrialization was especially acute in Republican Turkey, where the modernization program of Mustafa Kemal (Ataturk), according to Le Corbusier, had especially pernicious effects on the culture of whitewash. Writing in 1925, he lamented, "No more whitewash in Turkey for a long time to come!"

Paradoxically, it was as a restoration of the morality of an aesthetic tradition not bounded by stylistic nationalism that the whitewash promoted by European modernism promised to reinvigorate the authentic and anticipatory aesthetic modernity of the East.[74] However, even as Le Corbusier was preaching the gospel of radiant blankness, an alternative European vision of both aesthetics and history was stripping the dusty white plaster from the shimmering gold mosaics in the early Islamic mosques and shrines of Damascus and Jerusalem (see figure 5.2 and figure 5.3).

NOTES

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1 De Lorey, "Les Mosaïques de la Mosquée des Omayyades à Damas."
2 The mosaics make an appearance in the works of Damascene writers such as Shaikh al-Rabwa al-Dimashqi (d. 1327) and Ibn Shakir al-Kutubi (d. 1361).
3 Behrens-Abouseif, "The Fire of 884/1479 at the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus and an Account of Its Restoration," 283.
4 The mosaics are mentioned in accounts written before 1495, but in his account of the Dome of the Rock, written between 1616 and 1634, the Franciscan missionary Francesco Quaresmio cites earlier accounts of the mosaics, explaining that in his day the interior walls of the building were whitewashed, leaving only ornaments and arabesques. "In praesentia melius diceretur deforis quidem in superiori parte ornamentis et floribus damasceno artificio exornatum esse, et intus totum album, ut qui diligenter interius viderunt testati sunt, et credo, quia communiter sunt albae turcarum mesquitae": Quaresmio, *Historica theologica et moralis Terræ Sanctæ elucidatio*, 87.
5 Horn, *Ichnographiae monumentorum Terrae Sanctae*, 204–5. This may suggest that the whitewashing was undertaken during the restorations to the Dome of the Rock and Aqsa Mosque in 1721–22, which were verified by the qadi of Jerusalem: Göyünç, "The Procurement of Labor and Materials in the Ottoman Empire," 328–29. As to the reason for the whitening of the Dome of the Rock mosaics, Horn's reference to concerns with the figures of angels is intriguing, since no such subjects are immediately evident in the mosaics. The identification recalls reports that seventh-century mosaics covering the exterior before being replaced with Ottoman tiles in the sixteenth century bore numerous winged motifs, presumably similar to those found today on the mosaics on the interior drum of the dome. The exterior winged motifs are identified as cherubim by Felix Fabri, a Swiss pilgrim who wrote in the 1480s; this may be an error, since Fabri was forced to view the building from a distance, but it may also preserve a germ of truth. It has, for example, been suggested that the winged motifs here and in other Umayyad contexts were intended as aniconic evocations of the cherubim that guarded the Holy of Holies in the Jewish Temple that formerly stood on the site: Raby, "In Vitro Veritas: Glass Pilgrim Vessels from 7th-Century Jerusalem," 129–30; Flood, "The Qur'an," 272–73. One intriguing possibility is that the identification of the wing motifs in the Dome of the Rock as angels was made on the basis of their perceived resemblance to images of angels depicted in the mosaics in another celebrated monument under Ottoman control: the church of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople/Istanbul. After the conversion of the church into a mosque following the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople in 1453, the figural mosaics immediately within the view of the worshippers were plastered over. However, the images of the winged seraphim in the pendentives of the Hagia Sophia dome remained visible even after more of the remaining Byzantine mosaics were plastered or whitewashed as part of a major restoration undertaken at the behest of the Ottoman sultan Ahmed I (r. 1603–17), and were identified by later viewers as angels: Necipoğlu, "The Life of an Imperial Monument," 211–19.
6 Melchior de Vogüé, *Le Temple de Jérusalem*.

7 Richardson, *Travels along the Mediterranean and Parts Adjacent*, 296.
8 For an interesting account of these events and their implications for early Islamic aesthetics, see Alami, *Art and Architecture in the Islamic Tradition*, 159–88. See also Flood, "Bodies, Books and Buildings"; Flood, *Islam and Image*, chap. 3.
9 Flood, "Faith, Religion and the Material Culture of Early Islam," 255.
10 Flood, "Bodies, Books and Buildings"; Flood, *Islam and Image*.
11 Wandel, *Voracious Idols and Violent Hands*, 97–98, 100. See also Flood, "Bodies, Books and Buildings."
12 See, e.g., Koerner, *The Reformation of the Image*. A notable exception is Michalski, *The Reformation and the Visual Arts*, which includes a two-page appendix drawing attention to the ways in which the Ottoman Turks were implicated in the polemical exchanges between Catholics and Reformists over the question of the image. See also Kaufmann, *"Türkenbüchlein,"* 44–46.
13 A full discussion of the historiography of the "image problem" in relation to the representation of Islam can be found in chapter 1 of Flood, *Islam and Image*. See also Flood, "Inciting Modernity?"
14 Among many others Cottin, "L'Iconoclasme des réformateurs comme modèle de nouvelles formes esthétiques"; Hofmann, "Die Geburt der Moderne aus dem Geist der Religion; Greene, "Language, Signs and Magic."
15 See, e.g., Necipoğlu, "Suleyman the Magnificent and the Representation of Power in the Context of Ottoman-Hapsburg-Papal Rivalry"; Necipoğlu, "Visual Cosmopolitanism and Creative Translation."
16 Hanmer, *The baptizing of a Turke*, n.p.
17 For a sixteenth-century German pamphlet intended to prepare Turks for baptism and a remarkable early seventeenth-century painting depicting the baptism of the son of an Ottoman pasha, see Deutsches Historisches Museum. *The Luther Effect: Protestantism—500 Years in the World*, Nos. 26 & 27.
18 Bucer, *A Treatise Declaring and Showing That Images Are not to Be Suffered in Churches*, 41–42, adapted for modern orthography; Segesvary, *L'Islam et la réforme*, 100, n. 44.
19 Amended slightly from Skilliter, *William Harborne and the Trade with Turkey*, 37, using the Ottoman text of Bey, *Mecmua-i münşeat üs-selāṭīn*, 2:543.
20 Hess, "The Moriscos," 17–20. On the relationship between Moriscos and Protestants, including conversion, see Cardaillac, *Morisques et chrétiens*, 125–53.
21 Pereda, *Las imágenes de la discordia*, 351–53.
22 Skilliter, *William Harborne and the Trade with Turkey*, 69, 71; Burton, "Anglo-Ottoman Relations and the Image of the Turk in Tamburlaine," 136. William III of England (d. 1702) uses the same phrase later in a letter to the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb: British Library, Add. MS 31302.
23 Burton, "Anglo-Ottoman Relations and the Image of the Turk in Tamburlaine."
24 Cited in Kurz, *European Clocks and Watches in the Near East*, 46.
25 Spraggon, *Puritan Iconoclasm during the English Civil War*, 16. For the ways in which the notion of a common Christian front against the Turks prevailed in

Europe for most of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, see Baumer, "England, the Turk, and the Common Corps of Christendom."

26 Translated from de Hungaria, *Tractatus*, in de Hungaria, *Des Turcs*, 83–84, 89–90, 105–6, 142.

27 Grislis, "Luther and the Turks," 281; Henrich and Boyce, "Martin Luther," 253.

28 Pannier, "Calvin et les Turcs," 284; Köhler, *Melanchthon und der Islam*, 70.

29 Bohnstedt, "The Infidel Scourge of God," 29. See also Kaufmann, *"Türkenbüchlein."*

30 Luther, "Vom Kriege wider die Türken," 107–48. The translation is from Schultz, *Luther's Works*, 46:183.

31 Cited in Bohnstedt, "The Infidel Scourge of God," 24.

32 Highley, *Catholics Writing the Nation in Early Modern Britain and Ireland*, 60.

33 Vaughan, *Europe and the Turk*, 177. Pope Pius II had invited Mehmed II, the conqueror of Constantinople, to convert to Catholicism in return for recognizing Ottoman rule in the former Byzantine domains, an idea already raised by the humanist scholar Erasmus (d. 1536).

34 Seed, *Ceremonies of Possession in Europe's Conquest of the New World*, 92–93.

35 On Protestant perceptions of analogies between African fetishes and Catholic images, see Pietz, "The Problem of the Fetish II," 39–40. See also Eire, "The Reformation Critique of the Image," 52.

36 Eire, "The Reformation Critique of the Image," 52; Remensnyder, "The Colonization of Sacred Architecture," 195–206, app.; Remensnyder, *La Conquistadora*.

37 Mangrum and Scavizzi, *A Reformation Debate*, 12–14. For Byzantine antecedents, see Sahas, *Icon and Logos*, 21.

38 Sander, *A Treatise of the Images of Christ*, 36–37.

39 Bugge, "Effigiem Christi, qui transis, semper honora," 135.

40 On the Iberian roots of these spectacles of Moors or Turks being defeated, see Harris, *Aztecs, Moors, and Christians*, 180–81.

41 The theme of the Turkish threat or its defeat by the Catholic Hapsburgs seems to have been a constant refrain in the visual culture of New Spain in the sixteenth century, finding expression in both public theatrical performances and at least one other feathered object, a shield made for Phillip II, which depicted a series of historical Iberian victories over both Arab and Turkish forces: Gruzinski, *What Time Is It There?* 10–11, 137; Feliciano, "Picturing the Ottoman Threat in Sixteenth-Century New Spain," 244–45, 256–59.

42 Dupeux et al., *Bildersturm*, no. 1510.

43 Lejeune, "Notre-Dame de Cambron et sa légende"; Zafran, "An Alleged Case of Image Desecration by the Jews and Its Representation in Art."

44 For this reason, Norbert Schnitzler's insistence on the Jewish identity of the iconoclast in both paintings is too reductive: Schnitzler, "Anti-Semitism, Image Desecration, and the Problem of 'Jewish Execution,'" 359–60; Schnitzler, "Der Vorwurf des 'Judaisierens' in den Bilderkontroversen des späten Mittelaters und der frühen Neuzeit," 333–58.

45 Rainold, *Calvino-Turcismus*; Sutcliffe, *De Turco-papismo*, 1:3, 20–21. Mout, "Calvinoturcisme in de zeventiende eeuw." I thank Patricia Spyer for help with the Dutch.

46 Rainold, *Calvino-Turcismus*, 7–13, 339, 840, 1010–11. The key section on images occurs on pages 339–52.

47 Highley, *Catholics Writing the Nation in Early Modern Britain and Ireland*, 62.

48 Rainold, *Calvino-Turcismus*, 345. Conversely, writing in 1541, Luther lamented the fall of Buda and the conversion of churches (identified as houses of idolatry by the Turks) for Muslim worship: Ehmann, *Luther, Türken und Islam*, 411. For Ottoman iconoclasm in Hungary, see Török, "Bilderstürme durch die Türken in Ungarn."

49 Doukas, *Decline and Fall of Byzantium to the Ottoman Turks*, 231–32; Jackson, "cristen, ketzer, heiden, jüden," 22.

50 Auchterlonie, *Encountering Islam*, 148.

51 Ionescu, *Antique Ottoman Rugs in Transylvania*, 37.

52 Freedberg, *The Power of Images*.

53 Dillenberger, *Images and Relics*, 178.

54 Garside, *Zwingli and the Arts*, 160.

55 Decades before the Reformation, the Florentine artist Lorenzo Ghiberti (d. 1455) had explained that when Christianity became the state religion in the fourth century AD, drawings, pictures, and statues were destroyed; art came to an end; and the temples were made white: Buddensieg, "Gregory the Great, the Destroyer of Pagan Idols," 44.

56 For examples of such earlier descriptions of mosques, see Bonnardot and Longnon, *Le Saint Voyage de Jherusalem du Seigneur d'Anglure*, 59–60; Fabri, *The Wanderings of Felix Fabri*, 303–4; von Harff, *The Pilgrimage of Arnold von Harff*, 117, 209.

57 Bohnstedt, "The Infidel Scourge of God," 22.

58 Henrich and Boyce, "Martin Luther," 259–60; Francisco, *Martin Luther and Islam*, 160–61. See also Vitkus, *Turning Turk*, 51–52.

59 Calvin, *Ioannis Calvini Opera quae supersunt omnia*, 23:680. See also Segesvary, *L'Islam et la réforme*, 13; Slomp, "Calvin and the Turks," 130–32.

60 Calvin, *Ioannis Calvini Opera quae supersunt omnia,* 47:115.

61 Greene, "Language, Signs and Magic"; Dekoninck, "De la violence de l'image à l'image violentée," 57–67; Dekoninck, "Des idoles de bois aux idoles de l'esprit," 203–16; Squire, *Image and Text in Graeco-Roman Antiquity*, 15–89.

62 Rainold, *Calvino-Turcismus*, 13; *Four Treatises Concerning the Doctrine, Discipline and Worship of the Mahometans*, 212–18; Slomp, "Calvin and the Turks," 134–35.

63 Krstić, "Illuminated by the Light of Islam and the Glory of the Ottoman Sultanate," esp. 48–49; Krstić, *Contested Conversions* to *Islam*.

64 This was recognized by certain Protestant commentators in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries for whom the textual basis of Islam and its rejection of idolatry was worthy of praise, even if its contemporary expression was characterized by stasis and stagnation: Almond, "Western Images of Islam," 419–20.

65 See, e.g., Pauck, *Melanchton and Bucer*, 354–56.

66 Keane, "Sincerity, 'Modernity,' and the Protestants," 66.

67 Keane, "Signs are not the Garb of Meaning," 184. See also Keane, "The Hazards of New Clothes," 2, 4.

68 Garside, *Zwingli and the Arts*, 160; Le Corbusier, *Quand les cathédrales étaient blanches*, translated into English as Le Corbusier, *When the Cathedrals Were White*; Le Corbusier, *L'Art décoratif d'aujourd'hui*, 193, translated into English as Le Corbusier, *The Decorative Art of Today*, 192. On the convoluted aesthetic entanglements of modernism and late antique anti-ornamental discourses, see Flood, "God's Wonder."

69 Loos, *Ornament and Crime*, 168.

70 In the period before Christianity developed a richly figural tradition, the early church fathers sometimes presented it as restoring an aniconic natural religion that had been occluded by the representational excesses of Greco-Roman polytheism: Finney, *The Invisible God*, 47. Variants of the idea survived into the early modern period, evident, for example, in Ghiberti's assertion that with the triumph of Christianity art came to an end and the temples were made white: see n. 54.

71 Le Corbusier, *L'Art décoratif d'aujourd'hui*, 187–95; *The Decorative Art of Today*, 185–92; Le Corbusier, *Journey to the East*, 102–3.

72 Lyautey, cited in Çelik, "Le Corbusier, Orientalism, Colonialism," 66.

73 George, *Whitewash and the New Aesthetic of the Protestant Reformation*, esp. 30–33, 200–201; Wigley, *White Walls, Designer Dresses*. In a passage that could have been written about the aesthetics of the Reformation rather than those of modernism, Wigley writes, "The whitewash is not simply what is left behind after the removal of decoration. It is the active mechanism of erasure. Rather than a clean surface, it is a cleaning agent, cleaning the image of the body in order to liberate the eye": Wigley, *White Walls, Designer Dresses*, 8.

74 Çelik, "Le Corbusier," 65; Le Corbusier, *L'Art décoratif d'aujourd'hui*, 187–95; *The Decorative Art of Today*, 185–92; Le Corbusier, *Journey to the East*, 94, 102–3, 129. For Le Corbusier's engagement with Turkish Architecture, see Kortan, *Turkish Architecture and Urbanism through the Eyes of Le Corbusier*. On modernism's self-representation as a balm for the wounds that it inflicted on traditional forms and practices, see Isenstadt and Rizvi, "Introduction," 20.

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