PART TWO

TRANSFORMATIONS:
ISLAM AND COLONIALISM
Two hundred and forty years after Awrangzib’s death, the ‘nation-states’ of India and Pakistan appeared on the South Asian scene, born of a host of new political and socio-economic factors, but legitimated in the name of old religions. In the 60 years that have elapsed since, the legacy and further development of those new conditions remain evident in the continuous use of religious affiliations as primary signifiers of difference, most succinctly illustrated by the names given to the longest-range missiles that India and Pakistan have targeted at each other: India’s ‘Agni’ and ‘Surya’, named after Hindu gods, and Pakistan’s ‘Ghaznawi’ and ‘Ghuri’, referencing the 10th–12th century Sultanates that expanded Muslim rule beyond Sind. It will require the remaining chapters of this book to unravel the multifarious influences that account for such deadly rhetoric, but the turns taken by those following the Sober Path in the wake of Awrangzib’s reign provides a convenient starting point.

In the post-colonial context, four organisations have come to dominate the representation of the Sober Path: Jama’at-i ‘Ulama’-i Hind (f. 1919), Jama’at-i ‘Ulama’-i Islam (f. 1945), Jama’at-i Islami (f. 1941) and Tablighi Jama’at (f. 1927). That ‘connectedness’ with the Muslim World and ‘embeddedness’ in South Asia was not effaced in the centuries after Awrangzib’s death, is best evinced by the fact that the influence of political fragmentation and cultural regionalisation throughout the 18th century, overlapped with British imperial expansion under the auspices of the English East India Company (1765–1857), followed by the ‘direct rule’ of the ‘Crown’ in the period of the British Raj (1858–1947), did not discourage the scholars of the Jama’at-i ‘Ulama’-i Hind to work closely with Mohandas K. Gandhi (d. 1948) and the Indian National Congress (f. 1885) in seeking to secure ‘Indian’ independence. Although schism is apparent in the Jama’at-i Islami’s less-motivated support for Congress, the Jama’at-i ‘Ulama’-i Islam’s formation in support of the Pakistan movement, and the Tablighi Jama’at’s political quietude, the most striking feature of these organisations is that they are intellectually