PART FOUR

ALTERNATE GLOBALITIES
This chapter explores the concepts and approaches of transnational Muslim groups from South Asia pursuing their own religious, cultural and political agendas from salvation to emancipation and development. While the rationale of their activities is largely group-specific and often ideology-driven, they apply a variety of public and political means and tools to achieve their objectives, sometimes seeking to replace western domination with their own hegemony. For many western observers, their activities remain suspicious and even threatening. It is felt that the West may have to work with these movements rather than against them if a painful long-term collision course is to be avoided. In order to succeed, however, it will be necessary to closely study the competing religious, cultural and political compulsions they face.

While it is common place to argue that globalisation studies cannot be reduced to the subject of finance and the economy alone, nor to the impact of the West, we know very little as of yet about the influence of non-western forms of globalisation, how non-economic global processes function, how they interact with the economic processes and what drives them.

This paper seeks to contribute to the understanding of Muslim global networks and how they are adapting to the current processes of globalisation creating separate visions of the world and ‘alternate globalities.’ It will focus on those emanating from South Asia, a region which on the back of an expansive South Asian diaspora has generated a rising number of translocal and transnational Muslim networks. It is intended to point out new trends and developments worthy of further study. A discussion of categories and the conceptual arguments will be followed by a review of the historical antecedents. The main focus will be on the new features and formats of this networking, how it is evolving and in what direction it is going. It is thus hoped that the paper contributes to mapping the directions of internal and external expansion of these networks.