PART ONE

PERSPECTIVES
CHAPTER ONE

NEW TRANSNATIONAL COMMUNITIES AND NETWORKS:
GLOBALIZATION CHANGES IN CIVILIZATIONAL FRAMEWORKS

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INTRODUCTION

One of the most important phenomena in the contemporary global scene has been the development of transnational communities and networks, which are mostly but not only religious and/or ethnic associations. Within this framework, the diasporic communities and networks that simultaneously make up new types of minorities are of central significance.

A number of such communities and networks that stand out are: the Muslim ones, especially in Europe and in the U.S.; the Chinese and possibly Indian and Korean diasporas in East Asia, in the U.S., and also in Europe; as well as the Jewish communities, especially in Europe. The new types of minorities are best illustrated by the Russian ones in some of the former Soviet Republics, especially in the Baltic, and in Central and East Asia; and also the Hungarian and Moldavian ones in the former East European Communist states.

“Diasporic” communities such as “overseas” Chinese or Indian communities have existed for long periods of history. Similarly, transnational or transimperial religions have a long history, such as Catholicism, “Orthodox” forms of Christianity and of Buddhism, Hinduism (to a smaller extent), and of course, Judaism. But in the contemporary scene, under the impact of extensive movements of migration attendant on processes of globalization, not only a large number of such diasporic networks, communities and organizations have developed, but they also all entail far-reaching transformations of constitution of public spheres and collective identities, and of new inter-civilizational relations. Such developments signal a new global order.