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**Inbetweenity: Marginalization, Migration and Poverty Among  
Haitians in the Turks and Caicos Islands**

**Dennis A. V. Brown**

**Abstract**

The paper examines the experiences of Haitian immigrants in the Turks and Caicos Islands in the closing years of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. The movement to the TCI on the part of the Haitians is seen as a recent expression of a well established pattern of intra Caribbean migration that has been fuelled by differential responses on the part of the territories to the vagaries of the international capitalist system. The most recent movements are seen as a response to globalization and its attendant Neo-liberalism. In the paper it is argued that along with integration and interconnectedness, the forces of globalized neoliberalism have also produced sociological fissures, gaps or spaces that are associated with the marginalization and deprivation of the persons who occupy them. Haitian immigrants in the TCI are said to occupy one such space in which they are physically apart from their native land, but live as aliens in the “host” society. The personal experiences of a number of immigrants living in this place of “Inbetweenity” are analyzed in an effort to understand the responses of human agency to the dictates of the structures with which it is confronted in the Caribbean.

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**Introduction**

This paper is based on interviews conducted among legal Haitian immigrants as well as illegal immigrants living in the ‘bush’ in the Turks and Caicos Islands in the Northern Caribbean.<sup>1</sup> In it, it is argued that the case of the Haitian immigrants in the Turks and Caicos Islands is an apt demonstration of the relationship between migration, marginalization and poverty in a region that has been polarized by the recent

experiences of Globalization. It is suggested that Globalization not only offers increased opportunities for the poor, it also brings an increase in threats and risks. The case of these immigrants demonstrates that along with the interdependence, interconnectedness and integration commonly associated with the phenomenon there is increased possibility of isolation and marginalization.

The migratory character of Caribbean peoples is a well-established feature of their history and sociology<sup>2</sup>. This is hardly surprising given that the region is made up of small island economies subject to the vagaries of global economic processes. One important outcome of these changing global economic currents is variation in levels of socioeconomic prosperity. Historically, peculiarity of individual circumstances has led to variations in the ways in which countries within the region have responded to forces in the global economy.<sup>3</sup> Those countries of economic prosperity within the region tended to attract a significant number of immigrants from those that suffered economic decline.<sup>4</sup> In recent years, the historical pattern of movement between the economically vibrant and the economically depressed territories of the Caribbean has been given fillip by the differential impact of globalized neoliberalism.<sup>5</sup>

In the international arena, the emergence of globalization has been heralded as the dawn of a new era of opportunity that will provide the route out of poverty and deprivation for many of the developing countries of the world. As a part of this arrangement, many of the smaller territories of the Caribbean have been able to reap substantial benefits from their financial and tourism sectors. At the same time, the efforts at adjusting to Neoliberalism on the part of some of the larger countries have been plagued by social and political problems that have led to economic downturn. As a consequence of these developments economic poles of prosperity and depression have been created in the Caribbean.<sup>6</sup> This has fostered an intra Caribbean migratory pattern in which persons move from the areas of economic stagnation to some of the economically vibrant, though, smaller territories.

In most instances, this movement of large numbers of persons within the region results in the transnationalization of poverty, or the recreation, in the host countries of the conditions of deprivation from which the immigrant is fleeing. The unpreparedness of the host societies to receive a large influx of people leads to a number of social problems, including a proliferation of substandard housing and unsatisfactory living conditions, increases in crime the breakdown of families and social exclusion and marginalization.<sup>7</sup>

In the case of the Turks and Caicos Islands this has meant that, sociologically, poor Haitian immigrants find themselves living in a state of 'inbetweenity'. In this state they exist between two worlds, physically apart from their native land but living on the fringes of the 'host' society, both in a figurative and literal sense. This situation exposes the immigrants and their dependents at home to risk since it is often accompanied by a denial of human rights, unemployment, underemployment and restricted access to proper housing and social services. Their experiences point to the resilience of the Caribbean's poor and the strategies that have been forged by them as a means of coping with the marginalization they have encountered in an increasingly 'interconnected' world. In the paper an attempt is made to understand the lived

experiences of these immigrants within this space, as an adaptation to the structures of global capitalism with which they are confronted.

The notion of “inbetweenity” points to the need for understanding micro level perspectives within the context of the macrostructural dimensions of social reality. It allows for the centering of meaning in the examination of Globalization and the profound changes that it has visited upon the Caribbean people.<sup>8</sup> These range from the impact of structural adjustment in individual countries to the effects of international migration that is fuelled by changes in regional and international economic arrangements. The structures that produce marginalization and poverty globally, although having the same general form<sup>9</sup>, are spread across a variety of societal and cultural settings and therefore will have different meaning to the actors in each of these settings.

Locating Haitian immigrants in this hiatus created within the macrostructure of Globalization affords us the opportunity to accord privilege to their *personal* situation within these wider structures. Apart from the more general theoretical issue of the relationship between structure and consciousness, this approach brings into focus the ways in which people react to structures of domination, which are not of their making, but which they have no choice but to live with.<sup>10</sup> In this regard, a number of questions suggest themselves. What are some of the ways in which Caribbean people have responded to the circumstances shaped by Globalization? Where the circumstances have been disadvantageous, have these responses, in the main, been characterized by resignation or resistance? Is there another category of response that lies outside of this binary division and expresses resistance through passivity or creativity? In examining this state of “inbetweenity” our focus will be on the adaptations, resistances, subversions and transformations that one group of poor Caribbean people have effected in their quest for survival in an interstice of Globalization.

### **The Wider Context**

There now seems little doubt that over the past three decades or so the world has undergone technological, economic, social and political changes that herald the dawn of a new era in the affairs of humanity. The process can perhaps be characterized as a multidimensional phenomenon in which developments in the realm of information technology and telecommunications have been associated with the lessened significance of spatial and temporal barriers to communication and production. This has been accompanied by dissolution of the global geopolitical arrangements that emerged out of the post World War 2 period and the institutionalization of economic Neoliberalism as the guiding principle for the conduct of economic activities across the globe.

The exact nature of the impact of this process on the Caribbean is the subject of much debate. There have been two main interpretations of these changes. The first suggests that they signal a new dawn in human society that will foster economic growth and social development. According to this interpretation these developments mean that the world has now become a global village, a place in which interdependence and interconnectedness is the order of the day. This will provide opportunities for those who up until now have not been able to share in the fruits of economic prosperity.<sup>11</sup>

Not so, says another set of thinkers. They do not disagree that changes have occurred that signal the dawn of a new era. What they question is the extent to which these changes will mean improvements in the circumstances of the lives of those outside of the advanced industrial societies. Indeed, they argue that rather than greater integration, the peoples of regions such as the Caribbean will be subject to a more efficiently exploitative global capitalism. This is likely to lead to the region's marginalization and an increase in the impoverishment of its people.<sup>12</sup>

These competing interpretations seem to suggest that Globalization is a complex phenomenon that has had differential impact across and within societies. One implication of this is that at the same time that it creates opportunities for some through increased integration of social, economic and political systems it also fosters increased marginalization, isolation and impoverishment for others.<sup>13</sup> This it does by unleashing the forces of unbridled economic competition through its elevation of free market economic principles to a position of sanctity in national and international policy making circles. In its reordering of the global space, Globalization brings some segments of world economy closer together, but in doing so it excludes and marginalizes others. It also creates, as in the case of the Turks and Caicos Islands, areas comprised of the merged elements of both of these segments. Globalization is characterized by the interplay of forces of integration and dis-integration. The responses of this group that finds itself in one of the interstices of the new global order is illustrative of one type of Caribbean response to the contradictory character of the new arrangements.

### **The Immediate Setting**

The Turks and Caicos Islands is a British Dependency made up of six tiny islands that lie at the foot of the Bahamian chain of islands in the Northern Caribbean. Up until relatively recent times the main economic activity was salt mining. That activity waned in the 1960s. As a consequence, the population dynamics of this territory came to be dominated by large outflows of persons to places such as the Bahamas and the United States of America. Over the past decade or so, two factors have operated to reverse this trend. The first is the development of tourism on the island of Providenciales one of the six islands that comprise this country. The tranquil climes and pristine beaches have served as the basis for the development of an up scale tourism product. The construction boom and the demand for labour to service the tourism plants have attracted workers from across the Caribbean region, as well as some of the TC Islanders who had moved to the Bahamas and the USA. The second factor that has operated to reverse the trend towards depopulation is the tightening of USA immigration policy in regard to Haitians fleeing their country. Those Haitians seeking to escape adverse economic and political conditions in their country who have not been able to go the USA have opted, or have been tricked into entering the TCI.<sup>14</sup> This augmentation of the population by outsiders has continued to the point where intercensal population estimates indicate that the immigrants are close to outnumbering the local population.<sup>15</sup>

The attitude of the Turks and Caicos Islanders towards Haitian immigrants is best characterized as ambivalent. At the same time that the society has a need for the labour power of the immigrant its institutional framework has not been able to properly adjust to the double shock of 'large numbers' and 'foreign culture' and is faced with the prospect of being overwhelmed. This situation has led to a climate in which the denial of human rights, unemployment, underemployment and restricted access to proper

housing and social services and other forms of discrimination are common experiences among the Haitian immigrants. In a sense these are the barriers that the host society has erected to preserve itself in the face of an influx of large numbers of 'strangers'. This is the terrain that the immigrant has to negotiate.

Haitian immigrants in the TCI in attempting to adjust to a world driven by the imperatives of Globalization have found themselves living between two worlds. In this situation they are apart from their society of origin, but excluded by legal, cultural and social prescriptions and arrangements from full participation in the host society. The space that the immigrant occupies is filled with an uncertainty born of the tension between risk and possibility. Away from the succor of home the individual has to negotiate the new set of relationships that will govern his/her place in the 'host' society. In this space the limitations and certainties of the society of origin and the host society, respectively, have been reduced thereby creating a new set of parameters within which human agency operates. It affords a freedom that fosters creativity, yet at the same time exposes the individual and his/her family in the society of origin to a new set of risks, born of structural arrangements over which they have no control. The responses that are evinced in this context range from resignation thru resistance to highly creative adaptation.

### **The Inhabitants of Inbetweenity**

The world of Inbetweenity that these immigrants occupy is varied in its composition. It is made up of Haitians that have lived in the TCI for significant portions of their lives as well as those that have only recently arrived in the country. It is composed of the material resources, values, attitudes and norms of both societies. These have been forged into tools of survival by these immigrants as they attempt to come to terms with the reality of their situation.

#### *Resignation*

The first case that we examine is that of **Marie Antoine of Bell Road, Grand Turk**. Her case, it is argued, seems to reflect the response of quiet resignation to the structures of dominance that confront her. Although there is a shortage of skills in the TCI and many Haitians have found work, the majority appears to live lives of poverty at the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder of TCI society. Marie is one such case. She is 43 years of age and lives in the community of Bell Road on the island of Grand Turk. Marie's 'house' is a wooden shack, which has no electricity, or water. The shack has two bedrooms, an outdoor kitchen, bath and toilet. Water is purchased in drums. The house along with the land on which it rests is leased. Four men all Haitians, but none of whom are related to Marie, occupy the house with her. Of these, only one is employed. Marie's husband supports her. He lives in the neighbouring island of Providenciales where he works as a mechanic. He has done so for the past two years. Marie is not able to live with him because he is not always employed and therefore cannot afford to pay for accommodation that would allow her to do so. He and Marie exchange visits.

Marie only attended Primary School. She is not able to read and write. She has five children ages 22, 20, 17, 14 and 11. All of them live in Haiti. Her mother cares for the

youngest ones. Marie suffers from hypertension. She uses the public health care system and rates the services provided as very good. Marie is not able to eat a balanced diet every day of the week. However, she does not credit goods. When she does not have the money to buy these foods she does without or asks a friend, who may not always be in a position to give.

Marie does domestic work when it is available. She only speaks French Creole and lost her last job because she was not able to speak any English. Marie finds spiritual sustenance through religious quietism. She describes herself as a Christian and is a member of a Haitian Baptist church that operates in her area of residence. Marie's greatest problem is that she has no work. She sees work as the solution to all her problems. She does not regard the absence of light and water or the fact of substandard housing as a problem because the house does not belong to her. This attitude towards deprivation highlights the fact of Marie's marginalized position within the society. In these circumstances material deficiencies take second place to the need to find a place in the society that will allow her to provide for her offspring.

In spite of her circumstances, Marie does not see her self as being too poor. In her mind there are different levels of poverty. Real poverty, she says, means begging and she states clearly, she is not a beggar. It is just that, "sometimes I have and sometimes I do not have". She feels that the reason she is in her present condition is because she is not working. She has lived like this for the past two years. She feels that she lived better when she was a child. She describes herself as living in the "middle class" in Haiti, although her parents, she says, were not always able to provide enough they did their best. They were farmers.

There is in Marie no trace of rebelliousness or resentment about her station in life. She blames no one for her present situation. She attributes her situation to the fact of her unemployment not her Haitian-ness. This is quite a remarkable conclusion given that she lives in a highly xenophobic society where Haitians bear the brunt of social disadvantage. She does not feel that people in the TCI treat her badly because she is not wealthy. Indeed, she feels she is treated better in the TCI than at home. Education, she thinks, is a good thing, but her parents did not have enough money to allow her to complete her studies. Her aspirations and goals in life are all related to the desire to improve her material conditions to the point where she is able to help her children. She spends her days doing household chores. She does domestic work when it is available.

Marie finds herself on the fringes of TCI society. Her marginalization finds expression in her physical conditions of living, her labour market status and her inability to speak English. Her life is divided across national boundaries and physical spaces. She has a family in Haiti from which she is separated and a husband in a neighbouring island whom she sees only occasionally. Yet for all her marginalization she feels herself better off than when she lived in Haiti. She has access to medical services that she describes as good. Her need to feel herself a part of a community is met in part by her membership in a local church. She also expresses the view that she is treated better by the society in the TCI than in Haiti. In the TCI she does not feel the social alienation that she experiences in Haiti. The situation of this woman and her response to it provides good illustration of the types of coping strategies that have been forged by the

Haitian immigrants. The relative anonymity that she experiences in the state of Inbetweenity seems to represent a kind of escape from the socially oppressive conditions that she faced in Haiti.

The deprivations and denials that she faces as an immigrant in the TCI are bearable in comparison to the conditions and circumstances that she has left behind in Haiti. Marie's case raises interesting questions about the nature of acquiescence on the part of the socially disadvantaged in the state of Inbetweenity. Marie has long learnt acquiescence as a function of repression in her native Haiti. The fact that she left that society tells of non-compliance in the face of conditions of extreme deprivation enforced by a brutally repressive political regime. In the TCI she lives on the fringes of a society that is kind in comparison to her homeland. Nonetheless, she is still poverty stricken and marginalized in the face of opulence. In the state of "inbetweenity" she seems to accept her situation and blames it on no one. It is deemed to be a natural and acceptable part of the social order. In Gramscian terms, it might be said that this poor woman's acquiescence or consent is ensured because she subscribes to the ideological hegemony of the societal elite of TCI society. She is therefore able to face the negatives that she encounters as a virtual outcast of TCI society with resignation and hope that conditions will improve.

#### *Resistance: the illegal immigrants/refugees*

This group of immigrants more clearly evinces a response of resistance to the circumstances they faced in their native Haiti and the restrictions that confront them in the TCI. The group is comprised, in the main, of Haitians who have arrived in the country by boat. However, some illegal immigrants are persons who had entered the country legally, but violated the conditions of their stay as visitors or workers. The Haitian Boat People are the most impoverished and desperate of the illegal immigrants in the TCI. They live in the bushes of Provedenciales from where they venture forth in search of food and work. Locals sometimes come to them in search of workers and to sexually molest the women.

The situation of this group of persons highlights some other dimensions of poverty that were not given expression in the circumstances of the other two cases that are examined. Apart from greater insufficiency of resources, this group is the most vulnerable of all the Haitians in the TCI since it faces actual threats to its physical existence. This extends to their dependents in Haiti. This group's situation is also characterized by a higher degree of powerlessness than is the case with the others.

The first group that was encountered consisted of approximately 16 men ranging in ages from 20 years to the early 40s. They had been in the country for periods varying from 5 days to two weeks. They had all come by boat from Haiti. In most cases they had sold all of their belongings to pay for the trip, which cost US\$300. The men owned nothing but the clothes on their backs. Most were dressed in ill-fitting jeans, sneakers and jerseys of one sort or another. They were hungry and suspicious of the welfare officer, the interpreter and myself, who comprised the group seeking to interview them. A number of them wanted to return home. They asked if we would take them to immigration to be sent home. This course of action was, however, attended by certain

problems. They would have to be housed in the local jail overnight and were not willing to go through that experience again. On arrival in the TCI some had been taken into custody and had experienced the lack of sanitary facilities such as showers and toilets in the local jail. Faeces were strewn all over the place and they had had to sleep on the bare, cold concrete. They had managed to escape from jail into the bushes. A long discussion followed centered on the pros and cons of turning themselves into the authorities in order that they might be sent home. The following are the stories told by a number of them.

*Jean Pierre* arrived in TCI by boat five days before the interview took place. He used to be a vendor of small items in Haiti. He has a wife and child in Haiti. He describes his conditions of living there as “not good”. He did not have a house and even though he had food to eat, life was a struggle. Jean Pierre is 41 years of age, he has no skill and is not able to read and write, as he got no opportunity to go to school. His wife and children are surviving on monies that he acquired by selling some of his possessions. They are waiting for him to send monies back to Haiti. If they don’t hear from him they will have to go back to family and relatives. Given the situation with which he is now faced he realizes that the prospects for him in the TCI are not very good and that he will probably have to return home. However, he wants very much to at least acquire the monies he spent for his passage from Haiti. He came with no money and has survived on the kindness of people in the community. In the bushes where they live, mosquitoes feast on them. When it rains a number of them stand up holding a big piece of plastic. On one occasion the rain was so heavy that they had to end up letting go of the plastic and just letting it wet them. In the bushes they are not able to build permanent structures since Immigration Officers raid the area frequently and they constantly have to be on the move. Jean Pierre says there are women but no children living under these conditions in the bushes.

Some of the Haitians who have come by boat to the TCI are political refugees. *Francois* says that he and some community members formed a political group in support of the Lavelas, the Aristide faction in Haitian politics. Because of this they were targeted by the Ton Ton Macoute and persecuted. One night about two weeks ago they came into his house and killed his 38 year old wife, the mother of his three children aged 17, 12, 8. He had to flee leaving his children with neighbours. The Macoute, he says still have weapons and systematically persecute people who support the Aristide faction in local politics.

*Francois* says he did not flee Haiti because of economic conditions but in order to be able to live in peace and take care of his children. *Francois* was amongst those who initially said they wanted to return immediately to Haiti due to the circumstances they now faced in the TCI. When asked how is it that he now wanted to return to Haiti he explains that he knows that they will be after him to kill him but since the TCI will not receive him he might as well go back and let them kill him.<sup>16</sup> When asked why he did not apply for political asylum he says that he was on the run and the first means of escape that he found was the boat due to leave for the TCI. His intention in coming to the TCI was to seek some type of protection. He has been in the country 12 days. The Macoute he explains are ‘all over the place’, and they only have to suspect that you have certain political leanings for them to strike against you. There are many groups

like the one he has listed on the sheet of paper that he shows us, all over Haiti and they are engaged in constant struggle with the Ton Ton Macoute.

Francois is a diver by profession. However lobsters and conchs had become so scarce in Haitian waters that he had to stop diving and try other things. His greatest wish right now is to have his children beside him and be able to raise them properly, free from the fear of having to die because of any political system. Francois states that he is living in fear and asks what can we do to help him. In Providenciales he lives in the bush with no shelter from the elements, subject to mosquitoes. He does not have food to eat since the authorities rule that no one is to provide food for the Boat People. Francois says he is worried about his children. His parents are dead. He has one brother who distanced himself from him when he decided to participate in political activities. If he is to stay here he needs work. He considers staying here living on people's mercy as worse than going back to Haiti. Francois is 38 years of age.

We leave the young men and travel to a nearby community. This one is a little more remote and much less populated. On approaching the community we notice a young woman casually strolling along the road with a washing pan in her hand. She turns out to be one of three young women who have been in the country for four days. They live in the bushes and have come out to see what they can find. We question them as to how they eat. They eat, we are told, through the kindness of anyone in the community who feels to give them some food. How do they bathe we ask. When it rains some people might lend them buckets and they catch water and try to bathe. They sleep in the bushes.

The women say they have come to the TCI in order to escape the economic problems that they face in Haiti. At home they are unable find food, clothes or work. They have no skill and virtually no schooling. The women are aged 18, 19, and 23. Two have children. The 19 year old has two children who are being cared for by relatives. The other woman has four children. They have come to the TCI, they say, because they are unable to take care of their children at home. The women have come with nothing but the clothes on their backs. Their plan is to live in the bushes until they are able to find a 'Belonger' to 'sponsor' them.

In the bushes they have to be highly mobile, able to flee at any hour of the day or night at a moments notice.<sup>17</sup> At night they sleep on cardboard or anything else that is available. If it rains they stand-up until the showers are finished. The women report that there are lots of other women in the bushes, but no children.<sup>18</sup> They say that the Haitian men do not molest them. However local dope addicts come into the bushes and rape some of them because they know that they cannot go to the authorities.

Our guides tell us that the 'bush' people we have seen are the ones in best condition. Those brave enough to venture out of the bushes are the ones that obtain jobs and assistance. They claim that there are many people suffering in the bushes that are too timid to come out to seek any kind of assistance. If these persons injure themselves in the bush they cannot even get treatment in the clinic since they have no legal status in the society and therefore will not be attended to by the medical personnel. The poverty status of these persons living in the bush, although not recorded, far outweighs any

other in the country. It is persons such as these who exist on the fringes of TCI society who experience the most intense levels of poverty.

This group of Haitians gives stark representation to the concept of “inbetweenity”. The bushes, although physically a part of the TCI, lies outside of the ambit of its institutional framework; an uncertain space where the two societies encounter each other and where the process of negotiation for entry takes place. In that sense it represents a world that exists somewhere between the two societies. It is apart from Haiti, but unsettled, desperate Haitians who are virtual non-persons in TCI society people it. This physical and social space represents a sort of way station between the two societies. These Haitians are a cruelly oppressed people desperately trying to find a place in the world and to escape the extreme deprivations and terror that face them in their society.<sup>19</sup> TCI society on the other hand grants them limited, unofficial acceptance because they constitute a ready supply of cheap labour that can be drawn upon to service the needs created by the society’s incorporation into the Global service sector.

### *Creative Adaptation*

The third case that we look at is that of Evadne Dupont a Haitian immigrant who lives in the community of Seabreeze. Her case exemplifies the kind of response that we have called creative adaptation. Evadne has used the freedom allowed her by her state of “inbetweenity” to create a cosmology centered on a benign, providential Divinity, which rewards creative individuality, goodness, perseverance and hard work. Furthermore, her new spirituality provides the basis for a well articulated critique of aspects of TCI society.

The contrast between this new cosmology and that of the Haitian Folk is noticeable. For the latter, the spiritual universe is made up of a multiplicity of impersonal intercessory spiritual beings that the community sometimes has to appease by what Evadne terms, ‘blood sacrifice’, or human sacrifice.<sup>20</sup>

Evadne is a hard working independent minded individual. She is poor and deprived and removed from the familiarity of her native society and culture. In social and economic terms she is situated on the fringes of TCI society. The social relations that she encounters are of a fundamentally different character from the ones to which she is accustomed, but she is confident of the providence and guidance of a Divine force. Her circumstances she feels have taught her valuable lessons about life and although daunting, are taken as challenges to be overcome. Her religiosity is an integral part of the new identity she has forged during her attempts to negotiate a place for herself within TCI society.

Evadne is 45 years old. She has lived in the TCI for the past 15 years. She grew up in Haiti with her father, who was a carpenter in the construction trade. She has one brother. Her mother parted from her father at the time of her birth. She attended school up until age 20 and left with many vocational skills. She describes her father as a poor man and says he raised her without the assistance of a woman.

She got a dream about blood and sacrifice in Haiti and decided to leave in 1984. She also reveals that at age 18 she was raped by 7 Ton Ton Macoute. After this she left her father's house and came to TCI by plane. She heard of the country through other Haitians who had traveled there. She came to Grand Turk and started a family of three children with a local man. Her children are now aged 10, 8, and 6 years old. Evadne has not returned to Haiti in 10 years. This is due to the problems she has had with her husband and the fact that Haiti has so many problems. She feels that if she were to return to Haiti to live they would take one of her children from her as sacrifice.

Her house has two bedrooms. It is a shack, "something she put together with her own hands". She recognizes its decrepit nature and says there is an architect who has offered to design a new house for her, which she intends to build on the existing house spot. Evadne is indeed a multi-skilled person. She currently makes her living by doing upholstery, and making and selling craft and artwork to tourists. Besides having built the house, she has run water into it from the main pipe on the road and has thus managed to install a flush toilet on the premises. All of the plumbing she has done herself. The house also has electricity and a refrigerator.

Evadne used to work in the tourist industry as a domestic, but decided that she wanted to work for herself. In answer to the question of whether she has enough to eat she says yes and then qualifies it by saying that she works but sometimes she has and sometimes she does not. She does not feel especially disadvantaged since she feels that everybody or most people are like that. She likes mostly vegetables but eats chicken, meat and fish and lobster. She does not always have them. Does she give her children milk? Yes. How often? Once per week sometimes twice.

Evadne's creativity finds expression in a number of areas. In social terms she has established alliances with a number of professional and businesspersons in the society. She eschews begging and handouts, but accepts gifts and assistance from these persons whom she regards as her friends. One such friend whom she describes as a 'Godmother' for her children is an American whom she met a number of years ago when she came to the TCI as a tourist. The woman has now returned and established a business in the TCI. Evadne says sometimes it is hard for her, but she says the 'Godmother' pays for her children at private school and transports them to school everyday. There is another benefactor who pays for her daughter of 8 to do ballet lessons.

Evadne's creativity is also brought out in the way in which she rationalizes her material poverty and her place in the social order. She is satisfied to live like she does, she says, because she is assured of God's help and she knows of people who have money but do not live free or happy. She receives no help from her children's father, only \$80 per month subsistence from govt. God she says has sent her the Godmother for her children. She is gracious in her acceptance of assistance and combines it in a peculiar way with a strong sense of independence and self reliance. As she puts it she would never sit and wait for others to help her, but if during the course of her helping herself someone is willing to assist her she gladly accepts their assistance.

The benefactor who pays her children's school fees is someone for whom she works. Sometimes she works and gets no pay, or receives payment pay in the form of the children's school fees. Another benefactor is a man from Canada who acts as the children's godfather. She met him 14 years, before the birth of her first child developed a friendship and this converted to him being benefactor for her children. These people she says "show me family love for true, just like your mummy and daddy". Evadne continues, "I don't like to wait somebody, give me, give me, give me. I do, by time I do you see I nearly have, God send you, you help me and you honestly you put hand together, we work together. ....I don't like someone to say you wait for me[until I can help you] and I sit down and wait for them. I never do that in my life. And I like to live clean, and I am happy whatever I have and I am o.k. with that. But I know to live plain and good you have to work for it so I do what I could do best....". She contrasts this position with that of her former husband who deserted her due to his love of money. He left the matrimonial home, got married to a Cuban woman who died and left him with property, but her family took it from him and left him with nothing. "... And he got a problem, money, he love money plenty."

Like Marie, Evadne sees her socioeconomic situation as a part of a natural order. Asked if she blames anybody for the fact that she does not have more in life, she responds, "...no man! I understand that, I can't blame nobody like that, I understand real good". So why do you think that you don't have more in life? "Because that's how I suppose to go. I am happy whatever I got. No man, not only me one living like that! Many people living like that too. Who getting money hardly living, who not getting money hardly living...".

Her deprivation is not the outcome of human design, it is a part of a natural order. Unlike Marie though her view of the natural order is one in which agency is central and can alter the character of the social. Furthermore, Evadne seems to have a sense of the sociological that is absent in Marie's discourse. As she puts it, "those who have riches and resources in this world often time don't have the head to put it to good use. On the other hand those who have the head don't have the resources. She feels that those who lack material resources, who have understanding, if they help themselves, use their brains and show initiative then those who have will come to them when they see that you are someone of quality. As she puts it, "you don't need to go to them they come to you."

In the state of Inbetweenity, Evadne is unencumbered by the values of the host society. She is able to stand aside and critically evaluate it. According to her, the society is preoccupied with wealth and status. It looks at what you wear and what you have in your house in order to judge you as a person. As a result sometimes in sending her children to church she dresses them in fancy clothes, but at other times she just dresses them clean and simple. God she says looks at who is living clean. You came into this world with nothing. Preoccupation with vanity leads to a life filled with problems. Her Bible she says, is always in her head, everywhere she goes. Her dream in life is to do her father's work. "Don't worry bout hungry. Hungry or no hungry, he sees and knows. If you believe him you trust him, you do what you are supposed to."

Despite her situation in life, Evadne takes her parenting role seriously. She says she spends a lot of time talking to her children about life. She is glad to be in the TCI and regards the children as a contribution she has made to the society. Her husband through appealing in writing to the government initiated the process that resulted in her obtaining the land on which she lives. When he left her she wrote to them explaining that she needed to provide proper living conditions for her children and therefore needed the land.

In keeping with her philosophy of self sufficiency she did not beg for the land, but pointed out that she needed to live decently and that she had a 'profession', which would enable her pay monies on it. Furthermore, she indicated that she has enough skills to allow her to contribute to her community by teaching anybody interested in learning. Government leased the land to her.

Evadne has an interest she says in teaching people the skills she has and was willing to do so free of cost. One thing that this would do is to introduce her to the community since she is an outsider. However, she says people are not interested in that sort of thing. They are too busy looking for passport to go Miami. She continues her critical assessment, "rather than seeking to develop what they have around them they are looking outside to achieve what they need in life".

This observation captures the prevailing zeitgeist of the society. TCI is a society with a very strong outward looking ethos. Very high proportions of each age cohort migrate to the Bahamas or the USA. Although this is understandable from the standpoint of the inability of the populace to marshal the capital necessary to develop their resources, this approach to development on the part of TCI people must be understood as the basis for the dilemma that the society now faces. Much of the development that is now taking place in Providenciales is in the hands of foreigners. It is they who saw the value of the resources of the country and capitalized on it. The mind set described by Evadne has allowed foreigners to come in to the society and take over the best of the natural resources from the local population and plot a development course in which the locals have little or no stake. She laments the condition some of the youth, but attributes it to the parents who lack ideas and are not willing to work hard to achieve in life.

Dupont dislikes Haiti intently. She associates it with pain and violence and places great value on the fact of being able to live in a peaceful society where guns are not a normal part of everyday activities. She does not want her children to go to Haiti except on a visit when they come of age. Haiti is blood and sacrifice. "I love this place, this place cool". She is not looking for riches. Her desire is to see every body together for Father (God) in one voice".

## **Conclusion**

This paper addresses the need for an understanding of micro-level processes within the broader structural forces that have been labeled Globalization. The cases examined bear stark testimony to the existence of the state of "inbetweenity" as an ontological situation and the epistemological revisions that are necessary for its proper

understanding. It has been argued that recognition of this space within the seemingly monolithic global structures brings into sharp relief the counterfactuals of Globalization and the need to examine the lived experiences of the individuals that occupy such anomalous spaces within it. This approach while acknowledging the importance of structure also recognizes the need to push the analysis of social phenomenon beyond it in order to capture the variety of meaning that subjectivity attributes to circumstance, however standard.

The cases we have examined herald this in the range of responses that were evinced to a common set of structures. These responses ranged from resignation, through rebellion to creative adaptation. In seeking to understand how structures change we need to understand what they mean to people and therefore how the subjective molds, or is accommodated by them. In terms of our cases, although there is need for further work, it is clear that creative adaptation and resistance might easier lead to social change than, resignation.

The incorporation of the TCI into the global economic mold has set in train certain processes that will transform it for all times. Chief among these is the process of immigration. The infusion of international capital into the tourism sector has been associated with the arrival of relatively large numbers of immigrants. The society has been utilitarian in its approach to the newcomers- making use of their labour, but not necessarily welcoming them into its fold. The responses by the immigrants to this ambivalence on the part of the wider society are portentous for the future of TCI society. For example, the ‘bush’ community that seems to be developing on Providenciales represents an unhealthy state of affairs. It could provide the basis for the institutionalization of any number of social pathologies. Evadne has resolved her own situation through her creativity, but what will be the responses of her children, who are not regarded as ‘Belongers’ in the land of their birth? The ways in which the society regulates immigration and treats with its immigrants is going to determine the nature of its social landscape for generations to come.

The move by Haitian immigrants into the TCI and that society’s response should perhaps be seen as a part of a global pattern. Certainly, similar inflows are occurring in the USA, Western Europe and Australia. In all instances these have been accompanied by increased xenophobia and have fuelled the emergence of the far Right as a potent force on the national political landscape. Globalized economic neoliberalism with its promises of increased integration has also been attended by forces that offer much potential for disintegration. Understanding the lived experiences of people in the state of “inbetweenity” is a first step in the drawing up of social contracts between visitor and host and therefore a move in the direction of social assimilation.

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<sup>1</sup> The fieldwork was conducted in two of the islands of the Turks and Caicos, Grand Turk and Providenciales. The first island is significant because it is the capital of the country and the second because it is the most economically developed of the island group. In the case of Grand Turk, the

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households were selected on the basis of consultation with knowledgeable observers involved in social welfare work on the island. In the case of Providenciales the households were selected on the basis of consultation with the government's social welfare officer and other government officials. They were asked to identify households that seemed unable to meet all of their basic needs.

<sup>2</sup> Roberts, G.W. "Currents of external migration affecting the West Indies: a summary". *Revista/Review InterAmerica* XI, no.3, Fall, 1981

<sup>3</sup>For example, changes in the world sugar market in the late nineteenth century translated into economic downturn in some territories, while resulting in relative prosperity for others. See Lobdell, R. "Patterns of investment and sources of credit in the BWI sugar industry 1838-1897". Paper presented at the West Indian History Conference, Cave Hill, Barbados, 1970.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid*

<sup>5</sup> UNECLAC, Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee, *A Study of Return Migration to the OECS and the BVI in the Closing Years of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, General, LC/CAR/G.550, Dec., 1998. Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.

<sup>6</sup> Poverty and economic depression are of course not new to Haiti. The new global arrangements, though create opportunities for the exploitation of these circumstances by international capital. See Brown, D.A.V. "Comments: Mickey Mouse goes to Haiti", mimeo 1999.

<sup>7</sup> UNECLAC, Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee, "The Impact of Immigration on Caribbean Microstates: Bahamas, BVI, St. Maarten, USVI", General, LC/CAR/G.540, March, 1998. Port of Spain Trinidad and Tobago

<sup>8</sup> For a discussion of the relative importance of meaning centered analysis in sociological analysis see Scott, J. *Weapons of the Weak*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1985.

<sup>9</sup> F. Stewart, *Adjustment and Poverty: Options and Choices*: Routledge, London, 1995.

<sup>10</sup> A. Escobar, *Imagining a Post Development Era*, in J. Crush, *The Power of Development*, Routledge, London, 1998.

<sup>11</sup> This view has especially been pushed by international development agencies. It is for example a regular part of the pronouncements of Kofi Anan on prospects for development in Africa and was a central part of the message of Claire Short, British Secretary of State for International Development to the 1999 World Trade Organization meeting in Seattle, USA.

<sup>12</sup> See T. Klak (ed) *Globalization and Neoliberalism: The Caribbean Context*: Pub. Rowman and Littlefield, Oxford, U.K. 1998. See also D. Benn, *Globalization: A Calculus of Inequality*: Ian Randle Pub. Kingston, 2001.

<sup>13</sup> Sassen, S., *Globalization and its Discontents: Essays on the New Mobility of People and Money*: Pub. New Press, 1998. See also A. Hoogvelt, *The Postcolonial World in Global Development: the new Political Economy of Development*: Pub. Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1997

<sup>14</sup> On arriving in the TCI some have been duped by unscrupulous boat captains into thinking that they were in the USA

<sup>15</sup> Haitian immigrants are estimated to comprise thirty percent of the population, immigrants, largely from other parts of the Caribbean, twenty per cent and the remaining fifty percent, TCI natives.

<sup>16</sup> The horror of return to Haiti is very real. Recently, an account appeared in the Jamaican newspapers in which a Haitian refugee jumped into the ocean between Jamaica and Haiti from the JDF aircraft on which he was being returned to Haiti by the Jamaican authorities.

<sup>17</sup> Stories are told of women running and falling into holes and their feet being pierced by wood as they flee from immigration officers in the bushes.

<sup>18</sup> One of the guides contradicts this and says that he knows of a case of a woman giving birth to a child in the bushes.

<sup>19</sup> A. Stepick, 1982 "The New Haitian Exodus: The Flight from Terror and Poverty," *Caribbean Review*, Volume 11, number 1:14-17,55-57.

<sup>20</sup> D. Austin-Broos, "Religion, economy and class in Jamaica: reinterpreting a tradition": Mimeograph, UWI, Mona, 1985. The author makes the case that the encounters of the return migrant in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century with the social relations of American imperialism in the wider Caribbean led to a kind of Weberian disenchantment of the Jamaican folk cosmology. Certainly that process seems to be at work among the Haitian immigrants in the TCI. Evadne's embrace of a new religiosity and her disavowal of the 'blood sacrifice' that she claims is practiced in Haiti seems to exemplify this process.

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