

Redefining the Self: A Reading of Maya Angelou and Lori Tharps' Travel Texts

Porosha Sonowal

Assistant Professor, Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Adarsha Mahavidyalya, Dalgaon
(sonowalporosha607@gmail.com)

Abstract :

Travel Writing as a genre concerns itself with issues of negotiation and renegotiation of the self of the travelling subject. This is so because travel facilitates one to move away to an alien culture and environment forcing the subject to ponder and introspect within oneself. Such confrontation elicits multiple and contrasting responses from the writer. Such responses are determined by multiple factors such as race, class, nationality and gender among others. Such responses are noticeable in American Travel Writing and particularly in African American Travel Writing where the writers' "double consciousness" plays a decisive role. This paper will attempt to examine how African American women travel writers define and redefine themselves by negotiating with their multiple identities in their sites of travel. The travel texts chosen for the purpose are Maya Angelou's *All God's Children Need Travelling Shoes* (1986) and Lori Tharps' *Kinky Gazpacho* (2008). An effort will also be made to analyze how they negotiate with their multiple identities to redefine their selves in their travel narratives.

Keywords : travel writing, self, race, gender, nationality