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## Toni Cade Bambara's *The Salt Eaters* (1980): An Analysis



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### **ABSTRACT**

*Like the predominating theme of Afro-American women's writing, the theme of race, gender and class governs Toni Cade Bambara's only novel *The Salt Eaters* (1980). This paper will stress these aspects barring other issues. The double suicidal attempts of Velma Henry, the protagonist, a civil rights activist and a computer analyst at a transchemecial plant involve how the Afro-American heroine is trapped in the triple jeopardy of race, gender and class. Being a Black Woman she has to experience rampant gender indiscrimination and sexism at the hands of Obie, her husband and the male activists in the movement. This trauma lands her to the fatal action. Barbara Christian comments that the novels of early 1980s, the novels of the second phase have protagonists as "Socio-political" actors. This new phenomenon is observed here. Does Velma surrenders this trauma or resurrects? Minnie Ransom, the "fabled faith healer" heals Velma in the and by instilling the will to live in her. Ruth Elizabeth Burks observes that Velma "resurrects" like "Christ" for her people in the movement.*