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BETWEEN TWO WORLDS: THE EXISTENTIAL THEME OF WANDERING IN CONRAD

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ABSTRACT

The scenario in most of Conrad's work are much the same: they can be read as tales of betrayal, self-punishment and redemption, and as exploration of the consequences of treachery – an act which leads to endless wandering. The central figure in his novels is always an unfulfilled man who, having no foothold in society, must therefore achieve something in life upon which to ground his identity, self-esteem and a sense of worthiness. Yet an act of betrayal, whether intended or not, turns the malleable man into a wounded wanderer whose aspiration for success and potential to achievement only guide him into delusion and self-destruction. as a result, Conrad's heroes are frequently portrayed as “wandering between two worlds, one dead/ the other is powerless to be born.” This paper thus seeks to examine the theme of wandering in Conrad's novels, exploring its role as both a psychological condition and a metaphor for the fragmented modern self.

Keywords: Conrad, Wandering, Existentialism.