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**S. No 11 B.A.Part-3 English (Hons) Topic: Critical appreciation of  
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*The Second Coming*

The Christian doctrine of Christ's second appearance on the earth forms the basis of the poem. This poem talks about the disintegration of modern society with the spread of anarchy and violence. It presents a picture of a civilization which is going to collapse. It shows that the time for divine intervention has come, and another saviour is needed.

In this poem "Falcon" stands for Christianity. This falcon has lost the contact of falconer (the Christ), and so it has become directionless. The system of Christianity has been completely destroyed. There is lawlessness everywhere and there is no controller. In this condition Yeats foresees the Second Coming. The first coming of the god was the coming of Jesus Christ, his birth in Bethlehem. The Second Coming of God as the poet foresees, will be in the form of some monstrous beast. Now the Christian civilization has disintegrated and the new epoch is to begin. Yeats apprehends that after the end of the Christian civilization there will be an animal civilization. Yeats here expresses his prophetic insight.

The moment Yeats uttered the word "the Second Coming" his eyes were troubled by a huge image that appeared before him not from the conscious or unconscious level of memory but through the store house of imagination. This is an image of beast having man's head and lion's body. This strange combination of man's head with lion's body symbolizes mindless and merciless violence.

Twenty centuries have passed. It is the Christian faith that after every two thousand years the civilization collapses, and a new era begins. As twenty hundred years are over, this society is going to be extinct. During the

Christian civilization of twenty centuries this beast of lion's body with man's head was asleep but now the monstrous animal is slowly moving towards Bethlehem. This symbolizes the end of the Christian civilization and the beginning of the animal civilization.

This is the poet's vision of the Second Coming. The poet thinks that in the end of the Christian civilization, there will be the birth of a rough beast which will in due course of time dominate over the world spreading violence and evil. Then the murderous instinct cannot be kept in control. The poet seems to be in a mood of bewilderment. He thinks probably instead of Christ some monster will be born.

Thus the poem contains the horror vision of destruction. The poet hopes for the second coming of Jesus but he is in a state of bewilderment to see the appearance of a destructive god instead of Jesus Christ.