

## William Butler Yeats' "The Second Coming":

### A Stylistic Study in Terms of Collocation

William Yeats is laid to rest.

(Tran,2005:2)

### 3.The Interpretation of "The Second Coming"

"The Second Coming" is one of five political poems Yeats composed. It is one of the most widely read and anthologized of all his poems, uniting the poet's political and mystical concerns in an intense and visionary artistic whole.

In the first stanza the poet describes the state of the world its political upheavals, the chaos and cynicism of modern civilization, the haphazard brutality of contemporary culture. The relationship between the falcon and the falconer is the first image which is devoted to state the relationship between the civilization on the one hand and Christianity on the other. When the falconer cannot control the falcon, it means that "Christianity has lost its power; it can no longer hold society in an orderly structure...., Instead, things are flying away, falling apart; our civilization is disintegrating" (Coles,1980:54).

The confusion and disintegration in the world must surely be a sign that a revelation: a "second Coming" of the Messiah is at hand. Instead, the poet sees a sphinx-like creature moving across the desert. The poet, here, makes a comparison between the first coming of Christ after two thousand years of sleep of pre-Christian time and the second Coming of a "vast image out of spiritus Mundi". To the mortal world as saviour, but asserts that the coming cycle will be merciless and without sympathy toward its predecessor, turning the focus of its "blank and pitiless" eyes toward a new spiritual direction (Destefano,1997:5).

Destefano (ibid:6) adds that "in The Second Coming" Yeats as narrator seems to find himself alone in his assessment of the Christian redemption as he questions the nature of its Messiah's return to earth to redeem mankind for the decadence of their spiritual deviation". The poet believes that "some revelation is at hand", but he also realizes that this revelation is not Christ's but of the "vast image out of a Spiritus Mundi".

Yeats in "The Second Coming" tries to criticize the moralities that are dominating the society. The Christian people believe in the Second Coming, but the poet here uses the Second Coming symbolically and metaphorically. Yeats employs the vast and pitiless image to come instead of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of humankind. So, the Second Coming, here, is a punishment to the sinful society.