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The Second Coming

The poem, The Second Coming has been composed by W.B. Yeats. It is one of the most widely read and anthologized of Yeats' poems. This poem gives us the political and historical context in an intense and visionary view.

In the first stanza of the poem, the poet reveals us the present state of the world. Mainly its political upheaval, the chaos and cynicism of modern civilization, the brutality of modern culture. The poem is an illustration of Yeats' philosophy of history. The poem opens with:

Turning and turning in the widening gyre
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;

The poet believes that civilization and barbarism occurred in alternating phases. Our civilization is no longer in a position to listen to. The result is that things are falling apart. The ceremony of innocence is the certain victim of all this anarchy. The good people are very confident. They are full of passion and intensity. In other words, it can be said that an atmosphere of fanaticism and violence has overtaken everything. A vast shape with the head of a man and the body of a lion is seen emerging out of spirals.
Mundi.

In the last four lines the poet gives us the figure of twenty century. He means to say that twenty century is ready to give way to an antithetical civilization in which the controlling authority may be cruel and more terrifying.