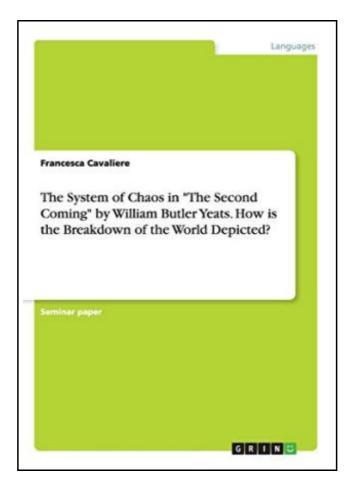
# The System of Chaos in "The Second Coming" by William Butler Yeats. How is the Breakdown of the World Depicted?



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## THE SYSTEM OF CHAOS IN "THE SECOND COMING" BY WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS. HOW IS THE BREAKDOWN OF THE WORLD DEPICTED?



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GRIN Verlag Mrz 2016, 2016. Taschenbuch. Book Condition: Neu. 210x148x1 mm. This item is printed on demand - Print on Demand Neuware - Seminar paper from the year 2011 in the subject English - Literature, Works, grade: 1,0, University of Potsdam (Anglistik Literatur), course: Symbolism and Modernism in British Poetry, language: English, abstract: 'The Second Coming' was composed by the Irish poet William Butler Yeats in 1919, in the aftermath of the First World War and was first published in November 1920. The present paper examines what enables the speaker to envision the Second Coming and how his vision is linked to the Biblical model. How is the breakdown of the world depicted and what are revealed to be its possible causes. The poem's title 'The Second Coming' makes reference to the Biblical reappearance of Christ, as prophesied in Matthew 24 and the Book of Revelation of St. John in the New Testament. According to Christian belief, Christ will return to conquer Satan and the forces of evil, before presiding over a thousand-year reign of peace on Earth. True to the Biblical pattern, the speaker of the poem envisions the breakdown of the present state of the world and the dawn of a new age. He adds, however, a sinister twist to the idea of the Second Coming, suggesting that the return of Christ might just as well become the arrival of the Antichrist. I will consequently go on to conclude that the poem presents the world as a perfectly balanced system of two opposing forces or principles such as: centrifugal vs. centripetal force in physics, democracy vs. aristocracy in politics, Christ vs. Antichrist in religion etc. Whenever this opposition is completely cancelled, chaos will be its consequence. All this is, however not to say that chaos sounds for the...

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