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Arthur Machen: Ecstasy and Epiphany

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Abstract

This essay examines the treatment of epiphany in the fiction of Arthur Machen from 1894 to 1922. It argues that whereas modernist writers often preferred to detach the notion of epiphany from its originally spiritual context, Machen's characters experience versions of it inflected by pagan and Christian religious practice. Accompanying this was his evolution of 'ecstasy' as a literary concept; the essay explores the way that the two

ideas were fused in fiction such as *The Hill of Dreams* (1907), *The Great Return* (1915) and *The Secret Glory* (1922).

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