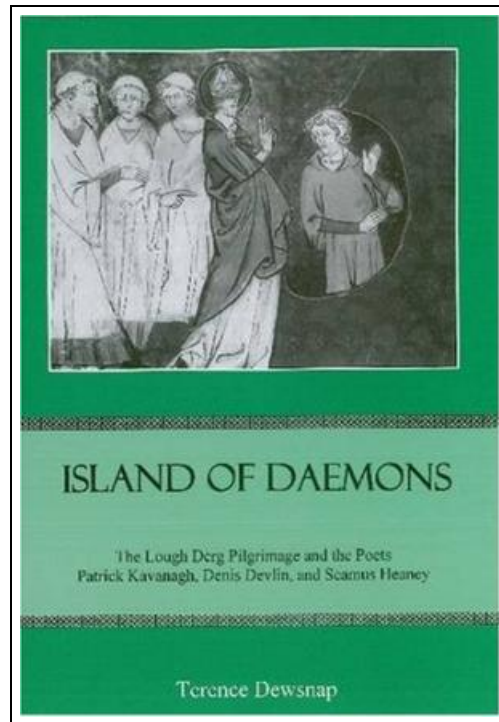


Island of Daemons: The Lough Derg Pilgrimage & the Poets Patrick Kavanagh, Denis Devlin & Seamus Heaney



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ISLAND OF DAEMONS: THE LOUGH DERG PILGRIMAGE & THE POETS PATRICK KAVANAGH, DENIS DEVLIN & SEAMUS HEANEY

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University of Delaware Press, Newark, 2008. Hardback/Cloth. Book Condition: New. 1st Edition. 224pp Illustrated. [In stock in Australia, for immediate delivery] *Island of Daemons* interprets accounts of the Donegal pilgrimage including histories, guidebooks, devotional writing, newspaper and magazine articles, as well as three major poems by 20th-century Irish poets. The pilgrimage history documents religious and political themes as well as the experience of pilgrimage as arduous, enlightening, and humbling. Early writings often stressed the sensational, with miracles, devils, and hideous torture. Most Lough Derg writings have been devotional, but there is a strong tradition of satire as well. Scepticism competes with reverence. It is important to locate each modern poet within a tradition of choices made in times past. This study, attempting to register the variety of attitudes associated with Lough Derg, depends at times on hypothesis - speculative possibilities rather than definite sources or influences. Chapter 1 charts the history of the pilgrimage from medieval times to the present. Chapter 2 is about Denis Devlin's 'Lough Derg' and his coming to grips with European as well as Irish traditions. His meditative poem was written in 1942 against a background of war. The poem begins as satire but moves towards contemplation. Difficult and displaced language and syntax indicate the complexity of his religious perceptions. Chapter 3 studies Patrick Kavanagh's 'Lough Derg', written about the same time as Devlin's poem but not published until after he died in 1967. Its method is fictional narrative, a story of three seekers and a poet who come to Lough Derg. Chapter 4 deals with Seamus Heaney's 'Station Island', mainly written in 1984. His pilgrimage resembles necromancy as he evokes the ghosts of writers, teachers, family, and friends, including victims of sectarian violence in Northern Ireland whose Dantean returns stimulate remorse. This study locates the poets in relation...

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