

THE INSCRIPTION OF A NEW AUDIENCE:
MARIE DE FRANCE'S *ESPURGATOIRE SAINT PATRIZ*

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In her least-studied work, the *Espurgatoire Saint Patriz*, Marie de France is involved in the translation of one form of language into another. In the *Lais*, the poet transformed the orally transmitted Celtic lay into written French verse. In the *Fables*, Marie claims to have translated King Alfred's Aesopic fables from English into Romance. The *Espurgatoire* undergoes similar treatment as the *Lais* and *Fables* in that it is transformed through translation by Marie. The literary circumstances surrounding the production of the *Espurgatoire*, however, stand in contrast to those of the *Lais* and the *Fables*. First, the Latin text of the *Tractatus de Purgatorio Sancti Patricii*, written by an English Cistercian monk known as Henry of Saltrey, survives in many manuscripts, testifying to the various stages of its development, and therefore can be compared closely with Marie's translation of it. In contrast to the abundance of *Tractatus* source texts which exist, of Marie's 102 fables only 40 are traceable to written (Latin) sources, and the collection is supposedly the French translation of the still-elusive English fable book of King Alfred. Similarly, there is no written trace of the *Lais* prior to Marie's recording of them. Second, the emphasis of the narrative in the *Espurgatoire* has shifted from this world to the next. The *Fables*, which by means of their epimythia teach social morality and responsibility, do not grapple with the workings of human salvation as does the *Espurgatoire*. The focus of the *Lais*, less didactic yet than the *Fables*, is also obviously elsewhere. The sacred subject matter of the *Espurgatoire*, then, sets this text apart from the *Lais* and the *Fables* on the one hand, but its status as translation into French suggests a cohesiveness of purpose on Marie's part in the three texts. Marie's *Espurgatoire* is not a simple translation (as if any translation is a "simple" one), but a recontextualization of Henry of Saltrey's *Tractatus*. At the most basic level, Henry's Latin prose is transformed by Marie into French octosyllables. This in itself constitutes innovation. More importantly, Marie integrates the text's new vernacular audience into the Purgatory legend not only by means of translation, but also by her inscription of this audience into the narrative itself. The focus of this study will be on how Marie simultaneously creates and speaks to a new, larger public in her *Espurgatoire*.

The *Espurgatoire* is 2,302 lines long, constituting a text more extensive than any of Marie's individual fables or lays. Of these 2,302 lines 22 are, as Jenkins states in his edition of Marie's text, "entirely original matter," (6) and have no analogue in the Latin manuscripts of the text. To the body of the *Tractatus*, Marie has added a Prologue (lines 1-8), an Epilogue (lines 2297-2302), and four couplets (lines 1019-20; 1053-54; 1119-20; 1667-68). Jenkins refers to these four couplets as "interjections

(which) bear the imprint of sincerity, and afford us a glimpse into the mind of the author" (6). Others have ignored or dismissed them as inconsequential.¹ Without questioning the sincerity of Marie's new verses, I would nonetheless suggest that they are not mere interjections, but rather the working out in narrative form of Marie's stated purpose in her Prologue; that is, to offer a new audience the possibility of salvation through the inclusion of that audience in her text.

What Marie herself added to the evolved text of H's *Tractatus* now warrants discussion, for it is in her own reworking of the Latin text that a new public for the work was created. Before passing on to Marie's aforementioned "original" material (the Prologue, Epilogue, and four couplets), several other aspects of the poet's text that I would also call "original" merit attention.

First, there are several passages in which Henry of Saltrey and Marie de France's authorial voices become confusingly mixed. The first example of this phenomenon occurs immediately after Marie's Prologue, in what is recognized as Henry's Prologue in the Latin text, but which might appear in Marie's text to concern her own work. The text found in the BN manuscript reads as follows:

Uns Prudom m'ad piéça requise
Pur ço m'en sui ore entremise,
De mettre mei en cel labur,
Pur révérence, è pur s'onur (lines 9-12)²

Henry's own Prologue speaks directly to its commissioner:

Jussisti[s], pater venerande, ut scriptum vobis mitterem, quod de Purgatorio in vestra me retuli audisse presentia. Quod quidem eo libentius aggredior, quod ad id explendum paternitatis vestre jussione instantius compellor. (9)

¹Owen calls the lines "four quite commonplace pious interjections." To Marie's credit, Owen believes that the lines suggest "a measure of sincerity rather than padding put in out of necessity," and concludes the following about Marie's reworking of the Latin *Tractatus*: "As for the omissions and discrepancies between Marie's text and the *Tractatus* as we know it, these are very small matters and contribute in no way to our knowledge of the authoress or her text" (65).

²For this view see also Jeanette Beer, *Narrative Conventions of Truth* (69-71). This passage, which retains the feminine endings of lines 9-10, is quoted from Roquefort's edition of Marie's three works (2: 411-12). All other quotations from Marie's *Espurgatoire* as well as from Henry's *Tractatus* are from Jenkins's dual-language edition unless otherwise noted. Michael Curley's more recent edition of Marie's *Espurgatoire* gives an English translation of the text.

Marie has already changed Henry's text in first referring to Henry's *pater venerande* in the third person (*Uns prudom*). She then addresses him in the second person (*Beau piere*). Marie seems at this point to have collapsed the levels of distinction between her own work and that of Henry, explaining that *Uns Prudom* commissioned the present work. That it is Marie's voice speaking is suggested by the manuscript's own feminine past participles in lines 9-10 (*requis/entremise*). In several published editions of Marie's text, however, the feminine endings are "corrected" to the masculine.³ In his edition, which retains the manuscript's feminine endings, Roquefort explains that Marie was referring to her own patron by *Uns Prudom*.⁴ Because BN fr. 25407 is the sole manuscript containing the *Espurgatoire*'s text, comparison with other manuscripts is impossible (Burgess 13). If the endings were indeed altered as Jenkins suggests by a later copyist, and are not of Marie's authorship, this would simply demonstrate the difficulty on the scribe's part (as well as ours) in determining where Marie's "je" ends and where Henry's begins.⁵

This phenomenon becomes more pronounced when read against other passages in the French translation, where Marie makes a clear distinction between herself as translator and Henry as *autor*. The following is Henry's Epilogue:

Haec, pater venerande, predictus Gilbertus et mihi et aliis pro edificacione narravit, sic ipse ab ipso milite sepe audivit. Ego vero, sequens sensum verborum et narrationis ejus, prout intelligere potui, dixi vobis. Si quis autem me reprehendere voluerit, sciat me quod vestra hoc scribere jussio coegit. Valete. (64-65)

³Jenkins changes these ending to the masculine in his edition arguing that the translation "proper" starts at this point and should thus reflect H's voice: "Uns prozdum m'a pieça *requis* / pur ço m'en sui ore *entremis*." Jenkins further explains his corrections with the following arguments: "1) the agreement in meaning with the Latin text is close . . . 2) the feminine participles in the MS. make small difficulty (similar errors lines 1025, 1026, 2077, 2078). As Marie names herself (l. 2297), any copyist, not knowing the Latin original, would feel called upon to substitute the feminine" (72). Warnke, like Jenkins, corrects the manuscript's own feminine endings: "Uns prozdum m'a pieça *requis*: / pur ceo m'en sui ore *entremis*" (3; my emphasis).

⁴"Marie prévient qu'elle a traduit ce poème à la prière d'un homme prudent et sage, dont elle a reçu des bienfaits" (2: 407). More recently, Yorio Otaka's edition of Marie's *Espurgatoire* reproduces the manuscripts's lesson: "Uns prosdum m'ad peça *requis*,/Pur ço m'en sui ore *entremise*" (363; my emphasis).

⁵Jenkins agrees with Selmar Eckleben's argument (47), that Marie's voice in her translation plays the same role as Henry's in the Latin version: "Dr. Eckleben's observation, that Marie generally puts herself in the place of the Latin author, and, like Henry, narrates in the first person, is found to be correct" (6).

Marie renders the passage thus:

Gileberz cunta icel fait
A l'autor quil nus a retrait,
Si cum Oweins li out cunté,
E li moignes dunt ai parlé:
Ço que jo vus ai ici dit
E tut mustré par mun escrit. (lines 2057-62)

Here, the levels of transmission are more clearly discernable. Owein told his story to Gilbert, who in turn told it to the *autor* or Henry, who here is spoken of in the third person by Marie's *je*, which frames the entire process in as what she refers to as *mun escrit*.

In the passage immediately following, however, the melding together of Marie and Henry's *je* seems to reoccur:

E puis parlai a dous abbez:
D'Irelande erent bons ordenez.
Si lur demandai de cel estre,
Si ço poeit veritez estre. (lines 2063-66)

Who is speaking here? If the *je* is the same as that in the verses immediately preceding ("Ço que jo vus ai ici dit / E tut mustré par mun escrit" [lines 2061-62]), it would appear that Marie herself spoke to the two Irish abbots. But the Latin text already has an *ego* who questioned them:

Ego autem, post quam hec omnia audieram, duos de Hibernia abbates, ut adhuc cercior fierem, super his conveni. (65)

Is this *ego* Henry? It seems unlikely, given that Henry just finished his Epilogue. Is it the voice of an interpolator, who wishes to add his "two cents' worth" to Henry's account? In any case, Marie's own level of narration has receded into and become one with that of the Latin *ego* after appearing as distinct from Henry's in the preceding passage.

A final remark about Marie's treatment of the *Tractatus* involves her audience. As we have seen, the *Tractatus*'s inscribed audience is the Abott of Sartis, whom Henry of Saltrey calls *pater venerande* and at whose request the account was recorded in writing. Marie, too, speaks to a *Beau piere* (who might or might not be this abbot), but in addition expands her textual audience to the *Seignurs* whom she directly addresses in line 49 (*Seignurs*, a l'eissue del cors), line 189 (*Seignurs*, entendez la raisun), and line 421 (*Seignurs*, si cum dit li escriz). These courtly gentlemen are nowhere to be found in the Latin text, and their introduction into the text by Marie reflects the general trend in the *Espurgatoire* toward greater inclusion in a salvithic literary legacy of those to whom the text had been inaccessible.

With this idea of audience expansion in mind, we arrive at Marie's "original" material, which both announces and enacts the inclusion of a new, larger public in the legend of Saint Patrick's Purgatory. In the Prologue, Marie declares her intention to render into Romance the Purgatory tale:

Al nun de Deu, qui od nus seit,
 E qui sa grace nus enveit,
 Voeil en romanz mettre en escrit,
 Si cum li livre le nus dit,
 En remembrance e en memoire,
 Les peines de l'espurgatoire;
 Qu'a Seint Patriz volt Deus mustrer
 Le liu u l'um i deit entrer. (lines 1–8)

The poet appropriates divine authority for her text in the assertion that her work is done in the name of God. This stands in contrast to the construction of authority in the *Lais*, where Marie only indirectly justifies her undertaking with a reference to the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14–30), but equally with one to Classical Antiquity's *anciens*. In the Prologue to her *Fables*, Marie likens her translation to those of Aesop and King Alfred, but nowhere does she claim God directly as her textual authority as she does in the *Espurgatoire*. The *Espurgatoire's* universal immediacy is apparent in Marie's prayer to God: "qui od nus seit / E qui sa grace nus enveit" (lines 1–2; my emphasis). Prefaced by this all-inclusive *nus*, what follows relates directly to each individual's relationship with God. In addition, the Purgatory which God revealed to Saint Patrick is portrayed, in both the *Tractatus* and *Espurgatoire* texts, as a geographical place to which pilgrimages, like Owein's, were possible.⁶

Such pilgrimages to Station Island on Lough Derg (Red Lake) in County Donegal, Ireland, were becoming increasingly popular at the end of the twelfth century,⁷ and visiting Saint Patrick's Purgatory was therefore a real possibility for Marie's audience. That Purgatory was an actual place on earth to be entered is reflected in Marie's qualification of it: "Qu'a Seint Patriz volt Deus mustrer / Le liu u l'um i deit entrer (lines 7–8; my emphasis). In addition, *l'um* is no generalized abstraction; it is rather a reference to real individuals who could literally visit Patrick's Purgatory and be purged of their sins.⁸ While the *Lais*

⁶Jacques LeGoff speaks of the increasing "spatialization" of Purgatory at the end of the twelfth century in *The Birth of Purgatory* where the *Tractatus* is presented as playing a pivotal role in assigning Purgatory an actual geographical location: "at last there was a description of Purgatory, a place with a name of its own and an other world consisting of three regions . . . Alongside Hell and Heaven, which Owein is not permitted to see, there is Purgatory . . . Furthermore, the geography of the next world is fitted into the geography of this one . . . by specifying the precise location on earth of one of Purgatory's mouths" (200–01).

⁷"Since the end of the twelfth century (Saint Patrick's Purgatory) has been a place of penance and pilgrimage of European renown because it held a cave believed to be the entrance to the Other World" (Picard and Pontfarcy 9).

⁸This same pilgrimage has continued to the present day. LeGoff states that "every year some 15,000 pilgrims visit the site between June 1 and August 15" (199). Picard and Pontfarcy make similar remarks concerning the location's

told fanciful tales of love set in the distant past, and the *Fables* taught social correctness in a more contemporary setting, neither work could be viewed as instrumental or necessary to its public's salvation. In contrast, the *Espurgatoire* offered a "mapping out" of the next world to speakers of French. The *Espurgatoire*, unlike Dante's later *Divina Commedia*, does not explain what sins are purged in each of the regions of Purgatory, but the basic workings of the place are made clear by the archbishops in the Terrestrial Paradise. They explain that the sinners Owein witnessed in Purgatory would eventually be purged of their sins and arrive at the Terrestrial Paradise, just as those in the Terrestrial Paradise would pass on to the Celestial Paradise. Each soul's journey after death and its ease of ascent to Paradise depended directly upon the individual's life on earth, as well as the prayers and masses offered on the departed's behalf by the living. Only the souls condemned eternally to Hell, which Owein never sees, are unable to move up the heavenly scale to eternal bliss. The *Espurgatoire* was thus of direct importance to all believers, for now speakers of Romance as well as speakers of Latin were confronted with the consequences of their earthly behavior, and apprised of what they could do to be in better standing for when the Last Judgement occurred.

The *Tractatus* not only became more accessible to the layperson through Marie's translation of it, but the story's protagonist undergoes a certain rewriting as well. In the *Tractatus*, Owein remains a knight instead of entering a religious order after his journey into the next world. In the *Espurgatoire*, however, Owein's decision to forego monastic life is amplified.⁹ The following passage is the *Tractatus's* version of Owein's seeking advice from his lord as to whether he should enter religious orders:

Sicque, cruce in humero accepta, Jerosolimam
 perrexit, et, inde rediens, regem dominum suum
 consulturus adiit, ut ejus concilio secundum illum
 religionis ordinem viveret, quem rex ipse laudaret.
 (61)

Marie's translation develops and expands the king's response to Owein's inquiry:

En Jerusalem en ala
 E ariere [s'en] repaire;
 A sun seignur le rei revint
 E il volentiers le retint.
 Tut en ordre li a cunté
 De sa vie la verité:

enduring attraction: "Even to-day, though the cave no longer exists, barefoot pilgrims travel to Lough Derg in June, July and August and there spend three days in prayer (including an entire night in the church), fasting and doing stations at the penal beds which in all probability constitute the remains of ninth-century cells" (9).

⁹Owen says the following of Marie: "in her translation she has underlined the fact that Owein remained a knight on his return from the Holy Land, instead of going into religious orders" (66).

Cunseil li quist e demanda
 De sa vie qu'il [l']en loa:
 S'il deüst moigne devenir
 U quel religiun tenir.
 E li reis li a respundu
 Chevaliers seit, si cum il fu;
 Ço li loa il a tenir,
 En ço poeit Deu bien servir.
 Si fist il bien tute sa vie:
 Pur altre ne chanja il mie. (lines 1917–32)

During the remainder of his life, we learn that Owein serves God faithfully as a layperson as the amplification of Owein's decision to remain part of the secular world continues. When Gilbert arrives in Ireland to found an abbey on Owein's King's land, the Latin text states that Owein, who helped Gilbert, remained a knight:

Sique miles cum ipso Gilberto mansit, sed nec monachus nec conversus esse voluit; quin potius se servum domui reddidit. (62)

But Marie places greater emphasis upon this decision than does her Latin source:

Issi remest od Gilebert
 Li chevaliers e bien le sert;
 Mais ne voleit changier sun estre:
 En nun de chevalier morra,
 Ja altre abit nen recevra. (lines 1972–76)

Although the *Espurgatoire* is not a saint's life *per se*, it shares some important characteristics with the hagiographic tradition.¹⁰ First, important events in the life of Saint Patrick himself are depicted in the *Espurgatoire*: Patrick preaches the Gospel to the unbelieving Irish (lines 189–264), he receives the Lord's Staff and Books of the Gospel from Jesus Christ (lines 265–300), and has revealed to him the entrance to Purgatory by God himself (lines 301–50). Second, the *Espurgatoire* involved its public in an immediate and personal way. Like Owein, a secular knight who had sinned against God and had been purged of his sins by his otherworldly journey, readers or hearers of Marie's text could themselves undertake this same pilgrimage to Lough Derg in northwestern Ireland and become reconciled with their Lord. The *Espurgatoire*, like the saint's life, linked its public to the events of its narrative by challenging that public better to serve God.

Obviously, the *Espurgatoire* goes beyond the realm of the saint's life, because the main character of the text is not a saint, but rather a knight who, benefitting from a saint's communion with God, himself remains a knight in both the Latin and French texts. Although the French text

¹⁰Brigitte Cazelles says the following of the hagiographic text: "A typical hagiologic document thus comprises two distinct and complementary types of mediation: the aim is, first, to evoke, at the biographical level, the facts and events accounting for the sanctification of an individual; and second, to inspire the believer to respond actively to such exemplary stories" (1).

further emphasizes Owein's decision to stay a knight, it is remarkable that the *Tractatus*, written by one monk (Henry of Saltrey) for another (the Abbot of Sartis), is largely concerned with a layperson's faithful service of God.

It is fitting that the exemplary account of a *layperson's* descent into Purgatory and his salvation become the object of a translation into Romance. Typically, readers and writers of Latin worked in some capacity within the Church. That the *Tractatus's* audience was probably a monastic one is reflected by the text's inscribed audience (the Abbot of Sartis), the Homily extolling monastic life, as well as the episodes in which the monk and the priest are sorely tried by demons. The *Tractatus's* readers, like the Abbot of Sartis, were part of a circumscribed community defined in part by the Latin it spoke, wrote, and read. Romance, on the other hand, was the language of the layperson, to whom the Latin of the Church was often incomprehensible. The *Espurgatoire*, whose hero is a layperson, stands as a most appropriate text, then, to inspire and involve laypeople in the legacy of Saint Patrick and his Purgatory. Identifying with a knight would probably have been easier for most laypeople than identifying with a monk or a priest.¹¹ The integration of the layperson into the tradition of Saint Patrick's Purgatory is embodied by Owein, a good Christian layperson in both the *Tractatus* and the *Espurgatoire*, and is further achieved by Marie's translation of the narrative into Romance.

After the Prologue, the actual incorporation of Marie's Romance-speaking public into the body of the narrative occurs for the first time in lines 1019–20. Owein has just witnessed the punishments of the second field in Purgatory, where sinners are nailed to the ground, tormented by burning dragons, snakes and toads, and beaten by demons. At this point, Marie expresses her sympathy for the sinners:

Chaitis est cil qui en tel peine,
 Par ses pechiez, se trait e meine! (lines 1019-20)

There is no Latin equivalent to this couplet in the *Tractatus* manuscripts. In addition to showing pity for those seen by Owein, Marie's exclamation is a generalizing statement, and is addressed to her present audience as a warning. (*Cil* in line 1019 is not limited to one of the sinners in the second field; rather, it includes all persons, who, because of their sins, may one day find themselves in such a horrible plight. Because this is one of Marie's so-called "original" couplets (Jenkins 6), there can be no mistake that Marie is speaking here to her own public, not to that of Henry of Saltrey. Because Marie's translation was undertaken to make the text more accessible to speakers of Romance, these lines are directed uniquely at

¹¹André Vauchez speaks of the limited number of laypeople appearing in saints' lives in his essay "Lay People's Sanctity in Western Europe: Evolution of a Pattern (Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries)."

this new public, which becomes inscribed into the narrative at this point.

Marie's next "original" material is found in lines 1053–54. His demonic guides have just shown Owein the torments of the third field, where sinners are nailed to the ground by nails so close together that a person's finger could not fit between two nails without touching one of them. A cold wind blows over the sinners, and demons beat them without pity. The following couplet is Marie's addition:

Allas, que nuls deit deservir
Que tel peine deüst suffrir!" (lines 1053–54)

Again, what has been dismissed as a sign of Marie's sincerity offers a revealing glimpse into the dynamics between Marie and her newly-created public. It is obvious that Marie has stepped momentarily out of the narrative mode to address her present audience with regard to the terrible suffering Owein has just witnessed. Those who are punished in the third field deserve their condition, for Purgatory is part of God's plan for human purgation and salvation. Marie's interjection therefore does not question the justification for the torture of these sinners; indeed, it does not directly concern them. Marie's words are rather directed toward those who are *not yet arrived* at this place as a warning to view the sinners of the third field as a negative exemplum. Indeed, Marie's "Allas" displays sympathy for those already suffering in Purgatory, but her concern that anyone (*nuls*) need suffer such punishment as Owein has viewed is for those souls who have not yet been assigned to this realm of suffering. Those souls whose destiny is still to be decided, and to whom Marie is offering the path to salvation, are the members of her French-speaking lay public.

As the narrative follows Owein through Purgatory, the knight witnesses new terrors in the fourth field of punishment. Here, some sinners are hung by various body parts by burning chains or on burning hooks, while others are thrown into furnaces, or roasted on spits or grills. For the first and only time in the narrative, Owein sees individuals with whom he was acquainted in life. Although it is never explained what they did during their lives to deserve these purgatorial torments, the souls' cries of pain are heart-rending. When the demons attempt to subject Owein to these same punishments, the knight cries out Jesus Christ's name, as he had been advised to do by the men in white robes when he first arrived in Purgatory. When Owein speaks Christ's name, the demons are rendered powerless, and the knight passes on unharmed. It is at this point that Marie again turns from Owein to address her present audience:

Mult est cist nuns bons a numer,
Par quei um se puet delivrer (lines 1119–20)

In the first two of Marie's couplets discussed (lines 1019–20; 1053–54), the poet presents the punishments of the second and third fields with sympathy for the sinners, but more importantly as negative exempla to be avoided by the living. In contrast, Marie here offers Owein's

speaking the name of Christ to save himself from danger as a positive exemplum. That the couplet is in the present tense reinforces its applicability to Marie's audience. Marie's couplets are not to be read in the past tense, as are some present-tense passages in medieval literature. Rather, they signal a fundamental, albeit brief, shift in time from the past to the present. What happened to Owein in the past (during the reign of King Stephen), as well as what was revealed to Saint Patrick in the more distant past, is pertinent to the hearers and readers of Marie's translation. Just as Owein counted on Jesus to protect him from the demons of Purgatory, so can the Christian believer count on Christ to keep him safe from what may befall him in life's walk, and to save him from the punishments which Owein and Marie's audience have witnessed.

The next and final couplet in Marie's text which has no apparent Latin equivalent occurs in the description of the Terrestrial Paradise, which Owein enters through a beautiful door in a high wall. Bright light floods the whole realm. Fruit and flowers grow in a pleasant meadow, a wonderful aroma and lovely melodies fill the air, and the temperature is neither too hot or too cold. Owein finds himself in a state of incredible peace. The following is Marie's exclamation in response to what the knight has seen, smelled, heard, and felt in his visit to the Terrestrial Paradise:

Or nus doint Deus ço deservir
Qu'a cez joies puissuns venir! (lines 1667–68)

The poet has again turned from her narrative to speak to her public. Marie hopes that we, like Owein, may one day experience the ineffable joy of the blessed in the Terrestrial Paradise, for it is obvious that the poet and her public constitute the *nus* in line 1667. The occurrence of this last and the other three audience-centered couplets in Marie's text reflects Owein's progress, both spatial and spiritual, through Purgatory. In her first two couplets (following the description of the second and third fields of punishment) Marie warns us of what we should *not* do, lest we be punished as are those suffering in Purgatory. In her third couplet (which follows the description of the fourth field) Marie informs us of what we *should* do; that is, to call on Christ to keep us from sinning. In that third couplet, Marie shifts from the negative aspect of sin to the positive side of avoiding it. Finally, in these verses which follow the description of the Terrestrial Paradise, the possibility of attaining salvation is held out to us. Like Owein, who makes his way physically through Purgatory from suffering and darkness toward beatitude and light, Marie's own audience appears in these same places textually, experiences Owein's journey linguistically, and becomes woven into the fabric of the narrative. By translating the *Tractatus* into French, Marie offers non-speakers of Latin a textual vision of salvation through Owein's adventure that they may one day experience extratextually themselves.

Marie's brief Epilogue reiterates that she has translated the *Tractatus* into Romance:

Jo, Marie, ai mis en memoire
 Le livre de l'Espurgatoire:
 En Romanz qu'il seit entendables
 A laie gent e cuvenables.
 Or preium Deu que par sa grace
 De noz pechiez mundes nus face. (lines 2297–302)

Warnke, Karl. *Das Buch vom Espurgatoire S. Patrice der Marie de France und seine Quelle*. Halle: Niemeyer (Bibliotheca Normannica, IX), 1938.

Marie has transformed the narrative in order to make it accessible to those who did not speak Latin. As we have seen, Marie's rendering of the tale into French literally creates a new audience by its inscription into her text. Marie's *Espurgatoire* continues the tradition of audience expansion, which was initiated by God's revelation of the Purgatorial pit to Saint Patrick, an initial audience to God's plans. Marie's text enables her audience to "see" God's plans for them, too, through letters familiar to them.

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