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Tijana Parezanović*
Alfa BK University, Belgrade

Melina Nikolić**
Alfa BK University, Belgrade

OTHERNESS AND SHARING: SPACE, EMOTIONS, AND DISCOURSE IN ELIZABETH VON ARNIM'S *THE ENCHANTED APRIL*

Abstract
This paper deals with Elizabeth von Arnim's 1922 novel *The Enchanted April* as an example of modernist travel narrative. The novel focuses on four different women vacationing together in Italy for a month and the present analysis aims to address how these protagonists experience otherness – of the Italian place, their own emotions, and one another. To this effect, the analysis relies on the theoretical concept of heterotopia and descriptions of Christian love. Close reading of selected excerpts, which prominently feature free indirect discourse (as a signifier of otherness in the text), reveals that otherness can be overcome through sharing and love mediated through the specific (heterotopic) spatial setting, which bears the aspects of sacredness and the potential for transformation.

Keywords: *The Enchanted April*, fictional tourists, heterotopia, Christian love, free indirect discourse

* tijanaparezanovic@gmail.com
** melina.nikolic@alfa.edu.rs

1. Introduction

Freedom of travel was probably one of the first harbingers of modernity. In the early 20th century, travel was becoming more and more popular and available due to the technologically improved and more affordable means of transportation and among those who received the opportunity to travel freely and individually were women, whose "move to motion gained momentum in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when increasing numbers of Western women participated in the cultural logic of the individualizing journey." (Smith 2001: X–XI). Women's journeys were not only the subject of travelogues by authors such as Rosita Forbes, Freya Stark, Gertrude Bell, and Rebecca West (Bassnett 2002: 225), but also of a number of works of narrative fiction, including Elizabeth von Arnim's 1922 *The Enchanted April*, the novel on which the present article focuses.[1]

The Enchanted April opens on a miserable rainy afternoon in a Woman's Club in London, where Mrs Wilkins sees a newspaper advertisement for a small mediaeval castle on the Mediterranean, in Italy, to be let for the month of April, with the promise of plenty of sunshine and flowers. Mrs Wilkins, who would later be introduced as Charlotte and, as the narrative progresses, even more intimately as Lotty, is the middle-class wife of aspiring lawyer Mellersh Wilkins, of whom she seems to be shy and slightly afraid, feeling that her presence is a constant embarrassment to Mellersh and that she does not live up to his social aspirations. The same advertisement is seen by Mrs Arbuthnot, later to be introduced as Rose. She, on the other hand, is well respected and supported, both financially and emotionally, by her husband, of whom she is in turn embarrassed – Frederick writes best-selling novels on the lives of historically famous mistresses, which is unacceptable to his wife, whose life is devoted to the church-related activities of helping the poor. Neither marriage is happy, so both women see the Italian castle in the spring as a way to escape from the gloomy everydayness, drudgery, and thwarted emotions. Lotty is more optimistic as regards April in Italy: she *sees* them both there, and this "visionary gaze" (von Arnim 2015: 15) becomes her trademark and she herself a prophetic figure whose anticipations always come true. Lotty, of course, has trouble letting her husband know that she intends to travel by herself; Rose does not, although she would actually like her husband to take a keener interest in her. The two decide to advertise the castle for subleasing so as to share space and thus reduce the costs. In this way, they acquire the company of

Mrs Fisher and Lady Caroline Dester. The former is an old (and haughty) lady with a Victorian heart and mind, filled with stories of illustrious Victorians such as Tennyson or Carlyle. With her own marriage long over and Mr Fisher dead, the only expectation she has of April in Italy is to be allowed to sit undisturbed and remember the "better" times. The latter is an incredibly beautiful socialite of noble birth, who wishes to spend her April thinking – an activity she does not commonly indulge in – and who is tired of people constantly seeking her company – these people she refers to as "grabbers." Now in her late twenties, Lady Caroline has lost the only man she ever loved to war and does not believe she can ever love again. During the month in Italy, each member of this incongruous party rediscovers everything they lack in England and moreover ends their journey in mutual friendship and tenderness, despite the obvious initial misunderstandings and misconceptions about one another.

Through the close reading of narratively relevant excerpts from *The Enchanted April*, taken as an appropriate example of the early-20th-century women's fiction about travel,[2] and relying on the theoretical framework established by Michel Foucault's concept of heterotopia and Robert Wagoner's description of Christian love, this paper aims to examine how otherness is perceived and eventually overcome through sharing in this particular type of literary fiction. To this effect, the analysis of the novel first focuses on the protagonists' emotional response to the new surroundings and the changing relationship between space and emotion brought about by modernity. The second part of the analysis is focused on the question of whether (and how) experiencing the otherness of space also entails embracing the otherness of fellow humans. Finally, the third segment of the analysis deals with the narrative technique employed to express this otherness, namely, the extensive use of free indirect discourse as "imperceptible discourse that is attributed to no-one" (Mansfield 2015: 71) and its potential for creating a shared space for different participants in the narrative.

2. Space and (Dis)Order

Considerations of the relationship between space and emotions often retain focus on the concept of the sublime, which does not seem to have lost its appeal since the Romantic poets rediscovered and redefined it. When in the

late 18th century the first "Grand Tourists," sons of wealthy North European families, first embarked on the long journey towards Italy to absorb the glory of the classical art, they usually crossed the Alps, which came to represent the landscape of sublimity to them. Mountains, chasms, and wilderness opposed the Enlightenment principle of a well-ordered universe established under some divine provision, and also came to signify how limited human abilities were and how incapable man was of comprehending the infinite wonders of nature. While the concept of the sublime initially (1st century) referred to the lofty style of expression in language, it was given new life in Edmund Burke's 1757 *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origins of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, where it principally concerns "the psychological and physical nature of our response to the exalted and the fearful, the terrible and terrifying, both in art and nature" (Leitch 2001: 537). Burke was interested in the objects (or landscapes) that cause the effect of the sublime as well as in the psychological response to this effect. The sublime objects are characterised as vast – nearly infinite, extreme, obscure, and powerful; as such, they indicate an element *beyond order and proportion* when found in either nature or art. The psychological response is invariably one of awe; as Burke suggests, "the feeling of the sublime originates in the experience of the terrible greatness of a rugged natural object (such as Niagara Falls), which so astonishes the mind that it fills it with a 'delightful horror' or a sense of reverence." (Phillips 2006: 24) With rapid urban development in the 19th and 20th century, the sublime came to be experienced not merely in natural scenery, but also in the growing cities that, "[b]uilt to rectify the apparent confusion and chaos of nature," became "a disorienting physical environment" (Tuan 2013: 146), a jungle-like dangerous modern wilderness.

The Romantic sublime, that is, the response to the landscape perceived as sublime, originated from travel and movement, be it travel to foreign countries or a shift from rural towards urban areas. It is the encounter with the otherness of space that seems to have incited the feeling of the sublime. As a 20th-century tourist narrative, *The Enchanted April* also recounts an encounter with otherness, but this narrative seems to provide its reconsideration within the context of modernity. The protagonists travel away from the city, "the dripping streets" of London and "the really extremely horrible sooty rain falling steadily" (Von Arnim 2015: 1, 2). While not exactly a welcoming or comforting sight, the London of *The Enchanted April* is established, in line with Tuan's idea of an ordered space which

is supposed to rectify confusion and chaos, as the place which contains "compass points of God, Husband, Home and Duty" or "the great four facts of life" (Von Arnim 2015: 13). The quote echoes the voice of Rose Arbuthnot, but can equally be applied to all the protagonists struggling with the norms society imposes on them. The Italian village in which they spend their April – San Salvatore, importantly, Holy Saviour – is the location which provides the potential to resist the idea of a well-ordered universe, but unlike the mountains and chasms that contained the same potential for the Romantics, San Salvatore differs from this "universe" (here, London) inasmuch as it is peaceful, joyous, and tame.

Any discussion of the otherness of space can certainly not forgo Michel Foucault's famous concept of heterotopia. When Foucault first introduced it in *The Order of Things*, it appeared as a not purely physical but rather metaphysical concept of the space that "undermine[s] language," "shatter[s] or tangle[s] common names," "destroy[s] 'syntax' in advance" (Foucault 1989: xix). This is immediately obvious in *The Enchanted April* when, upon arrival in San Salvatore, Rose and Charlotte reprimand themselves for not knowing a word of Italian, which they see as "not only contemptible" but "definitely dangerous" (Von Arnim 2015: 51), only to start calling each other – as soon as they see they are safe – endearingly by their names or nicknames (Von Arnim 2015: 55). The syntax that is destroyed is the one provided by the above mentioned "compass points," which brings us to Foucault's further considerations of the concept of heterotopia. In the talk titled "Of Other Spaces," he discusses the idea that "contemporary space is perhaps still not entirely desanctified," which implies that certain oppositions "that we regard as simple givens" – which also include the space of living and the space of vacationing – "are still nurtured by the hidden presence of the sacred" (Foucault 1986: 23). Foucault locates the sacred in utopias, which are not real places, and heterotopias, which are real. It is at this point important to stress that in Foucault's view the latter represent "a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which [...] all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted." (Foucault 1986: 24) The idea is well explained by Charlotte Wilkins, the protagonist who first becomes aware of the singular power of San Salvatore:

> 'You mustn't long in heaven,' said Mrs Wilkins. 'You're supposed to be quite complete here. And it is heaven, isn't it, Rose? See how everything has been let in together, – the dandelions and

> the irises, the vulgar and the superior, me and Mrs Fisher – all welcome, all mixed up anyhow, and all so visibly happy and enjoying ourselves.' (Von Arnim 2015: 81)

Charlotte Wilkins here focuses on the idea of the other space as an effectively enacted utopia, the perfect setting she keeps referring to as heaven throughout the narrative. Her words reflect Foucault's description of heterotopias as places capable "of juxtaposing in a single real place several spaces, several sites that are in themselves incompatible"[3] (Foucault 1986: 25), but they also call for a reconsideration of the established compass points. Namely, finding "heaven" as an actual physical location questions its metaphysical – religiously connoted and socially conditioned – conception. As religious Rose Arbuthnot explains upon meeting Charlotte Wilkins: "'We are told that on the very highest authority. And you know the lines about the kindred points, don't you [...] [t]he kindred points of heaven and home' [...] 'Heaven is in our home.'" (Von Arnim 2015: 12) Charlotte Wilkins immediately firmly denies this, which from the beginning positions her as the character most likely to experience the freedom and inevitable transformation (or inversion of the familiar and homely) that is inherent in the otherness of space. As soon as Charlotte and Rose cross the Channel, Charlotte contemplates:

> Mellersh at Calais had already begun to dwindle and seem less important. [...] In Paris there was no time to think of him because their train was late [...] and by the afternoon of the next day when they got into Italy, England, Frederick, Mellersh, the vicar, the poor, Hampstead, the club, Shoolbred, everybody and everything, the whole inflamed sore dreariness, had faded to the dimness of a dream. (Von Arnim 2015: 44)[4]

[3] The best example of this heterotopic quality, as explained by Foucault, is the garden, to which the present analysis will return in due course.

[4] This contemplation is not merely fictional but rather firmly grounded in the reality of travel. As Brenda Bowen notes in her Introduction to the 2015 edition of the novel, "[t]he Ligurian Sea in December is jade green, not blue at all, and in April it must be a shock of color, especially to the benighted English tourist of 1921." (Von Arnim 2015: xiv) This stark contrast certainly enhances the quality of otherness and extraordinariness that tourists grasp.

In this way the place to which the women travel stands in contrast and contests all the familiar and ordinary places of their everyday lives. Due to her "visionary gaze," Charlotte Wilkins is the first to realise this, but the process of grasping otherness and simultaneously going through an individual change gradually starts affecting other protagonists too – under the influence of the house they share in San Salvatore. To this effect, it is important to address some recent theoretical views on the Foucauldian concept of heterotopia. In their 2008 study, Michiel Dehaene and Lieven De Cauter make an interesting point with reference to Foucault's claim that heterotopic spaces are based on "a system of opening and closing that both isolates them and makes them penetrable." (Foucault 1986: 26) Foucault goes on to state that heterotopic places are not freely accessible like common public spaces: "[e]ither the entry is compulsory, [...] or else the individual has to submit to rites and purifications" and obtain a sort of permission to enter a heterotopic site (Foucault 1986: 26).[5] Heterotopias are, so to say, semi-public, but according to Dehaene and De Cauter, this does not mean they are isolated or marginal; they are in fact "necessarily collective or shared spaces." (Dehaene and De Cauter 2008: 6) It is precisely this quality that bears relevance to the narrative of *The Enchanted April*. As the protagonists gradually accept the otherness of the space in which they temporarily reside, they also adopt different views on their ordinary lives back at home. This, however, is only possible because they have to (learn to) share the house in San Salvatore. The transformative potential of this heterotopic site is achieved precisely because this heterogeneous group is brought together and forced to share, and the capability of San Salvatore to impose the necessity of sharing is what essentially sanctifies this place.

Learning to share is a process for all the protagonists. Old Mrs Fisher keeps thinking about "curbing" the other women, especially Mrs Wilkins, so that they respect the boundaries she herself has set in her life, based on the strict Victorian rules and norms of behaviour. Young Lady Caroline Dester is so used to other people "grabbing" her presence, her attention, her space, that she has herself become a grabber. Both Mrs Fisher and Lady Caroline arrive at San Salvatore unexpectedly and unannounced the day before Rose and Charlotte. Their purpose is revealed from the perspective of Mrs Fisher:

[5] *The Enchanted April* indeed presents San Salvatore as not easily accessible; the journey from London is long and the path to the house itself rather arduous (Von Arnim 2015: 45–55).

> And she had a very nice bedroom, too; it looked two ways, across the bay in the morning sun – she liked the morning sun – and on to the garden. There were only two of these bedrooms with cross-views in the house, she and Lady Caroline had discovered, and they were by far the airiest. They each had two beds in them, and she and Lady Caroline had had the extra beds taken out at once and put into two of the other rooms. In this way there was much more space and comfort. Lady Caroline, indeed, had turned hers into a bed-sitting-room, with the sofa out of the bigger drawing-room and the writing-table and the most comfortable chair, but she herself had not had to do that because she had her own sitting-room, equipped with what was necessary. Lady Caroline had thought at first of taking the bigger sitting-room entirely for her own, because the dining-room on the floor below could quite well be used between meals to sit in by the two others [...] (Von Arnim 2015: 75)

The two women show absolute possessiveness as regards the surrounding space and want to claim certain parts of the house as exclusively their own. Apart from the rooms, Lady Caroline also wants a garden ("Why should not this one spot be kept exclusively for her? She liked it; she liked it best of all." [Von Arnim 2015: 84]) and Mrs Fisher the battlements, whereby they absolutely disrespect the equal right all four women have to the house for the month: "she had a right to expect them to stay inside the round drawing-room and not to emerge interrupting on to her battlements" (Von Arnim 2015: 97). Mrs Fisher goes so far as to order that an exit to the battlements be barred so that no one except her could approach it. Their selfish attempts to possess space and turn it into their own property, at least temporarily, reflect the assumption that the heterotopic place they occupy should be isolated and individualised. Even Rose initially acts selfishly as she minds the fact that Mrs Fisher behaves as a hostess in the dining room – the hostess, in her view, should be herself. The narrative, however, diverts from the idea of a secluded and individual heterotopia towards showing that any transformative power, any acceptance of otherness, is possible only if the heterotopic space is shared. Apart from Charlotte, who realises, or rather sees, this even before the company reach San Salvatore, Rose is the first to grasp the fact:

> No, it didn't matter what Mrs Fisher did; not here; not in such beauty. Mrs Arbuthnot's discomposure melted out of her. In the warmth and light of what she was looking at, of what to her was a manifestation, and entirely new side, of God, how could one be discomposed? (Von Arnim 2015: 80–81)

Rose acknowledges a change of emotions when confronted with this particular space; moreover, she acknowledges the sanctity of the space. The necessity of forgoing one's own comfort and suppressing one's self to accommodate the collective experience can be brought into connection with the real historical facts of travel in the early 20th century. As mass tourism gradually superseded the Grand Tours of the Romantic Era (Buzard 2002: 38), so writing about it became more egalitarian and the places visited by tourists, while retaining the aura of difference and novelty, started inspiring not fear, awe, or the complexities of the mind, but rather love, empathy, and understanding.

3. Loving and Sharing

In the previously quoted lines, when Rose realises the sacred power of San Salvatore, her first thought is of her husband Frederick: "[...] If only Frederick were with her, seeing it too, seeing as he would have seen it when first they were lovers, in the days when he saw what she saw and loved what she loved…" (Von Arnim 2015: 81) The couple have grown apart and barely see each other; Rose has put God before her husband, of whom she is ashamed because she believes his ways of earning income are sacrilegious. Once faced with the beauty of San Salvatore, she starts missing him, the way he was in the early days of their marriage, and she remains nearly until the end of the narrative the most reticent of the four women. Charlotte's marriage is similarly unhappy and she has to lie to Mellersh that she has been invited to spend April at a friend's (Rose's) house in Italy, although she intends to spend her own savings on this holiday and does not ask for financial support from Mellersh (Charlotte is a homemaker). Mellersh sees her as a disobedient wife and the very idea of her travelling on her own infuriates him. Even though Charlotte forgets everything about Mellersh during her journey, on the very first day in San Salvatore she visualises him there. She believes such beauty as offered by

San Salvatore in abundance has to be shared and feels guilty for having left Mellersh in dreary London.

At first glance, Rose's and Charlotte's stories indicate romantic love thwarted for some reason or another. Additionally, Lady Caroline notes (at the point after Mr Briggs, the owner of the house in desperate search of love, visits and becomes instantly infatuated with her) that "[s]he was afraid of nothing in life except love." (Von Arnim 2015: 228) In love she has seen little but inevitable pain and loss, and the very idea of romance intimidates her. "Romantic" and "romance," however, are words frequently oversimplified: romantic love "is easily the best known idea of love in the popular imagination" while the true strength of romantic love is actually in the fact "that it makes love a religion" (Wagoner 1997: 5).

What follows from the fact that San Salvatore is presented as a heavenly place, a manifestation of God, is that the protagonists (primarily Charlotte Wilkins, then the other three women through mere observations of Charlotte) experience the feeling that can most closely be related to Christian love. The precondition for experiencing this difficult-to-achieve feeling is the complete acceptance of the surrounding (heterotopic) space: the four tourists first need to relinquish any desire to possess it and instead allow themselves to be possessed by it. Only subsequently can they also relinquish selfishness as regards their relationships with other people, be they romantic, friendly, or familial. In his study on the philosophical meanings of love, Robert Wagoner indeed makes a reference (quoting from Iris Murdoch[6]) to the spatial dimension of the emotion, stating that obsession and egotism destroy space, while unselfishness enlarges it:

> This "sense of the 'space' of others" creates an atmosphere in which neither desire nor fear plays a role. Others are "given their rights," as it were. If this kind of love seeks anything, it is only to want others to stand in the same relation to transcendence as I do, so as to open up the space in which we live. (Wagoner 1997: 36)

The space of others is to be understood in metaphysical terms – similar to Foucault's initial conception of heterotopia – but it is in the narrative of *The Enchanted April* taken more literally, as real physical space with

[6] Wagoner's reference is to Iris Murdoch's 1992 *Metaphysics as a Guide to Morals*.

the qualities of otherness. The connection between space and emotions is first grasped (perhaps even subconsciously) by Charlotte Wilkins. Rose Arbuthnot realises this as she talks to Lotty: "The extraordinary quickness with which, hour by hour, under her very eyes, Lotty became more selfless, disconcerted her. She was turning into something surprisingly like a saint." (Von Arnim 2015: 122) As they discuss Lotty's sudden wish to invite Mellersh to Italy, which is at first incomprehensible to Rose, Mellersh being one of the people they were getting away from, Lotty acknowledges: "'It's quite true. It seems idiotically illogical. But I'm so happy, I'm so well, I feel so fearfully wholesome. This place – why, it makes me feel *flooded* with love." (Von Arnim 2015: 124) Christian love "involves something more than human relationships. Another factor, God, has to be considered, not just as an addition to the human equation, but as the very basis of human relationships." (Wagoner 1997: 31) Since God in *The Enchanted April* is channelled through San Salvatore and its magically natural beauty, it might be assumed that space serves as the basis of human relationships, mediating and distributing emotions where their presence was hidden or reduced to a minimum. And, to go back to the initial arguments, this experience and effect of space was made possible in the early 20th century by increased mobility, which perhaps for the first time offered women the possibility of free travel.[7] Freedom is essential to the concept of Christian love – and in the case of Charlotte Wilkins, it is expressed as "wholesomeness." One's freedom and wholesomeness in turn, in accordance with this specific meaning of love, call for the same freedom and wholesomeness for others – for expanding the space of others. As Wagoner remarks, "[l]ove is precisely this freedom for our fellow human beings, for the other person. This openness is the result of our relation to God's absolute transcendence." (1997: 34)[8] Charlotte Wilkins behaves in accordance with this idea: she wants to expand the space of Mellersh by removing him from London; at a different point in the narrative, she leaves space for Lady Caroline to enjoy her freedom. During one of their first dinners in the house at San Salvatore, Lady Caroline does not want to join the others and prefers to remain in "her" garden, claiming she has a

[7] Rather than mobile, women had traditionally been 'sessile', "permanently planted, tenaciously fixed, utterly immobile […] always 'at home'" (Smith 2001: X).

[8] Travel functions in a similar way to love, at least from the religiously connoted perspective on tourists as modern pilgrims who experience self-discovery "through a complex and sometimes arduous search for an Absolute Other" (MacCannell 1999: 5).

headache. Rose is rather worried and behaves in a motherly fashion; Mrs Fisher thinks it rude on behalf of Lady Caroline to refuse to join them. Both reactions limit Lady Caroline's freedom and deny her the right to spend time at the place of her choice. Charlotte, on the other hand, is quite certain the headache is a mere excuse that Lady Caroline is using out of politeness. She explains her certainty with the following words: "'When I was out there just now I saw inside her.'" (Von Arnim 2015: 106) It appears that Charlotte's ability to see develops over time: initially she sees them all in Italy, and in Italy she first sees beyond mere natural beauty (her gaze transcends the physical world, which is the reason why to Rose she appears as a saint) and then beyond the boundaries existing between people.[9] She appears to be able to enter other people's minds in the same way in which she enters various spots, groves, gardens, and sandy beaches around the house. Her ability originates in her lack of possessiveness, the effect of the San Salvatore house. The first morning upon arrival, Charlotte "gave a sigh of contentment, and went on lying there looking round her, taking in everything in her room, her own little room" (Von Arnim 2015: 57). The size of the room or the fact (which she would later learn) that it is one of the most inconvenient rooms in the whole house do not stir her. The following lines express her feelings upon going outside for the first time:

> Happy? Poor, ordinary, everyday word. But what could one say, how could one describe it? It was as though she could hardly stay inside herself, it was as though she was too small to hold so much of joy, it was as though she were washed through with light. And how astonishing to feel this sheer bliss, for here she was, not doing and not going to do a single unselfish thing, not going to do a thing she didn't want to do. (Von Arnim 2015: 58)[10]

The excerpt shows how Charlotte is merging with the surrounding space ("she could hardly stay inside herself"), which would subsequently enable her to merge with other people's selves. Her very use of the word "unselfish" is curious inasmuch as it reflects the very idea of Christian love. "Selfish" in

[9] Immediately upon arrival, Lotty says to Rose: "'The first thing to happen in this house' [...] 'shall be a kiss.'" (Von Arnim 2015: 55) Thus she erases the boundaries between the two of them in a way that stresses love as a shared and bonding emotion.

[10] At a different point, Charlotte similarly asks, extending her emotions to include other characters as well: "'Who could be acquisitive, selfish, in the old rasped London way, in the presence of this bounteous beauty?'" (Von Arnim 2015: 117)

this context refers to taking care of one's self, which is the prerequisite for being able to experience love. As Wagoner observes, "to live in the presence of transcendence strongly enhances my sense of individuality, since my sense of self is undetermined by anything other than my relation to God." (1997: 35) Being self-aware or selfish is at the same time, paradoxically, being selfless, as "[t]o stand in a loving relation with another person is to give what I have been given" (Wagoner 1997: 36) – which is exactly what Charlotte intends to give to Mellersh as well as to her three companions.[11]

The most interesting acceptance of love takes place within Mrs Fisher's mind. She is the one who has the greatest difficulty accepting other people, especially Charlotte. The two women are in many respects complete opposites – of different age and social background, different social and family status, different manners, etc. – which makes accepting otherness all the more difficult. The process with Mrs Fisher also starts with coming to terms with her self: her primary reason for going to Italy is to be allowed to sit in the sun and remember the past,[12] and being in the San Salvatore house, "if she could keep off the others," (Von Arnim 2015: 98) is far cheaper and more agreeable than a hotel. Paradoxically, she soon starts looking for company, first seeking that of Lady Caroline, whom she probably perceives as the woman most similar to herself in status. She goes out into the garden in which Lady Caroline wishes to be alone and attempts to start a conversation (Von Arnim 2015: 109-111). Despite initially thinking of Mellersh's arrival as a repulsive idea, she immediately

[11] Wagoner goes on to claim that there is a danger inherent in such an idea of love; namely, that as an act of selfless giving, love can easily become moralism or repressive authoritarianism, and "[n]othing denies the gift of transcendence more than the claim of divine authority." (1997: 44) The narrative bears no evidence for attributing authoritarianism to Charlotte. Throughout it, she simply lets people be and refrains from persuading them into anything. Additionally, Wagoner poses the question of whether such selfless love is even possible without the mediation of God and answers that "Christians would say that this is not possible." (1997: 46) The implications provided by *The Enchanted April* are, as has been touched on previously, that modernity gave a new definition to divinity (relevant also to Christianity or religion in general), which was achieved through contacts with other spaces enabled by travel.

[12] There is a trace of heterotopic quality recognisable in Mrs Fisher's idea. Heterotopia can pertain to "indefinitely accumulating time" as is the case, for example, with museums or libraries "in which time never stops building up" (Foucault 1986: 26). With Mrs Fisher, the very process of remembering is rather similar to the building of a museum or library: she keeps making references to the great people of the Victorian era whom she knew. The fact that she intended to do precisely this at San Salvatore indicates perhaps her semi-awareness of the quality of otherness that the place possesses.

likes him and finally feels almost happy for having someone to talk to. Additionally, during the second week of their stay she becomes more and more restless and unable to sit inside her enclosed private space:

> And added to the restlessness, [...] she had a curious sensation, which worried her, of rising sap. [...] Dignity demanded that she should have nothing to do with fresh leaves at her age; and yet there it was, – that feeling that presently, that at any moment now, she might crop out all green. (Von Arnim 2015: 188)

Mrs Fisher's feeling of burgeoning increases and she starts walking more frequently and aimlessly around the top garden of the house, which is relevant because *she is herself becoming a garden*. The garden is "the most important space in [von Arnim's] fiction [...]: it is the space of contemplation, introspection and even transformation or transgression." (Gordić Petković 2020: 160) Significantly, the garden is also one of the most illustrative examples of heterotopia, as has already been mentioned: traditional Oriental gardens, as described by Foucault, were sacred spaces which contained representations of the four parts of the world, with all sorts of plants coming together "in this sort of microcosm": "The garden has been a sort of happy, universalizing heterotopia since the beginnings of antiquity" (Foucault 1986: 25–26). Happiness is stressed, the same positive feeling Lotty has immediately upon arrival, and Mrs Fisher's contemplations about herself becoming a garden anticipate her loving acceptance of other people, finally also including the entirely different Lotty. The feeling of burgeoning is not pertinent only to Mrs Fisher – Mellersh also "ripened like fruit by the beneficent sun of San Salvatore" (Von Arnim 2015: 198) – but in the case of Mrs Fisher it is more striking since it builds up more gradually. Its intensity increases as the narrative draws to a close, for instance: "What Mrs Fisher was thinking was how much surprised they would be if she told them of her very odd and exciting sensation of going to come out all over buds." (Von Arnim 2015: 215) Her process of transforming into a heterotopic garden includes the initially unthinkable acceptance of, and warm feelings for, all the people with whom she shares her space at San Salvatore: "now came the *stranger* Briggs, a *stranger* who at once took to her as no young man had taken to her in her life [...] [w]hat a *strange* creature; what a very *strange* creature [Lotty]" (Von Arnim 2015: 215, 216, emphasis added). While she wonders at her own acceptance of strangers,

it is their warmth and kindness she is attracted to. As Lotty put it, "[t]he great thing is to have lots of love about. I don't see [...] here, though I did at home, that it matters who loves as long as somebody does." (Von Arnim 2015: 125) An important aspect of love stressed in *The Enchanted April* is that it can, under the given circumstances, only breed more love. Lotty shares this love with kisses, which she also finally gives to Mrs Fisher, just as she did to Rose upon their arrival.

4. The Other Discourse

The garden in *The Enchanted April*, as has already been mentioned, is a space of "identity-forming introspection" (Gordić Petković 2020: 160) – for all the protagonists, which enables them to face their true selves. Introspection is also the first step in the protagonists' journey towards love – they first have to look into themselves to be able to look inside the others – and love is based precisely on their ability to observe the world from the point of view of the other, the ability to "handle difference and make it creative" (Badiou 2012: 54). Assuming the other's point of view is – at least in modernist literary fiction – most frequently achieved through the use of free indirect discourse. This hybrid form "combines verbal tenses and pronouns from indirect discourse with the tone and order of the sentence from direct discourse" (Parezanović 2020),[13] which can be seen in several of the previously quoted excerpts from *The Enchanted April*. The tone, for instance, is nicely set in the quote which relates Mrs Fisher's point of view (Von Arnim 2015: 75), where Lady Caroline is referred to several times by her title and first name, while Rose and Lotty are referred to as "the two others" – because Mrs Fisher initially dislikes them. More linguistically oriented characteristics of free indirect discourse include the use of "this" and "here" in another quoted excerpt, alongside rhetorical questions and elliptical sentences (Von Arnim 2015: 58). However, more interesting in the context of analysing space and emotions represented in *The Enchanted April* is the (narrative) space which free indirect discourse creates. As Franco Moretti explains, this type of discourse is a form in which characters "speak of themselves in the third person, as if from the

[13] More details can be found in Rimmon-Kenan 2005; Nørgaard, Montoro, and Busse 2010; Leskiv 2009; Banfield 2015.

outside" (2007: 82). Charlotte Wilkins appearing to be able to see inside other characters – to enter their minds – makes this interpretation of free indirect discourse quite relevant to the narrative: if she can see inside other characters (as a result of her heightened emotion due to the specific qualities of the surrounding space), then Rose Arbuthnot, Mrs Fisher, and Lady Caroline also, as time goes by, become able to transcend their selves and see themselves from the outside and the others from the inside. Moretti additionally refers to free indirect discourse as a particular "third voice of the *well-socialized individual*" (2007: 82), which implies – in *The Enchanted April*'s narrative – that the frequent use of free indirect discourse signals an increase in the protagonists' socialisation as they are becoming more comfortable with one another.

Speaking of oneself as if from the outside evokes the symbolism of the mirror image. It might be compared, as regards sensory perception, to seeing oneself from the outside, which is an impossible situation people get closest to when they look at their own reflection in the mirror. The imagery of the mirror certainly brings to mind Foucault's heterotopia, of which the mirror is a perfect example as it occupies real physical space while also providing an inversion or reflection of another physical space – the one that the person or object in front of the mirror occupies:

> Starting from this gaze that is, as it were, directed toward me, from the ground of this virtual space that is on the other side of the glass, I come back toward myself; I begin again to direct my eyes toward myself and to reconstitute myself there where I am. (Foucault 1986: 24)

This is the process which the protagonists of *The Enchanted April* go through as they observe themselves from a different point of view, which enables them to reconstitute themselves and eventually – inevitably – return home with a stronger sense of self and purpose. What the presented (rather philosophical) consideration of free indirect discourse implies is that in a narrative it creates a place which has the same effect that heterotopic spaces possess in physical reality. The effect also includes sharing. Since free indirect discourse cannot be attributed solely to a protagonist or the narrator, it is attributed to no-one, as a mysterious voice whose "net effect is an emotional identification with the hero's slide into relaxation" (Mansfield 2015: 71). Using Moretti's term, Charlie Mansfield stresses that the reader is also socialised as the use of free indirect discourse in a

narrative allows for "leaving the consumer with feelings, emotions, and socialisation" (2015: 71) – namely, the reader shares what emotions are felt and expressed by the characters.

To illustrate this effect of sharing (reminiscent of the concept of Christian love) that free indirect discourse as a heterotopic construct possesses, an excerpt looking into Lady Caroline could be of use. In the first passage, the heterotopic setting of the excerpt is established (the garden); in the second, the stress is on freshly discovered emotions; the third is explicit in its use of free indirect discourse:

> There had been wonderful stars the evening before, and she had gone out into the top garden after dinner, [...] and, sitting on the wall at the place where the lilies crowded their ghost heads, she had looked out into the gulf of the night, and it had suddenly seemed as if her life had been a noise all about nothing.
>
> She had been intensely surprised. She knew stars and darkness did produce unusual emotions because, in others, she had seen them being produced, but they had not before done it in herself. A noise all about nothing. Could she be quite well? she had wondered. For a long while past she had been aware that her life was a noise, but it had seemed to be very much about something; [...] suppose it was only a noise about nothing?
>
> *She* had not had a question like that in *her* mind before. It had made *her* feel lonely. *She* wanted to be alone, but not lonely. That was very different; that was something that ached and hurt dreadfully right inside *one*. It was what *one* dreaded most. It was what made *one* go to so many parties; and lately even the parties had seemed once or twice not to be a perfectly certain protection. Was it possible that loneliness had nothing to do with circumstances, but only with the way *one* met them? (Von Arnim 2015: 92–93; emphasis added)

In the final paragraph, readers can see a gradual switch from the personal pronoun and/or possessive adjective which refer to Lady Caroline towards the indefinite *one*. As much as *one* is indefinite, it is perhaps paradoxically also universal; in a similarly paradoxical way, the effect which is achieved is one of both extreme closeness and distancing. It might appear at first glance that the narrative attempts to impart a universal truth using this

pronoun – but this is not the case as readers can immediately see the verbs *ached* and *hurt*, which convey rather personal, individual emotions. As the use of *one* goes on, it becomes even clearer that it refers to Lady Caroline (because of the reference to parties, and more particularly a couple of specific recent occasions). Therefore, at second glance it appears that Lady Caroline has distanced herself from herself only to be able to see herself in a new light. However, this new perspective is also offered to the readers, who are able to participate in Lady Caroline's rediscovery of her self due to the mere fact that she achieves it by observing herself apparently from the outside. The "outside" which is expressed in the form of free indirect discourse thus becomes a space shared with the reader, from which insight into the character(s) is given. This shared space is in addition heterotopic: the view it gives of Lady Caroline is that she is in fact lonely despite being constantly surrounded with people. It reveals that all the noise and intense activity in her life are virtually meaningless. In other words, while being itself imaginary (created by means of narrative representation) and illusory (associated with the almost otherworldly beauty of San Salvatore), this space "exposes every real space, all the sites inside of which human life is partitioned, as still more illusory" (Foucault 1986: 27).[14] It therefore exposes Lady Caroline's aristocratic home and London parties as a mere illusion of meaningful life and thus allows for her transformation during the month she spends at San Salvatore.

5. Conclusion

The analysis of how each of the four protagonists – women tourists – individually goes through a process of transformation and moves towards socialising and sharing, prior to returning home, could go on. The model is the same despite individual differences. It is precisely through these

[14] The scope of the present paper does not allow for further analysis of other illustrative examples of the use of free indirect discourse in the novel. This is left for future research, which might even apply a quantitative method of determining the frequency of free indirect discourse in the novel, and especially of those examples that are relevant to the presented framework of its interpretation. Critical analysis of such a discourse, as well as of the discourse of the novel in general, might also add valuable insights into the language and discourse strategies used both in the narrative and in the direct speech of the four women, which could and should reflect their respective individual transformations.

differences that *The Enchanted April* presents the initial difficulty of coming to terms with otherness – above all, other people and other spaces. The protagonist with whom the narrative opens, Charlotte Wilkins, is the one who immediately accepts otherness and denies any possibility of othering – deepening the differences. Her "visionary gaze" into space and people extends its influence on Rose, Caroline, and Mrs Fisher, with the effect that the four women form a model for a happy fictional tourist of the 20th century. The first step they take is the encounter with the heterotopic destination, which no longer inspires fear and awe but – due to the fact that it is, with the rise of mass tourism, more available even to travelling women (as well as more necessary because of their strict confinement to home) – pleasure and love. The encounter with these heterotopias reveals that God can be found elsewhere, not merely within the boundaries of religious and other conventions imposed by the society in which they live. The availability of travel additionally reveals a new dimension of the theoretical concept of heterotopia, which is in traditional Foucauldian terms perceived as a place of isolation – heterotopia as a tourist destination is collective and shared. These qualities consequently lead to the sharing of emotions (love), as tourists internalise the beauty of the place and start expressing their emotional response to it more freely and widely. Such sharing implies the works of Christian love, and the mediating influence of divinity is indeed present in contact with spatial otherness as well as in interpersonal contacts. Merging heterotopia with another theoretical/philosophical concept, that of Christian love, creates an image of complete otherness that can be accepted, as the narrative of *The Enchanted April* points out, by means of sharing through vacationing. Additional considerations of free indirect discourse in the novel, one of the typical modernist modes of discourse (i.e. speech and thought) representation, indicate that this particular discourse stands as a zone of otherness itself, not quite common to either the narrator or the protagonists and hence marked as a signifier of difference or strangeness within the text, thus facilitating the process of accepting the difference and strangeness of space and people as well. Dealing with a particular aspect of modernity – travel and mobility – *The Enchanted April* shows the possibility of observing oneself from a different point of view, made possible by the experience of a different spatial setting, and consequently also observing, accepting, and loving other people for whatever they are. What might be tentatively offered by this analysis is a new set of compass points, adapted to modern times, perhaps as relevant

in today's society as in the one presented by modernist fiction: instead of God, Husband, Home, Duty – different Space, loving Emotions, and Discourse which allows for sharing and accepting new perspectives.

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