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Fanny Copeland and the geographical imagination

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Fanny Copeland and the geographical imagination.

Abstract

Raised in Scotland, married and divorced in the English south, an adopted Slovene, Fanny Copeland (1872 – 1970) occupied the intersection of a number of complex spatial and temporal conjunctures. A Slavophile, she played a part in the formation of what subsequently became the Kingdom of Yugoslavia that emerged from the First World War. Living in Ljubljana, she facilitated the first 'foreign visit' (in 1932) of the newly formed Le Play Society (a precursor of the Institute of British Geographers) and guided its studies of Solčava (a then 'remote' Alpine valley system) which, led by Dudley Stamp and commended by Halford Mackinder, were subsequently hailed as a model for regional studies elsewhere. Arrested by the Gestapo and interned in Italy during the Second World War, she eventually returned to a socialist Yugoslavia, a celebrated figure. An accomplished musician, linguist, and mountaineer, she became an authority on (and populist for) the Julian Alps and was instrumental in the establishment of the Triglav National Park. Copeland's role as participant observer (and protagonist) enriches our understanding of the particularities of her time and place and illuminates some inter-war relationships within G/geography, inside and outside the academy, suggesting their relative autonomy in the production of geographical knowledge.

Introduction; 1931

An anonymous review in the Scottish Geographical Journal of Fanny Copeland's Beautiful Mountains: In the Yugoslav Alps describes its author as 'a Scotswoman by birth but a Slav by adoption' (Anon 1931: 114). In fact, Copeland (1872 – 1970) was born in Parsonstown (now Birr) in Ireland and an ambivalent identity was just one of a number of features which serve to make her life a window on the intersection of geography, history and personal circumstance. An illustrative example is an incident which took place in the same year as the review. In 1931 Copeland narrowly avoided being killed by shells fired by an Italian artillery unit towards the spot where she was climbing on Slovenia's Mount Triglav. Copeland assumed this was a misfire from some border manoeuvre, however on returning to Bohinj, where her group had been staying, she discovered that the Italian officer in command had been ordered to fire so as to provoke an 'incident' along the disputed border. Unwilling to do so, but not wishing to disobey orders he had:

'...informed his Yugoslav opposite number of the situation, and suggested that the Yugoslav sentries be withdrawn during the odd half-hour when, in deference to orders, he would be sending shells across. The Yugoslav commander agreed, and if we had not happened to pass that way at that time, nobody would have been any the wiser. On the other hand, if a British citizen had been killed when crossing the mountain, by a recognised route, on her lawful

occasion, so to say, the Fascist government would have had its 'incident' – with a vengeance'.
(Copeland 1956a: 254-255)

Geographical and historical conjunctures manifest themselves in individuals in unique ways, but in doing so can provide a valuable perspective on times and places. Politics and climbing intersected with other dimensions of Fanny Copeland's life, not least with music, languages and a vigorous independence. Largely unknown in Scotland (she does not feature in the recent Biographical Dictionary of Scottish Women (Ewan, Innes, and Reynolds 2006)), Copeland was closely involved in the formation of what subsequently became the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (initially the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes) that emerged from the First World War. Settling eventually in Ljubljana, she became engaged with the activities of the Le Play Society (formed also in 1931 and a precursor of the Institute of British Geographers) at an important period in the development of British geography.

Beyond documenting the life of a woman whose 'geographical' contribution has been almost ignored, this paper situates Copeland within a number of current debates. First, responding to Driver and Baigent's (2007), call for attention to those who may not '*conform to a present-day version of what a "geographer" should look like*' (102), it hopes to demonstrate the value of biographical studies in (the history of) geography beyond Johnston's (2005) focus on the labours of individual university academics. Second, it builds on Matless' (1992) refutation of the inter-War period as '*a geographical Dark Age*', its products '*mundane, routine, intellectually arid*' (465), and it explores some links between the development of regional studies, geographical fieldwork and contemporary analyses of geopolitical events of the period. Third it examines the significance of the 'geographical imagination', here used not in Matless' (1992) sense of the generation of generic structuring or organising concepts, but rather in the interpretation of (and commitment to) particular places, peoples and events. Finally it explores, through the activities and writing of its subject in the inter-War period, the significance of such 'extra-mural' work in relation to geography as an academic discipline and to geography as a more diffuse form of knowledge underlying perception, practice and policy.

This paper is structured (loosely chronologically) around the main phases or elements of Copeland's life: — childhood, Yugoslavia, climbing, writing, and War — exploring in each the reciprocal influences of events and places. A concluding section assesses Copeland's contribution to the '*broader field of geographical knowledge and practice*' (Driver *et al.* 2007: 102), and suggests that the relation between geography outside and inside the academy may best be understood in terms of a 'relative autonomy' of geography and Geography between which, in Copeland's case, the Le Play Society provided an important link.

The study draws on a variety of sources, including Copeland's own unpublished autobiography¹ (from which the description of the incident on Triglav, above, is taken) and other archive material lodged at the Royal Observatory, Edinburgh and at the National Library of Scotland, the National Archives (for additional material on Copeland), the Special Collections at Edinburgh University Library (for correspondence with Charles Sarolea); the British Library (for access to several items of Copeland's published work); London University's School of Slavonic and East European Studies (for

¹ Copies of Copeland's hand-written autobiography are lodged in the archives of the National Library of Scotland as well as in the Royal Observatory, Edinburgh.

access to correspondence with Professor Sir R W Seton-Watson), the University of Ljubljana (for Copeland's work records) and the State Archives of Slovenia (for the Potočnik archives) and on other material presently lodged with the Alpine Museum in Mojstrana, with Skala (the Slovene Alpine Society), and at the Alpine Club of London.

Growing up

Fanny Copeland's interest in the Slav nations (and Slovenia in particular), and her passion for climbing seem to have come from her father, Ralph Copeland (1837–1905), the Scottish Astronomer Royal (Dreyer 1906; Gavine 2004). Ralph Copeland's own interest in things Slavic seems to derive in turn from his contacts with astronomers in Russia and elsewhere; and in particular with Julius Payer with whom he climbed. Fanny Copeland's autobiography recounts an incident which occurred in 1878 when she was just six, shortly after the family's move to Dun Echt² where Ralph Copeland had secured a post as astronomer to Lord Crawford. Taking tea with 'polite company' in the drawing room, the conversation had moved to the recent 'rising' in Macedonia and her mother had commented that it was a pity that *'these trouble-makers could not be put down effectively and taught to be quiet. At this point my father suddenly dashed down the paper he was reading and burst out in his most thunderous voice: "I wish you wouldn't talk of things of which you know nothing. These people are Europeans like ourselves, and they wish to live as such". I forget the rest. Father stamped out of the room, and I have no doubt mother apologised for his behaviour. But I was immediately filled with sympathetic curiosity regarding the Macedonians and resolved to find out more about them'*. A subsequent incident occurred during a grammar lesson where her mother was *'explaining the meaning of singular and plural. "You can have one" she said "or you can have several. There is nothing in between". Father looked up from his paper. "Not in our language" he said. "But there is an old language, still spoken in Europe, in which you can say: "I am, we-two be" and after that "we are". Very sensible, I thought, because two's company but three is a crowd, as all young folk can tell you'*. (Copeland 1956a: 31-32)

This precocious reflectiveness was accompanied by influences perhaps more typical for an imaginative six year-old; Fanny Copeland goes on to write about discovering the ballads of the 'Macedonian' Marko Kraljević, who *'carried a dagger in his boot, like a Scot, and had a fairy for his friend and adviser'* (Copeland 1956a: 32) and 'being' him in the woods behind her father's Observatory in Blackford Hill, Edinburgh. Some years later, after a marriage, three children, and divorce, these early influences were to emerge in a strong commitment to Slav autonomy, prompted by sympathy for arriving refugees from Europe in the lead-up to the outbreak of War in 1914.

Copeland's linguist abilities and her musical interests seem attributable to her mother, Anna Teodora Berta (nee Benfey) who came from a family of linguists and met Ralph Copeland shortly after the death of his first wife, in her native Germany. On her father's appointment to the post of Astronomer Royal for Scotland, the family moved to Edinburgh, and Fanny Copeland was educated privately first in London and then Berlin where she studied languages and music. Returning to Edinburgh, Fanny Copeland attended Fettes Music Academy where she met her future husband, the Fettes school master and an opera composer John Edmund Barkworth, a Yorkshireman. Fourteen years her senior, Barkworth supposedly proposed after Copeland had had an argument with her

² Dunecht; the formulation here is Copeland's.

mother. They were married (Fanny was aged 22) in Edinburgh on 15 February 1894 (Marriages 1894) and had three children; a son, Ralph, and twins Lily and Harold. The marriage was not a happy one. Fanny seems to have been unfulfilled in the relationship and she found solace, initially, in music. With her sister Agnes (a violinist) she gave occasional public performances in London. The first such was in 1898, just four years after her marriage; Fanny Copeland's profession is given in the 1901 Census as 'singer'.



Figure i. The Copeland family outside Dun Echt Observatory, Aberdeenshire, 1882. Fanny Copeland is on the left (courtesy Royal Observatory Edinburgh).

In 1907, Fanny moved to London, regarding this as a resumption of her life from the 'interruption' of marriage. In July 1912, Barkworth petitioned for divorce on grounds of desertion; Copeland defended the petition herself. The divorce itself caused something of a stir with both The Times and the Daily Mirror making much of Lord Dewar's assessment that Copeland had '*filled her mind with the writings of Ibsen*' and had '*a distaste for domestic life*' (Divorce and the Reading of Ibsen 1912). Copeland herself admitted in court that she had '*from time to time, when tired or ill, tried her husband by outspoken remarks that a woman and a wife seldom allowed herself the liberty of making, even to her husband*' (Wife Who Read Ibsen 1912). There was some public sympathy for Copeland herself – in examination, Barkworth said '*that he wrote a letter to his wife asking her to leave off biting her nails. When expostulating with his wife he always represented the fault*

pictorially.' (Divorce and the Reading of Ibsen 1912). The Mirror made much of the fact that he 'had tried to eliminate defects and mould respondent into the perfect wife he desired to see her. Perhaps it was not surprising that he had failed.' (Husband's Perfection Ideal - Decree Granted in Scottish Suit Against Wife Who Fleed 1912). Dewar's judgement found in favour of Barkworth, granting him custody of the children.



Figure ii. Fanny Copeland (left to right) as a young woman in Edinburgh, as a singer in London (courtesy Royal Observatory Edinburgh, dates unknown) and from her work records, 1921 and 1933 (courtesy, University of Ljubljana).

Following the divorce, music - initially a source of comfort and independence - seems to have become a means of survival; Copeland had little other income. She collaborated with Frederick Delius in the adaptation of Norwegian songs for performance (Delius and Copeland 1930) and adapted the works of other composers, such as J S Bach (Bach 1943) and Rimsky-Korsakov (Rimskii - Korsakov and Andreevich 1935). Public recitals and performances began soon after her separation, and continued for several years after her divorce. Early reviews were favourable (Two Song Recitals 1912) but later ones less so; a 1914 review declared that if her singing 'had not been so funny, it would have amounted to a libel' (Reviews 1914).

Yugoslavia

By this time, however, Fanny Copeland had found her life's vocation and she was in due course to discover the land in which she would spend most of the rest of her life. A meeting with Dr (later, Sir) R W Seton-Watson, the Director of the School of Slavonic and East European Studies at London University, led her to place her services at the disposal of the Serbian Relief Fund, which he had orchestrated. In the course of this work, at a visit to the Meštrović exhibition in the Albert Hall (Ivan Meštrović moved to London at the outbreak of War – the exhibition referred to is presumably the 6th Allied Artists' Association, London Salon, Royal Albert Hall, July 1913) the sculptor himself had asked her to explain the works to the public. Copeland spoke extempore on the Battle of Kosovo, (June 28, 1389) and on the suffering of the Slav peoples. Her care to avoid partisanship or narrow nationalism and her sympathy for pan-Slavism led her to be asked by Bogumil Vošnjak of the Yugoslav Committee to translate his A Bulwark Against Germany (1917) a work which Copeland describes 'the most important work of my life' (Copeland 1956a: 169). In fact, by the time that the

English text (subtitled The fight of the Slovenes, the western branch of the Yugoslavs, for national existence) was published, Copeland had already translated others. One of the first was Srđan Tucić's The Slav Nations, published by Hodder & Stoughton in the Daily Telegraph's War Books series (Tucić 1915). This was followed by further translations, most significantly, in 1916, a report by Archibald Reiss on atrocities committed by the Austro-Hungarian Army during the first invasion of Serbia, submitted to the Serbian Government and subsequently published as a book (Reiss 1916).

From 1915-1919 Fanny Copeland was employed as Secretary to Dr Ante Trumbić, the President of the Yugoslav Committee. The Committee (formed by exiles from Austro-Hungary, and based in London and Paris) was the main campaigning body for the unification of South Slavs in a single state. Much of its work was directed towards the territorial integration of lands held variously by Austria and Hungary, and especially against expansionist territorial claims of Italy. A particular focus of the Yugoslav Committee was the production of publications and organisation of public meetings promoting South Slav, Croatian and Slovene rights to western Slovenia and the eastern Adriatic. Copeland's work for the Committee included production of the English language version of the Jugoslav Bulletin and she also worked for the Serbian Press Bureau as translator (Potočnik 1970). During this period she also gave lectures, some of which appeared in pamphlet form (Copeland 1917). Other publications during this period include a translation of Tucić's The Liberators – described by Seton-Watson in his introduction as *'above all else a fiery indictment against the mortal sin of civil war... It is upon the consciousness that fraternal concord must in the long run triumph over the passionate hates and misunderstandings of a cruel present, that our hopes for the future of the Balkans must centre'* (Tucić 1918: x).

In 1918, Copeland travelled with the Yugoslav Committee to the Paris Peace Conference of 1919-20, working for the delegation of Serbs Croats and Slovenes (SHS). Here Fanny Copeland struck a friendship with Dr Drago Marušič who subsequently, in 1930, became Ban (Civil governor) of the Dravska banovina ('province of the river Drava' - in effect, then, Slovenia – see fig v) within the Kingdom of Yugoslavia³.

In June 1921, Fanny Copeland accepted a post in Belgrade as English tutor and translator to a prominent business family (Copeland 1921b). This fell through; however through the good offices of Marušič, and Dr Leonid Pitanmić, Fanny Copeland was offered a post as Lector in English at the University of Ljubljana. She was appointed on 2 November 1921 and she retained the position formally until June 1947 (Copeland 1921a)([Work Records of F S Copeland] 1921-1947). By 1923, Copeland had acquired a typewriter as well as dedicated premises (and a growing collection of books) for her English school and library. She had also travelled extensively in what by then had become known as Yugoslavia; her letters to Charles Sarolea and to Seton Watson contain observations on place, ethnicity and politics.

Copeland's observations are a good deal more perceptive than those of some other Balkan travellers of the period – including Rebecca West (1943a, 1943b) - possibly because they were systematic; *'in order to write up the country effectively'* Copeland wrote *'I must see everything for myself'* (1956a: 192). Unlike West, Copeland was not 'a traveller', neither did she write primarily for an audience 'back home'. Yugoslavia became her home, and perhaps because of this her writings are free from

³ Copeland herself uses both 'Yugoslavia' and 'Yugoslavia' and both spellings are used interchangeably here, depending on context.

the applied exoticism that West – and others – consciously or unconsciously adopted in their work. Finally, Copeland was not a woman of independent means – she had to earn her living; writing was part of her work and life.

One of the results of 'seeing everything' is some perceptive – and occasionally amusing - anecdotes, relating to the geopolitical events of the time. Some observations are, with hindsight, prophetic. In 1923 during a visit to Dalmatia Copeland '*...spent a few very interesting days at Benkovac, which is an entirely Serb settlement*' making clear that ethnic differences are more than a quaint tourist attraction, but a source of real difficulties which are the consequences of deliberate policies of settlement pursued by successive imperial administrations; '*How exceedingly complicated everything has been left here by the defunct A-H. [Austro-Hungarian] Government. The more I see of it, the more it reminds me of a horrid character in a short story that I read and have forgotten long ago. I just know that he still grinned in his coffin for joy that he had left a will which would provide for discord and misery among his descendants for generations.*' She concludes (prophetically in the light of subsequent events) that '*It would take a very strong Government indeed to venture to make the administration equitable for once and for all.*' (Copeland 1923b). Benkovac (in Dalmatia) is adjacent to the Krajina region of Croatia (the scene of massacres, mainly of Serbs by Ustaše, during the Second World War). The region's declaration of independence in 1991 (following the secession of Slovenia) precipitated the war which ended in the break-up of Yugoslavia.

Both Seton-Watson and Copeland regarded nationalism as a scourge. Copeland herself seems to have been acutely aware of the relationship between nationalism, tradition and 'heritage'. In a March 1925 letter to Seton-Watson she discusses Sokolski Slet, the celebration of the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand in Sarajevo on Vidovdan (1914) an event commonly supposed to have triggered the First World War;

'not at all as an attempt to glorify crime and assassination, but on the contrary – owing to the lapse of time and many accompanying circumstances, this particular deed of violence has already become legendary over here... it is being consciously and unconsciously removed from the plane of hard facts to that of the semi-symbolic facts of the national ballads and everybody who can claim some sort of connection with it makes the most of it.' (Copeland 1925).

Her autobiography recounts another visit, this time to Serbia and Montenegro, in which '*[a]t one of those townships of the south, on my way home, I saw the great Kosta Pećanac with a squad of his Merry Men (Četniki) parading as if in anticipation of war. He had rendered yeoman service to his country during the First Great War, fighting Austrians in the wilds of Montenegro.*' She adds '*I was downright sorry to read that in the Second World War he took the wrong turning and came to a bad end...*' (Copeland 1956a: 235). The Serbian dominated Chetniks received the support of Allied forces until 1943 when this support was switched to the Partisan resistance led by the Yugoslav Communist Party. Pećanac, one of their commanders, was assassinated in 1944 by rivals loyal to Draža Mihailović.

Climbing and writing

Although Copeland travelled widely in Yugoslavia, Slovenia, and specifically its Alps, was her first and enduring love. Shortly after her arrival in Ljubljana in 1921 she joined the Turistični Klub Skala which

had been formed the same year. Skala quickly grew to become the most important of the Slovene (and possibly of all the Yugoslav) alpine societies.

Climbing was a major part of Fanny Copeland's life. In addition to Skala, Copeland was also a member of the Scottish Mountaineering Club, the Ski Club of Great Britain, and the British Alpine Club. My Beautiful Mountains – no technical guide, but rather a celebration of some of her most memorable expeditions – is perhaps her best known work. Its opening finds her alone, in Mojstrana, on New Year's Eve, 1925.

'It was really the girl who began it. She betted them a stick of chocolate – make and size unspecified – that they dare not go up into the high Alps to spend New Year's Night in the topmost Alpine Hostel under the shoulder of Triglav's crest on the Kredaritsa... And being men and members of the Skala (i.e. Rock) Club, they accepted the challenge.' (Copeland 1931a: 21).

Reluctant to return to her hotel, Copeland persuaded the men to allow her to accompany them. Departing for the mountain in the early evening, the party stopped overnight in a tiny log hut, lit a fire and slept, then moved off before day-break, to climb. They returned, 48 hours after their departure, to the Mojstrana Hotel (Copeland 1931a).

In 1923, in what must have been one of her first ascents of Mount Triglav, Fanny Copeland witnessed a symbolic Slovene victory over Italian claims to the mountain:

'We had quite an exciting weekend. It was rumoured that the Italians intended to hoist their flag on the Aljaz tower on the summit of the Triglav. Without exception, the whole borderside was 'out'. I was told that when a party of Orjunaši passed through Jesenice, on their way to the Triglav, they were cheered regardless of party! Our informant was a school-girl who had no particular bias. The deed was to be done by a party of tourists, with a good leaven of Fascisti, and carabinieri and soldiers were to hover nearby in case of difficulty. Well, by the time the Italians arrive in sight of the summit, there were about sixty Yugoslavs there already, discharging fire-arms into the air, just to show they had them. And further down were gendarmes and soldiers in case there was a breach of the peace. And the Yugoslav flag was flying from the tower... Nobody said any more about the Italian flag. The Italians in civilian clothes asked for, and were given, permission to come across the frontier to visit the summit, and the carabinieri and soldiers had to stop on their side. And then the Italians went 'back again' like Sandy, and the Yugoslavs remained on top. The soldiers had their picnic for nothing. I think it was an excellent kind of battle, and I wish the principle could be applied on a bigger scale. It would prevent an awful lot of trouble.' (Copeland 1923a).

By the end of the 1920s, Fanny Copeland's reputation had spread, beyond the alpinist community, and indeed, beyond Slovenia. She received, either on her own behalf or on behalf of others, a wide range of visitors to Slovenia from UK and other countries. Many visitors were mountaineers, who sought Fanny Copeland out as a renowned Alpinist. One such was Sandy Wedderburn, whom she had known as a young Scottish climber, *'one of those champions of liberty who served during the Spanish Civil War in the Republican forces, survived, fell in Italy in WW2'* (Copeland 1956a: 239). Other guests would be 'official' visitors to whom Fanny Copeland would be allocated as an English speaking guide, and 'representative', although it seems that it was sometimes unclear who she was representing - the Slovene authorities, or external agencies in Slovenia. Eminent visitors included Sir Julian Huxley, and she was occasionally asked to represent interests other than Britain's; the

American Consul in Zagreb described her as *'The One and Only Unofficial British-America Vice Consul in the World'* (Potočnik 1970: 210).

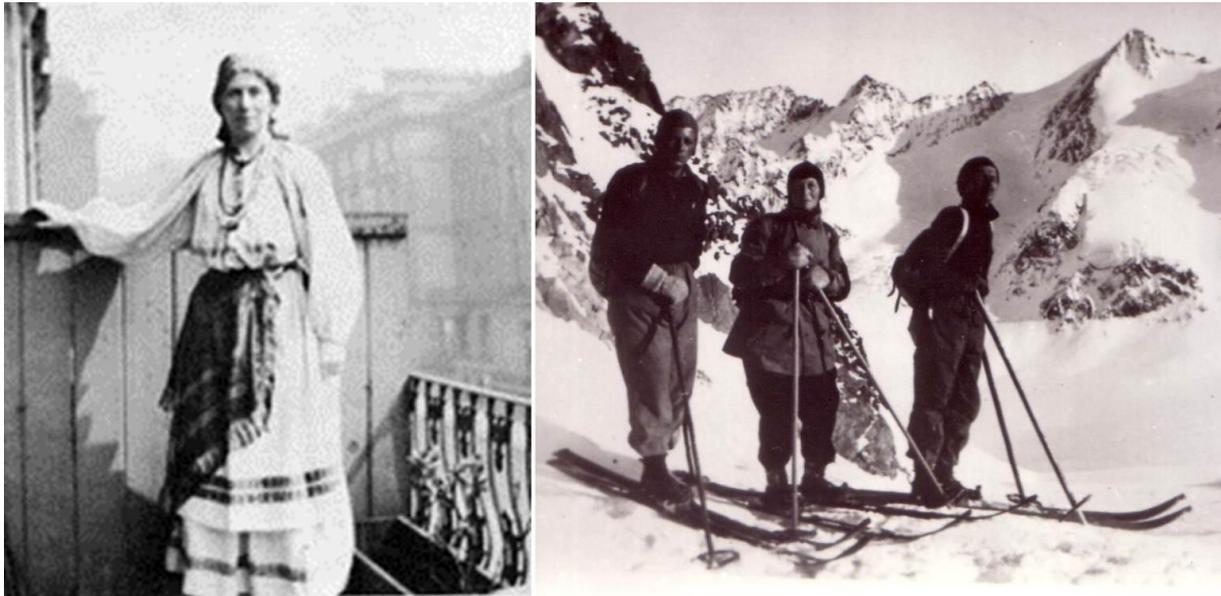


Figure iii. Fanny Copeland in Serbian national dress (left, courtesy Royal Observatory Edinburgh) and skiing (courtesy Alpine Museum of Mojstrana), both dates unknown.

Much of her public work was undertaken, with the *'hope of attracting to Slovenia tourists of all types, from summer visitors in search of little-known beautiful and inexpensive Alpine resorts to Alpinists in search of accessible mountain ranges not yet wholly exploited or explored'* (Copeland 1956a: 192). During the Inter-War period, Copeland wrote and published extensively. The Beautiful Mountains (of Slovenia) was published, initially with her own money in Chelmsford, England, and subsequently by the Yugoslav Bureau, in Split. In addition to Beautiful Mountains, she contributed a steady stream of articles to mountaineering journals, and with a close friend, Mira Marko Debelakova, she published in Ljubljana in 1931 and 1936 a tourist guide in English to the mountains A short guide to the Slovene Alps (Copeland and Debelakova 1936).

A parallel interest was folk lore, in particular in relation to landscape. Copeland translated Slovene, Croatian and Serbian folk stories for publication in English, including Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić's Croatian Tales of Long Ago [Priče iz davnine] (Brlić-Mazuranić 1924) and Vladimir Levstik's An Adder's Nest [Gadje Gnezdo] (Levstik 1931), interpreted them in academic journals (David 1932; Copeland 1934) and produced herself a significant paper on Slovene folklore (Copeland 1931b).

Copeland also wrote or translated explicitly polemical works, including Lavo Čermelj's Life-and-Death Struggle of a National Minority. The Yugoslavs in Italy (Čermelj 1936, 1945). In parallel with her alpinism and interest in folk culture and in Slav history and politics, she continued to pursue her own musical interests, producing the libretto for an opera by Méhul, Joseph and his brethren (Méhul 1928) of which a performance was broadcast by the British Broadcasting Corporation twice in March 1928 (Programmes 1928a; Programmes 1928b). Some of Copeland's earlier translations are still performed and the earlier collaboration with Delius, Twilight Fancies, is available on CD (Delius 1930). Towards the end of the period, in 1939, Copeland herself wrote an opera 'with imaginary

music', The Selkies; A Fantasy of the North (Copeland 1939). She later in her autobiography described this, quite inaccurately, as the only piece of original work she had ever produced. Characters include Sir Alex and Lady Ingold and their family, Ian MacLeod ('a trusty Highlander'), 'The Seal Woman', Hilda (a 'Woman and Valkyrie'), Helgi, her lover and Bjorn (who is in love with Hilda), together with the Captain, Officers and Crew of the Avalon, and its passengers (Copeland 1939).

In 1928, Fanny Copeland was awarded the Order of Sveti [Saint] Sava – the highest honour available to a foreign national - for her contribution to the establishment of Yugoslavia and her continued dedicated support for it. Ten years later, Fanny Copeland was honoured with its British equivalent an Order of the British Empire (OBE) (Birthday Honours 1938) in recognition of her work in Slovenia and Yugoslavia.

Regional studies; Solčavsko. Logarska and the Le Play Society

In 1931, the year of publication of Beautiful Mountains (Copeland 1931a) (and of the incident on Triglav with which this paper opens), Copeland became engaged with geographical developments in a somewhat more formal way. Two years previously, in 1929, she had brought George Ingle Finch, to lecture in Ljubljana and Maribor (Potočnik 1970). A well-known mountaineer, Finch was also an activist within the London Le Play House Organisation (LPHO). The LPHO was a key organisation in the development of inter-war British geography. It had been established in 1920 by a curious mix of geographers, sociologists and educationalists to take forward 'regional studies' using an interdisciplinary analytical framework based on the trilogy of 'place' (the natural environment, physical and biological), 'work' (the economy, and daily life of its people) and 'folk' (their community and social organisation). This approach was itself derived from the work of the 19th century French sociologist Frederick Le Play (who emphasised 'family' as the basic unit of society, rather than 'folk'). The LPHO provided a home for several bodies, including student groups and a 'foreign fieldwork committee' whose emphasis on 'human ecology' during the late 1920s became increasingly at variance from that of the Sociological Society (another body within the LPHO which was championing the 'professional' disciplinary practice of academic sociology). The two bodies split in 1931, with the Sociological Society recasting itself as a professional institute - the Institute of Sociology - and the foreign fieldwork committee becoming the nucleus of a separate organisation, the Le Play Society (LPS), under its first President, Patrick Geddes. Geddes died in 1932, shortly after the formation of the LPS and was succeeded as its President by Halford Mackinder.

The LPS (a precursor of the Institute of British Geographers) became a major influence on the development of geographical fieldwork between the two World Wars. Its first 'foreign study' (in August 1932) led by Dudley Stamp was of Solčavsko, a then 'remote' Alpine valley system on the Slovene - Austrian border. Commended by Halford Mackinder (in Stamp 1933) it was hailed as a model for regional studies elsewhere. Copeland's role as facilitator was again key. Her reputation as a champion of Yugoslavia (at a time of growing interest in the Balkans) and as a climber had led to invitations to lecture in the UK. In 1930 she gave a talk to Bedford High School (a girls' school in southern England) whose headmistress, Dr K M Westaway, subsequently became an active member of the LPS. Arising from this, the LPHO's 'Students Excursion' the following summer came to Slovenia, staying in Bohinj (Copeland 1932).



Photo : H. J. Howard.
 FIG. 4.—THE ASCENT FROM THE LOGAR VALLEY TO THE KAMNISO SEDLO—IN THE SHADE EVEN



SLOVENE STUDIES



PUBLISHED BY
 THE LE PLAY SOCIETY
 1933

Figure iv. Le Play group (with Fanny Copeland leading) ascending Kamniško Sedlo (Kamnik Saddle) 1932 (left) and (right), and frontispiece of Slovene Studies (from Stamp, 1933).

That the 1932 LPS study should have been taken to Solčavsko however seems to be due to another coincidence. In the spring of 1931, Copeland was in a café in Ljubljana where she was sought out by Tom Longstaff. Copeland took Longstaff (whom, she discovered, was a cousin by marriage) to Logarska dolina - her favourite climbing area - where they climbed Mrzla Gora (Cold Peak). A prominent mountaineer who had climbed in the Julian Alps as well as in the Himalayas, Longstaff had been Chief Medical Officer and also the Naturalist on the 1922 British Everest expedition. Longstaff became President of London's Alpine Club and, together with Dr Julius Kugy, did more than anyone else to introduce Triglav and the Julian Alps to the international community. *'By comparison the Dolomites are obvious'* he wrote in a letter recounted in How to Climb Triglav; *'Triglav reigns over a dream world, sundered from time, full of unbelievable hidden nooks, of unsuspected passages, of sudden visions of cliffs which cannot be real. Surely, there is no other mountain land like this'*. Longstaff's expedition and mountain experience are relayed in 50 volumes of diaries held in London at the Royal Geographical Society.

Copeland, together with her assistant Dr Boris Kermavner and Pavel Kunaver then made arrangements on the Slovene side for the LPS's 1932 visit (Kunaver 1972). This comprised a mixed group of some 50 university students, staff and teachers: one group went to the Solčava region, including Logarska dolina and Velika Planina, another group visited Bled, Bohinj and Kamna Gorica. In addition to making the physical arrangements for the visit, Copeland, together with Michel Stoyović, representative of the South Slav Herald, met the group on their arrival in Bled on August

3rd. Margaret E Tatton, Director of the LPS and the UK-side organiser of the visit declared that 'Our hope is to establish a branch of the Le Play Society in Yugoslavia, in order that intellectual exchanges might be established between the two countries: this will also enable more closer cooperation among intellectuals of all nations' (British Society's Visit to Yugoslavia. Messages to the "Herald" 1932; Copeland 1932). There is no evidence that Tatton's hopes were realised, however collaboration with the Society continued beyond the 1932 visit. Copeland's English tourist guide A short guide to the Slovene Alps (Copeland et al. 1936) was published for use 'with the outline maps published by the Le Play Society'.

Fanny Copeland remained with the Solčavsko group throughout their stay in Logarska dolina (Pismo iz Logarske doline 1932). The academic leader of the Solčavsko group was Dr L D Stamp, then Reader in Economic Geography at the London School of Economics who subsequently, as Professor Sir Dudley Stamp, was to have a significant influence on the development of geography. Stamp's Land Utilisation Survey of Britain in the 1930s depended heavily on volunteer, amateur input; his contribution to the Scott committee on land utilisation in rural areas (1941–2), and as chief adviser on rural land utilisation in the Ministry of Agriculture (1942-55) underpinned much rural (including protected area) policy and a series of 'popular' texts, notably Britain's Structure and Scenery (1946) were widely read. A report of the fieldwork in Solčavsko, edited by Stamp, was published by the LPS under the title 'Slovene Studies' in 1933 (Stamp 1933).



FIG. 2.—THE MODERN DIVISION OF THE UNITED YUGOSLAVIA INTO PROVINCES OR *banovinas*, DESIGNED TO WELD THE COUNTRY MORE CLOSELY TOGETHER BY ELIMINATING THE OLD 'COUNTRIES.'

Figure v. Yugoslavia *Banovinas* in 1931 (figure taken from Slovene Studies) with (inset) modern borders of Slovenia and Croatia with, labelled, Triglav (1), Logarska dolina (2) and Benkovac (3).

In addition to accounts in the Slovene popular media the 1932 visit was also reported in the UK. One of the Le Play group's members included several articles in the Huddersfield Daily Examiner (of

which he was proprietor) describing Copeland as a *'vivacious and temperamental little lady'* (Woodhead 1932). The Solčavsko work in turn stimulated Copeland's own activities and she subsequently translated or adapted numerous articles for publication in Planinski Vestnik and other Slovene journals; these included Slovenia and its Problems by K C Edwards, then a young lecturer at University College Nottingham and Secretary of the Le Play Society's student body (subsequently, as Professor of Geography at Nottingham University to become Chair of the Society) (1932) and Slovenia by A E Moodie (then a lecturer and later Professor of Geography at London University's Birkbeck College) (Moodie 1943b, 1943a); both Moodie and Edwards had been participants in the 1931 LPHO students' expedition.

The 1932 visit to Slovenia was followed by others elsewhere. A valedictory note on the Society, written in the year of its eventual demise states that *'in the early thirties the Society would have as many as ten or twelve study Groups working in various countries at the same time'* (Tatton n.d. (1960)). Three-quarters of a century after the 1932 study, in 2004, the area was surveyed again by a joint postgraduate group from Birkbeck College and the University of Ljubljana Biotechnical Faculty (Anko *et al.* 2007). It was this study that gave rise to the present interest of the authors of this article in the life and work of Fanny Copeland. For our work in the Solčavsko area, the initial value of the 1932 study was as a source of data against which later changes in land use, ecology and society could be compared. Its significance as a window on inter-War geography was an unexpected bonus.

'Extra-mural' impacts? Geographical fieldwork and protected areas

The 1932 Solčavsko visit was in some ways the high point of the Le Play Society, formed only the previous year. Halford Mackinder in his Foreword to Slovene Studies described it as *'an honestly made brick for the palace we are rearing.'* (in Stamp 1933) The LPS subsequently held up the 1932 visit as a model of how regional studies should be carried out. The Society's own (1935) guide to regional fieldwork describes it as *'An excellent example of regional survey by a Le Play Society group doing field work as a summer vacation course abroad'*. (Barnard 1935: 114, 1948) Thirty years later (after the LPS had been wound up) the visit was described by Beaver (1962: 236) as *'one of the best examples'* of the LPS's work. Beaver did much within the Joint School of Geography at King's College and LSE during the 1930s to promote fieldwork and his own interest in the Balkans were fostered by his leadership of several LPS 'expeditions' (Phillips and Turton 1975).

During the life of the LPS however, the rigour of its fieldwork declined, as did its status within the Geographical establishment. Withers (2010) asserts the work of the LPS at any point to have been somewhat distant from what would have been considered 'scientific geography'. Papers on 'geographical' fieldwork in section E meetings of the British Association had grown steadily during the early 1900s, displacing those on exploration which hardly featured by the 1920s (79).

Throughout this period there was a growing tension not merely between 'professionals' and 'amateurs' but also *'between leading proponents of geography's still uncertain disciplinary status and celebrity practitioners whose renditions of exploration were rejected by the discipline's proponents, yet eagerly anticipated and raucously received by public audiences.'* Already by the 1920s *'There was a strong sense... that geography was the 'ladies' section'* (Withers 2010: 93).

The Second World War marked the beginning of the end for the Le Play Society. The growing professionalization of economic and social planning, born during the depression, consolidated during

the war, and underpinning the 'new Britain' of the post-War settlement, contrasted strongly with the amateurism of the Le Play approach whose adherents were ageing, their activities increasingly seen as the self indulgence of those who used 'educational' trips to give a purpose to their leisure activities and a meaning to their retirement. The catholic 'anthropological' geography of the LPS, exemplified by its admission of folk-lore (see e.g. Richards, Stamp, and Fleure 1931), sat uncomfortably with the diverging foci of physical and human geography.

In his final address to the Society's concluding conference in 1960, the then President, Sir John Russell aged 86, complained that arrangements for its last study tour (to Belgrade and Dubrovnik) the previous year - planned as a '*wonderful holiday*'. (quoted in Merricks 1996: 188) had driven the organisers '*almost to distraction... Several lectures had been promised us by Yugoslav experts known to us: we arrived but they did not...*'. (Russell 1960: 12); he referred to the 1932 study of Logarska as the high point of the Society's development. Equally important was the fact that the Le Play Society had already achieved many of its earlier goals. No longer were 'regional studies' a pioneering activity; they had already become professionalized, and absorbed into the fabric of post-war planning, in part at least as a consequence of the achievements of the Society's leaders. In addition, much of the approach they had pioneered had become embedded in the curriculum of school and higher education. The junior university lecturers who had played such a prominent role in the Society's early visits had, by the end of the 1930s begun to integrate field studies into their own teaching. Already, towards the end of the 1930s, University geography departments began to organise their own fieldwork expeditions for undergraduates. The philosophy on which they were based had already become assimilated into the educational curriculum at both school and university level, and fieldwork had become an integral part of geography teaching – not just in Britain but elsewhere in Europe. The need for a body such as the LPS of the 1930s had largely disappeared.

In 1947, well before the Society's eventual closure, its 'student group' had become a separate body (Turnock 1991), recasting itself as the 'Geographical Field Group' (GFG) with K C Edwards, by now Head of Nottingham University's Geography Department as its President. The GFG as a body of 'professional geographers' regarded the LPS as elderly amateurs and too 'sociological'; the emphasis on civics and the Le Play method was dropped (Merchant 2000). Between 1947 and 1960 it organised some 35 'field parties' (2000: 136, 145). Several of these were to eastern Europe, including three to Yugoslavia (the results of all of which were published) - in 1952 to Kraljevica, Primorje (Moodie 1952); in 1953 to Soča Valley (Moodie and Geographical Field Group 1955) and in 1960 to Istria (Fuller and Geographical Field Group 1960). In addition, a series of field studies in Yugoslavia by the Brathay Exploration Trust (Brathay Exploration Group 1954, 1960, 1970, 1971) culminated in a re-run of the Solčavsko study in 1971-2 (Boardman 1972, 1973). Copeland was involved only peripherally with the later visits, but Pavel Kunaver assisted actively in several of them. At least one now senior staff member of the Slovene nature conservation agency acted as an assistant/ translator on the 1971-2 Solčavsko study when a student.

It is tempting to speculate on the influences of Copeland's work and her association with the Le Play Society's activities, on subsequent developments policy, both in Slovenia and elsewhere. Linehan (2003) has discussed the significant impact of (professionally conducted) regional surveys on inter-War policy in the UK. By contrast the direct policy implications of the LPS' 'foreign fieldwork' were undoubtedly marginal. However the 1932 visit does seem to have had some influence on tourism and protected area policy – somewhat removed from the politics of pan-Slavism which occupied so much of Copeland's earlier work.

Slovene networks in mountaineering, nature protection, and land use policy represent overlapping epistemic and policy communities, which at a fairly early stage attempted to establish national parks, nature reserves and other protected areas. Fanny Copeland was herself well aware that tourism, which she did so much to encourage, could destroy the very resource that the tourists came to enjoy. An October 1923 letter to Seton-Watson refers to an earlier walk in Triglav:

'It is an interesting walk, but as an expedition it is badly spoilt by the path having been made fool-proof. Result, every holiday is made hideous by hundreds of trippers, and the average person has to wait for a holiday to go up' (She adds: *Next year I hope to 'do' most of the usual mountains, and I will also try to write a chatty sort of comment upon them, and let you see the result, in case your idea of a Guide Through Jugoslavia materialises'*) (Copeland 1923b).

The first attempt to establish a protected area in Slovenia appears to have been that of Albin Belar who in 1918 proposed a 'nature protection park' over Komarca (Vidrih 2002). In the 1920s calls to protect both the natural environment and cultural monuments gathered momentum. Particularly influential were the activities of Slovensko planinsko društvo (SPD, the Slovene Alpine Club) and Muzejsko društvo Slovenije (MDS, the Museum Society of Slovenia). These resulted in the early 1920s in the first systematic legislation on endangered plants and animals, and on caves in the Limestone karst (legislation in Austrian times had afforded protection to the Postojna caves) (Singleton 1987). In 1924 protection was extended to the Valley of the Seven Lakes, then known as Alpski varstveni park (Alpine protected park), later to become the core area of Triglav National Park (Singleton 1985)

Some at least of this experience seems likely to have influenced members of the Le Play Society, not least those who, like Stamp, were to contribute significantly to the development of UK policy in this area. It seems unlikely that Patrick Geddes himself had any significant impact in this respect but his son, Arthur Geddes, who was a personal friend of Copeland's, certainly did. In his capacity of Planning Officer of the Department of Health for Scotland, the body under whose auspices the key reports recommending policy for Scottish National Parks (Scottish National Parks Committee 1945; Scottish National Parks Committee and Scottish Wild Life Conservation Committee 1947) and nature reserves (Scottish National Parks Committee 1949), Arthur Geddes was closely associated with the development of policy in this area (and took a personal role in the surveys conducted for potential nature reserves). In contrast to those of its parallel body for England and Wales, the recommendations of the Scottish National Parks Committee were not implemented for more than half a century; the first National Park for Scotland was eventually established in 2002. As far as Slovene protected areas are concerned, Singleton (1988) speculates that the support for these proposals may owe something at least to Copeland's friendship with Marušič — a prominent member of the SPD who, soon after Copeland's arrival in Slovenia, became a vigorous campaigner for the idea of protected areas in the Julian Alps. Logarska dolina was one of the areas proposed. Logarska is today seen well beyond Slovenia as a model for a new type of community-run protected landscapes and, with the village of Solčava, is set to become the nucleus of a future Regional Park in the Kamniško-Savinjske Alps.

War and return to Socialist Yugoslavia

In her autobiography, Fanny Copeland recalls events leading to the outbreak of War:

'It was in May, 1938. I was enjoying my after diner cup of coffee at the café 'Emona' and listening to the small band of Czech musicians, who had just delighted me with an excellent rendering of Smetana's 'Vltava'. At the table next to mine sat a mountaineering friend reading 'The Times'. Suddenly he started up, flung the paper over to me and hissed something about "your people" having "acted after their kind". "What have we done now?" I cried. "Betrayed Czechoslovakia". "I don't believe it". "Look there! Read this – and a letter from Professor Sarolea." took the paper and read. It was as if all the lights had gone out. The band had stopped playing' (Copeland 1956a: 267-268).

Horrified by the turn of events, and at the request of the Yugoslav government, Fanny Copeland visited London:

'I arrived in London in the wake of Neville Chamberlain returning from Munich and waving his 'Peace in Our Time' message before a frantically delighted British public. I felt like Cassandra when she saw the wooden horse drawn into the city of Troy. Without delay I called at the House of Commons and asked to see Miss (now Dame) Irene Ward. On a matter of great importance. She was greatly troubled by my prediction that before twelve months had passed we should be fighting with our backs to the wall and without the help Czechoslovakia could have given us. Moreover, our reputation on the Continent had suffered considerably. Miss Ward agreed that I had better give my message to L S Amery and he undertook to inform no less a personage than Winston Churchill. I bade them good-bye, feeling that I had done my best for both Britain and Yugoslavia' (Copeland 1956a: 289).

Fanny Copeland returned to Ljubljana. In April 1941 Yugoslavia was invaded and occupied and the Ljubljana district was annexed to Italy. As a foreign national of a hostile state, Copeland was arrested by the Gestapo (after having been betrayed by an acquaintance) and imprisoned for some days until Italian forces took over the occupation. In August 1942 she was removed from Slovenia and she was interned, first in Trieste, then Arezzo and finally in Bibbiena (near Florence) where she remained for the duration of the War; her work records in the Ljubljana State Archives contain a copy of the decree ([Work Records of F S Copeland] 1921-1947).

During her internment (in which she received parcels of mountain flowers from Velika Planina from a friend in Stahovice) Copeland followed events in her adopted country as best she could. She was dismayed by Britain's initial support for the Serb Royalist forces rather than for the partisans. *'The trouble was that the anti-fascists were also anti-clerical, and both British and Americans tend to assume that a clerical party is as ipso deserving of their sympathy. Have they never read about the Inquisition?' (Copeland 1956a: 333).* In Bibbiena (where she had been accommodated at the Albergo Bei) she was invited to listen to a BBC report of the war on the Yugoslav Alpine front.

'I listened and held my breath in disgust. Not a word of the magnificent stand on the Drava sector. Not a word of the German reverses in the Karavanke – and not a word of the Croat treachery. I shut off the radio. "I prefer my fiction in novels", said I, - and have never listened to the BBC since then – at least not for news' (Copeland 1956a: 288-289).

Following the end of the War, Fanny Copeland returned to Britain and attempted to find work and a home. By now in her seventies, she remained intellectually as well as physically active. Once again, reports of her activity can be found in The Times; the issue of Wednesday, Oct 15, 1947; includes an

announcement of her lecture on 'Slovene Folk tales' 5.30 pm at the Folk-Lore Society at 21 Bedford Square, London' (Today's Arrangements 1947). After her brother's death the financial burdens at least were lifted when she inherited his estate. Now having secure funds, Fanny Copeland decided to return to Slovenia.

On April 15, 1953 at the age of 80, Fanny Copeland returned to Ljubljana. Copeland recalls in her autobiography how on crossing the Yugoslav border at Sežana, a customs official entered, attended by a soldier with rifle and fixed bayonet. On seeing her, the soldier thrust aside the customs officer shouting *"It is she, she's come back. She's not dead"* and flung himself on me, rifle, bayonet and all' – *'You don't remember me, he gasped. I was just a little boy at Kranjska Gora and you were always so kind to me'* (Copeland 1956a: 380). More than fifteen years previously, under German occupation, Copeland had befriended the boy, who still remembered her. In 1955 she moved to Hotel Slön, where she lived for the last fifteen years of her life. By this time, age was taking its toll. Despite ill-health, however, she continued working. In a letter to Seton-Watson started on 19 March 1956, she declares; *'I am slowly getting better now and cannot complain. At least I was able to carry on my work at the People's University. A concluding section to the letter begins: 'March 28. This later date will tell you how little time I have for my own affairs'* (Copeland 1956b).

Stories of place and time

Despite such 'little time' she continued translating children's books, including one of many translations of Vladimir Levstik's tale of Martin Krpan (1960) —perhaps the best known of Levstik's folk tales (written for ordinary people as a way of giving them national pride), Peroci's My Umbrella Can Turn into a Balloon ('Moj dežnik je lahko balon') (Peroci 1962) and she was particularly proud of her translation of Ciril Kosmač's work A Day in Spring ('Pomladni dan') (Kosmač 1959, 1988). It is during this period also that she appears to have begun work on several unpublished stories. One, entitled The Hurricane is set in *'a small corner of the Adriatic coast near Dubrovnik'* in the 1860s. The first twenty typed pages only are stored with Copeland's autobiography in the Royal Observatory, Edinburgh. Manuscripts of two others, A Point of Honour and The Race Call, are in private ownership. All three contain autobiographical elements and are attempts to embody in fictional narratives, Copeland's own highly humanitarian views on society. They are, also (fictional) geographical narratives in their own right.

Subtitled A Study of German Life in the 'Eighties, A Point of Honour is a story narrated *'on board a north going steamer'* by a not-quite-English *'insignificant little body in grey tweeds - a governess on her summer holiday it might be'* – clearly Copeland's *alter ego*. Two officers - Horst, from a rich North German family and Felix, an impecunious subaltern, are skating with on a frozen lake in Berlin in the early 1880s. Each has a companion. Horst is with his bride-to-be Rita, and Felix with his sister Adele, who had been to school with Rita. Rita trips and is helped up by Felix, whom Horst then insults by calling him a 'Jew-boy'. Felix calls Horst a liar, and the two agree to a duel with pistols the following morning. Felix discovers that his mother, raised as a Christian, does indeed have a Jewish background. Horst is renowned as an excellent shot and Felix's mother goes by night to his chambers in order to persuade him not to kill her son. Horst refuses her entreaties, saying that the only way that Felix could escape is by apologising and resigning his commission. However he is strangely affected by the (Christian) blessing that Felix's mother gives him as she leaves. At the duel the following morning the two fire at the same instant. Horst, cool and relaxed, aims only to disarm

Felix and shoots him through the arm. Felix however, who has been awake all night, loses his nerve and fires blindly but shoots Horst through the brain. Felix is imprisoned, and when released, moves to America with his mother. Rita remains in Germany and, visiting Horst's grave is surprised to find Adele there, also dressed in black and holding a small posy of flowers like herself. They become friends and meet often at the grave, until Rita moves to England in *'a post with people who wanted a governess who knew how to move in society'*. The story ends inconclusively, with the three surviving parties to the original episode each suspended in a kind of spatial and temporal limbo as a consequence of it.

The Race Call is perhaps the most interesting of the three surviving stories, set as it is in *'a little room furnished as an office somewhere in the business quarter of Paris... a grilling hot summer afternoon during the days of the Peace Conference'* and, probably reflecting an actual event, narrated in the first person by *'I, by the way... a translator and general utility person, and I happen to hail from Scotland'*. It is time for afternoon tea. Over tea a young Slav enters, whom Fanny Copeland refers to as *'the Lily; because at that time he typed not, neither did he do anything else that was considered useful, and moreover Solomon in all his glory surely never looked half so distinguished as the Lily in his trench coat'*. *'The Lily'* recounts, to a neutral journalist from Denmark, his experience as a soldier in the Austrian army at the Galician front in mid-winter 1915. Leader of a Company consisting of *'some sixty yokels from Istria'*, he is holding a salient and digging trenches. Under heavy Russian fire the company retreats and the *'Lily'* offers to leave the trench last in order to provide cover for the others, although this will put him in danger as a consequence. However, instead of following them, he takes the opportunity to desert, moving in the opposite direction and hiding in a dug-out, before giving himself up to his *'brother Slavs'* – the Russians – to whom he provides intelligence. As he is driven to GHQ, he passes a column of his former Company, who have been captured. His car showers mud over his former commanding officer (a Prussian Major) who had earlier insulted him for being a Slav. Nobody emerges with credit from the episode, least of all *'the Lily'*, who may have made the better choice in being true to his Slav origins, but who in so doing has deserted his *'duty'* – and betrayed the men under his command.

Throughout this period, Copeland was also busy in the preparation of her autobiography, which by 1956 (only three years after arriving in Ljubljana) she regarded as sufficiently complete to try to get published. In this same year Fanny Copeland was awarded a pension from the Yugoslav state, though she was not a citizen of Yugoslavia.

'Buzzing fly' or 'geographic' broker?

In the churchyard at Dovje, at the foot of Slovenia's Mount Triglav, one grave is remarkable for its modesty and simplicity amongst the larger and sometimes ostentatious headstones of imported black marble and gold inlay. Of local stone, rough-hewn and dressed only on its face, the inscription reads, simply *'MISS FANNY S COPELAND, 1872 – 1970'*. Its unassuming nature parallels Copeland's life. The absence of Copeland from the recent collection of biographies of Scottish women (Ewan *et al.* 2006) is only partially remedied by her treatment in a similar Slovene survey *'The Forgotten Half'* (Šelih *et al.* 2007). This does include an entry but places it under the category of *'sportswomen'* (Batageli 2007). Copeland was indeed a prominent alpinist but her association with geopolitical events in which, like Geographers she was an observer rather than a driver, but also a facilitator, and geo/geographical writing make her much else besides.

Copeland's autobiographical verdict on her own life is that of a 'buzzing fly' – ever engaged with events around her; though never leading or directing them; ever moving, but never in a single direction. Nevertheless as a 'participant observer' she played a minor but significant role in the production of geographical knowledge in the highly politicised arena of national identity and international affairs and in the largely masculine area of mountaineering. That much (but by no means all) of her work in the former was as a translator was partly due to its partisan nature; she identified with a cause that subsequently provided the route to personal emancipation.

Harvey, in a review of Gregory's *Geographical Imaginations* (1994), declares that '*the geographical imagination is far too pervasive and important a facet of intellectual life to be left alone to geographers*' (Harvey 1995: 161). It is a long way from Copeland's playing Marko Kraljević in the Blackford Hill woods to working in the Yugoslav Committee after the First World War or climbing Triglav after the Second, but perhaps less far – conceptually as well as physically - from the 'new' Royal Observatory on Edinburgh's Blackford Hill to Calton Hill (its predecessor's location) a short distance north. Geddes' nearby Outlook Tower provided the physical manifestation of the structuring 'geographical imagination' represented by 'Place, Work, Folk'. In Copeland's own work one can find elements of the idealism of Patrick Geddes, the mysticism of Vaughan Cornish (especially in her writing on mountains) and the pragmatism of Dudley Stamp (although she had direct contact only with the last). At times 'imagination' led her to assertions for which there is little direct evidence. For example, she was convinced, not just by similarities in the physical landscape but also in their associated folklore, that Logarska dolina, the venue for the Le Play Society's 1932 fieldwork, had earlier been the inspiration for John Ruskin's 'treasure valley' (Ruskin 1851).

Copeland wrote:

'I am personally convinced that the wonderful "Valley in the Styrian Alps" which was well described by John Ruskin in his fairytale King of the Golden River – he named it "Treasure Valley" – is no other than Logarska and its end – Okrešelj. The description fits too well. The fairy tale I read many years ago in an American illustrated version. It is hardly possible that the American illustrator was ever in Logarska dolina. It may be that he found his sketch of Rinka waterfall in some photograph. Last year, in 1958, I saw a new English edition of Ruskin's only fairy tale for children and again it is quite possible that the places which relate to Ruskin's descriptions are stylized reproductions like those you can easily buy in Planinski dom. I never could follow Ruskin's travels in the mountains, which then belonged to Austrian Štajerska. Naturally, his persons have German names and local farmers knew how to speak German. However, Ruskin was not really interested in farmers. But he was drawn to picturesque, fertile grassy regions, protected by surrounding mountaintops and a high waterfall, falling down a vertical cliff from a black crag into a gulf underneath it. Exactly there, the water appears at the top of the cliff, behind which it had lived the life of a happy and significant rivulet, its source somewhere below Okrešelj. Its current is squeezed between two black crags their form like two human statues. In truth it was those two crags that inspired Ruskin to write the fairytale and because of this I am convinced that it is truly that place which inspired him. Nowhere in the whole of the Štajerska Alps is there any waterfall like Rinka, with two black crags.' (Copeland 1959 trans M Anteric)

Elsewhere, Copeland's commentary on places and contemporary events suggests that her physical inter-War location in the 'Cockpit of Europe' provided a position where she could, arguably, see equally far and reach insights whose 'impact' may have been as great as those from within the

Academy – or from Outlook Tower. Copeland's 'geographical imagination'; her search for meaning beyond the confines of home and family forms a unifying thread through her life. Other (especially Scots) women contemporaries were fired by comparable motivations – humanitarian (Elsie Inglis), political (Edith Durham) or narration (Rebecca West) as well as intellectual (Marion Newbigin). Elements of all these seem to have driven Copeland's own work.

Maddrell (2004), focussing almost exclusively on university geographers, has demonstrated why women were often so marginal to the Geographical establishment. Gender is obviously a key factor to understanding Copeland's life and work – at the most obvious level, had it not been for her unhappy marriage and divorce it is unlikely that she would ever have found her way to the Yugoslav Committee, alpinism, or to Slovenia. However it is our contention that gender is almost irrelevant to the way that Copeland's activities – whether in writing, climbing or teaching – were received (in Yugoslavia at least, notwithstanding how they might have been perceived elsewhere) during her lifetime. Although today Copeland's 'geographic' contribution – for example as celebrated in Potočnik's (1970) funeral oration – has been 'forgotten' (Šelih *et al.* 2007) this seems less to do with gender than with a general political foreclosure on discussion of Slovenia's Yugoslav past.

In this context, Copeland's climbing is perhaps worthy of further comment. Hansen (1995, 2000) for example, adds to explanations of the mid-Victorian 'invention' of mountaineering based on the extension of the railways, the cults of the sublime and picturesque, or the diffusion of public school athleticism amongst the upper middle classes. He argues that climbing was, above all, a form of 'imperial exploration' promulgated actively through an assertive masculinity to uphold an imagined sense of Britain's imperial power at a time of crisis (Hansen 1995: 301). These were all embodied in the activities of the Alpine Club, formed in London in 1857.

In contrast to the London Alpine Club, the formation of Skala can be seen, at least in part, as a counter-hegemonic – perhaps counter- imperial – enterprise, challenging the dominance of Austrian and Italian alpinists. Austrian alpinism, in particular, had strong elements of elitism and territorial conquest (Holt 2008) and Copeland's experience on the Aljaz tower in 1923, above, suggests that the latter, at least, may also have been true of Italian alpinism. Moreover, both before and after the Second World War, climbing in Slovenia must be understood as a very different phenomenon from the British experience. It was – and remains – largely domestic (mountains are, literally, 'backdoor scenery' for most Slovenes), a mass pursuit, lacking in class distinctions and, whilst the Alpine Club opposed full membership for women for a considerable part of its existence (the Daily Mail cartoon of Copeland's 1958 ascent of Triglav was reproduced in the Ladies' Alpine Club journal), Yugoslav climbing organisations were always mixed and there is little evidence of any form of discrimination (Engel 1971). Copeland's climbing partner and co-promoter of alpine tourism, Mira Marko Debelakova (born in 1904, she was younger than Copeland who did not start serious climbing until her 40s) was during her lifetime (she died in 1948) regarded much more highly than Copeland as an expert alpinist (both before and after becoming a mother).

Maddrell (2006), in a study of the work of Hilda Ormsby, suggests that narratives of the '*pre-1970s production of geographical knowledge as a (near) universal male domain and the post-1960s critique of the regional approach as descriptive and nonhermeneutical have combined to make invisible the geographical work of most women (and some men) working in British universities in the first half of the 20th century*' (1739). Ormsby was an active member of the Le Play Society, first as a student, then lecturer at London University and was subsequently a founder member of the Institute of

British Geographers and the first woman to serve on its Council. Stamp, Edwards and other leaders of the early regional studies movement are certainly not invisible; however the largely female (as well as amateur) composition of their study groups may well be one reason why this aspect of the early stages of their careers has largely faded from view.

Whether or not this is the case, we argue in this paper that Copeland deserves to be considered with all those operating outside the academy – men as well as women —whose *'range of embodied practices – practices of travelling, dwelling, seeing, collecting, recording and narrating'* (Driver 2000: 267; we would add also, for Copeland, climbing) have contributed significantly to our understating of their place and time. In a similar vein, Stoddart and Adams (2004) argue that:

'Geographical knowledge needs to be understood as something that is constituted through a range of embodied practices (such as travelling, seeing and recording). The 'field' is not some self-evident place, something 'out there' to be 'discovered' in an unproblematic sense, it is produced in the ideas and the recorded or remembered movements of geographical actors, created through their discourse and shared through the networks of academic (and amateur) exchange.' (2004)

Copeland's life provides just one amongst no doubt an infinity of links between the academic discipline of Geography and the broader field of geographical understanding and engagement (Driver *et al.* 2007). There are few references to academic Geographers in Copeland's writings. However it seems highly probable that Copeland was aware, for example, of at least the more accessible works of Newbigin though neither her 1915 book (1915b) nor the article of the same year in Scottish Geographical Magazine (1915a) are mentioned in Copeland's writing. This is perhaps unsurprising since by 1915 Copeland was already working – in London – for the Yugoslav Committee. Whilst screening of at least the more accessible media was a matter of routine, Copeland herself would probably have considered herself in as good a position as any academic commentator to have a handle on events. Her life suggests a 'relative autonomy' of the production and dissemination of geographical knowledge inside and outside the academy.

Interestingly, whilst there is political commentary there is little political analysis in Copeland's writing. Nor is there much regarding her position as a woman. The closest that Fanny Copeland gets to identification with any broader social or political movement is as a woman: *'of course, I was a suffragette at heart, but my own problems arising from my unfortunate marriage kept me from taking an active part in the movement'* (Copeland 1956a: 165). Perhaps best description of Copeland is as assertive participant – whether climbing on Triglav or campaigning for the Yugoslav cause. Her modest self-assessment in the 'Lily' is that of an observer – at the heart of, though exerting little influence on major geopolitical events and for the modern reader, providing a mirror to them.

Copeland's own work can perhaps be best described as characterised by a progressive environmental determinism, coupled with a folkloric geography that at times verges on the mystical but can also be intensely practical. Nowhere is this clearer than where she deals with issues of ethnicity and nationalism, not merely in Yugoslavia but also in her (frequent) comparisons between the Slovenes and the Scots. Her first significant translation - of Tucić's The Slav Nations - contains an introduction (by Seton-Watson) which compares contemporary Balkan conflicts with past difficulties between Scot and English, challenging the notion that 'racial' tension must always exist. However (in common with much current analysis of the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s) he identifies Balkan

problems with backwardness. ‘...[T]he Balkan peninsula has been covered by a superficial veneer of Western culture to delude the superficial observer. In reality its inhabitants, despite the telephone, the railway and the machine gun, despite even the effect of Paris and Berlin upon the life of the student or trader, are still for the most part in the same stage of civilisation as produced the reivers of the Scottish border and the endless bickering of the Highland clans’ (Seton-Watson in Tucič 1918: v-vi).

Copeland, at the heart of events, was keenly aware of geopolitical complexities including the role of great powers in Balkan conflicts, and nowhere in her writing is there any suggestion that ‘western culture’ was to be considered as in any way superior. A letter from Copeland to Charles Sarolea compares the Slovenes to the Scots: *‘The Slovenes are excellent Yugoslavs. I think they have the makings of the backbone of the country... Like the Scotch [sic] they contrive to make a situation work, instead of grousing about it to each other and to the Universe’* (Copeland 1922); Thirty years later, Copeland wrote of her plans to return to Yugoslavia following the Second World War:

‘When I was told – nay, warned – that in the New Yugoslavia I should find neither Christmas nor Easter, but only the New Year, I cheerfully replied that it would be like going back to the Scotland of my childhood. In fact, tourists complained to me that neither the tobacconist nor the motor mechanic was open on Sundays. I put on my straightest face, pointed out that Man had a right to his one day of Rest in the week – and that in many ways, the Slovenes are very like the Scots’ (Copeland 1956a: 43).

In old age, Copeland harboured thoughts of returning to Scotland. *‘There are moments, many moments, when I would like to look my last upon the mountains of Donside, and leave my bones to rest at the back o’ the Benachie. I have even secured the address of an inn at Monymusk where they are prepared to take boarders’*. This was not to be; life was still too full. The final paragraph of Copeland’s autobiography (1956a: 389). reads: *“I know that I shall leave the decision to fate. The fly is still buzzing about the ears of the carter and his horses. In the end it is the carter and his team that get the cart and its load up the hill. The fly can only buzz – but that doesn’t detract from the pleasure she takes in it – from the proud consciousness of being associated with that fine cart in its struggle up that most difficult of hills which we call Human Progress ‘Finis’.*

Characteristically, however this ‘Finis’ was not the end – of her autobiography⁴ or of her achievements. In addition to her writing and translating, the latter included yet another ascent of Triglav in 1958. The feat was widely reported in The Times (Woman of 88 climbs 9,000 ft mountain 1958) and other newspapers. The Boston journal The Appalachia unlike the Times, got Copeland’s age right – she was just ten days short of her 87th birthday (Potočnik 1970). In 1961 at the commemorative meeting for the 40th anniversary of Skala, held at Bled, which she was too frail to

⁴ The autobiography ends with a ‘P.S.’ to the reader: *‘But have you really found good reasons to go and live in a "communist" state? This was a question I was often asked soon after my return to Ljubljana. Well - for one thing it depends on what you mean by ‘Communism’. If you mean a totalitarian regime then my reply is that no Yugoslav would put up with such a system... The Yugoslavs are stout individualists, but they appreciate law and order. Ask any British tourist who has visited Yugoslavia in recent years’*. (1956a: 389)

attend herself, Copeland became the first woman to be awarded Silver and Gold medals by the Mountaineering Unions of Slovenia and Yugoslavia.

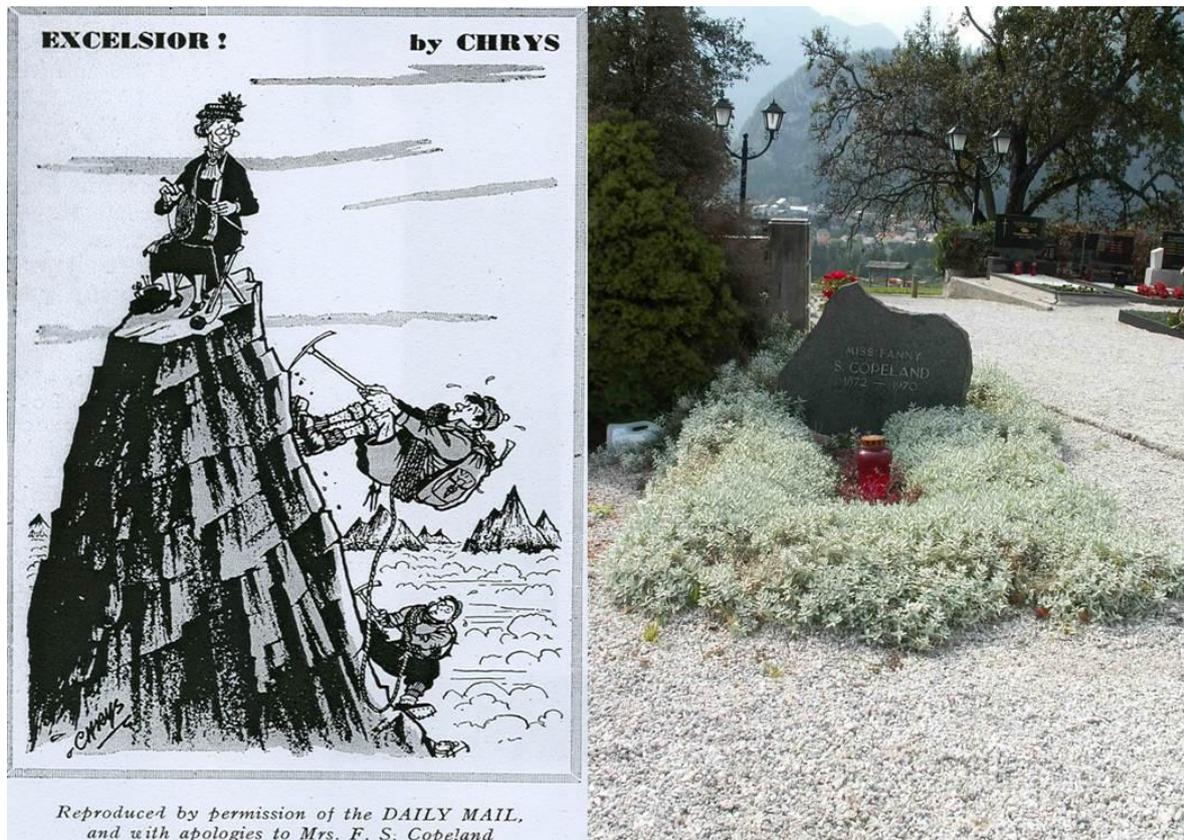


Figure i. A Daily Mail cartoon of Fanny Copeland's ascent of Triglav in 1958, aged 86 (left) and (right) her grave at Dovje, Slovenia.

Copeland died age 98 on 29 July 1970 in her room in Hotel Slön. Her funeral was organised by the Mountaineering Union of Slovenia, and her obituary address was read by Miha Potočnik, a former President of the Slovene Parliament and himself a well-known alpinist. Beautiful Mountains is a paean to 'Father Triglav'. She wrote:

'By fixed custom those that perish on Triglav are buried at his feet. In the pretty village church of Dovje, opposite the entrance of the stately Valley of the Gate (Vrata—truly a gate to be called Beautiful) they lie side by side. I think they would have it so. The long shadows of the regal avenue of peaks, down which they passed to their last adventure, sweep over their graves as the days and the years roll by; on All Souls' day the mountaineers bring them pious offerings of prayer and lights, and from their tombstones their names cry greeting and warning to the hosts that go up year by year to visit the mountains, - greeting to the many who go up by the blazed trail where every danger spot is made safe with iron bolt and wire rope, to protect the unwary and put heart into the timid, - greeting to the few who seek, like themselves, to win the goal without guidance save the love of the heights, and no company except the extreme mysteries of life and death - greeting to the cragsman and the lover, to schoolboy and hunter, to smuggler and spy, and the ski-shod friend of the snows....' (Copeland 1931a: 17).

Fanny Copeland's little grave in Dovje is immaculately cared for by local alpinists. At the base of the headstone is a small rock from the mountain, carrying a painted waymark – a red circle with a white centre, and next to it a small clump of *Sempervivens* – an enduring and appropriate tribute to a remarkable woman whose 'geographical imagination' complements the more formal Geography of the period.

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