

Submission:

Abstract proposal for a paper to be delivered at the 20th Annual conference of the New Zealand Studies Association, Oslo, Norway, 25-28 June 2014.

Title: “The saga night that sends dreams to our earth”: Scandinavian connections with New Zealand in literature.

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Abstract:

“Yes, we love this country
as it rises forth,
rugged, weathered, above the sea,
with the thousands of homes.
Love, love it and think
of our father and mother
and the saga night that sends
dreams to our earth.”

(from “Ja, vi elsker dette landet” by Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson, Norwegian popular anthem, 1905-)

This paper will reflect on some of the representations of Scandinavian, especially Norwegian, characters, culture and conventions in literature that have been written in or about New Zealand. Commencing with “Johanna’s World”, by Oystein Molstad Andresen which is the fictional treatment of a story of migration from Norway to New Zealand, (from this author’s own family), then referring to texts by Yvonne du Fresne and Joan Rosier Jones the paper will explore ideas of identity, geography, settlement and above all the shared traditions of saga and voyaging that link these distant shores.