



EISENBRAUNS

Specializing in the ancient Near East and biblical studies since 1975

Unburning Fame

*Horses, Dragons, Beings of Smoke, and
Other Indo-European Motifs in Ugarit and the Hebrew Bible*

Coniectanea Biblica Old Testament Series 62

by Ola Wikander

In this book, Ola Wikander studies Indo-European influences in the literary world of the Hebrew Bible and the Ugaritic texts, tracing a number of poetic motifs and other concepts originating in the Indo-European linguistic milieu of the greater ancient Near East (for example, among Anatolians and in Indo-European traditions transmitted through Mitanni)—and possibly at earlier, reconstructible levels—as they influenced what became Northwest Semitic poetic culture. The methodology used is what Wikander refers to as “etymological poetics”: the study of poetic and mythological structures as transmitted through specific lexical material.

Among the motifs studied are “smoke” as a simile for human life, the great serpent-battling tales of Northwest Semitic in comparison with similar stories among Indo-European-speakers (focusing on the titulature of the combatants and on the reconstruction of inherited and calqued poetic formulas), the etymology of the divine name “Dagan,” and terminology and ideas related to borders and living outside established social norms, including the concept of the *ger*, the “sojourner” or “resident alien.” The study discusses the importance of early poetic borrowings for tracing the interactions between cultural and linguistic contexts, and—using the methodology of “etymological poetics”—employs these motifs and their history as a way of uncovering new, exegetically relevant interpretations of key texts. Ugaritic passages from the Baal and Aqhat texts, as well as biblical passages from (among others) Hosea, Psalms, 1 Kings, and Judges are given new interpretations.

One of the motifs discussed is that of *destroying heat* being used as a metaphor for forgetting important cultural memories and, consequently, of the resilience of these memories being expressed as resistance to burning. Thus, bringing these ancient connections between Indo-European and Northwest Semitic culture into the open is, in a sense, showing their “Unburning Fame.”

Eisenbrauns, 2017. Pp. xi + 185. English. Paper.
ISBN: 978-1-57506-762-9 List Price: \$33.95
<http://www.eisenbrauns.com/item/WIKUNBURN>

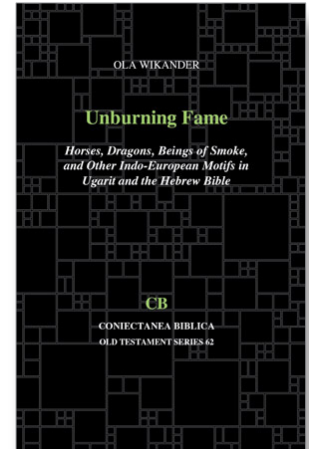


Table of Contents

Preface

1. Introduction
2. Preamble: The Semitic and Indo-European Language Families, and Possible Arenas of Interaction
3. Horse and Plow: Case Studies in Technological Indo-European/Hebrew Vocabulary
4. Biblical Chaos Dragons—and Indo-European Ones
5. Beings of Smoke:
Terms for Living Breath and Humanity in Indo-European, Ugaritic, and Hebrew—and Remarks on Fatlings and Merciful Bodies
6. When Jeroboam Divided His God
7. Dagan/Dagon as a Possibly Indo-European-Derived Name, and Some Methodological Questions Raised by Religio-historical Etymology
8. Strangers, Boundary Crossers, and Young Predators in Hebrew and Indo-European: *gwr*, **h3erbh-*, and *habiru*
9. Fame That Does Not Burn: The Verb *tkh*, the Drought Motif, Indo-European **dhgwhei-*, and Etymological Poetics
10. Dragons Returning Home: The “Pizza Effect”
11. In Conclusion
12. Abbreviations
13. Bibliography
14. Index of Personal Names
15. Index locorum