

CV Ola Wikander

- **University studies** in Old Testament/Hebrew Bible, Akkadian, History of Religion, Jewish Studies, Sanskrit, Latin, Linguistics.
- **Doctoral degree, 2012**, Old Testament Exegesis, Lund University Old Testament Exegesis – dissertation title: *Drought, Death, and the Sun in Ugarit and Ancient Israel: A Philological and Comparative Study*. (internationally published in 2014 and twice awarded prizes). Supervisor: Prof. Sten Hidal.
- **Postdoctoral work** at Lund University, funded partly by a so-called RQ08 research position and partly via project funds from the Swedish Research Council (on Indo-European motifs and borrowings in Ugaritic and Hebrew literature) and a smaller project funded by the Swedish Nuclear Waste Management Co. (on insights from Exegesis and Philology applied to the question of preservation of information about buried nuclear waste). Led to publication of postdoctoral monograph and numerous articles.
- **Reader in Old Testament Exegesis**, Lund University: 2016.
- **2018-2023: Pro Futura Scientia Fellow at SCAS, including year-long residencies at the Collegium in Uppsala (2018-2019) and at CRASSH and Wolfson College, Cambridge (2021-2022). Project name: “The Words of the Storm Gods: Reconstructing the Poetic Language of Proto-Northwest Semitic”.**
- **Current employment: permanent position as Senior Lecturer in Old Testament Exegesis**, Centre for Theology and Religious Studies, Lund University. Chairman of the subdiscipline council for Biblical Studies at CTR, as well as of the Old Testament Seminar.

- **Previous employment:** mainly active at the Centre for Theology and Religious Studies (CTR), Lund University:
 - Doctoral student/PhD Candidate (2007-2012);
 - University Lecturer (early 2012);
 - RQ08 Researcher (2012-2013);
 - externally funded researcher, funded by the Swedish Research Council and The Swedish Nuclear Waste Management Co. (also including teaching) 2013-2014;
 - Deputy Senior Lecturer (50%) from August 2015;
 - permanent senior lecturer (50%) from 2017;
 - 2018-2023: Pro Futura Scientia fellow, first year working at SCAS in Uppsala, then at CTR in Lund.

My teaching has been concentrated on Biblical Hebrew (many courses) but also on Exegesis at both lower and higher levels, as well as supervising BA and MA theses. Currently supervising one doctoral student. I have also developed new online Biblical Hebrew courses, as well as started, developed and taught a course in Akkadian and comparative Semitic linguistics, which has now been run twice at the Master’s level in Old Testament Studies, including readings from Gilgamesh, Codex Hammurapi, The Poor Man of Nippur, etc.

- **Other awards and assignments:**
 - 2005 – awarded the **Letterstedt prize in translation** for my book *Kanaaneiska myter och legender* by the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences (Kungl. Vetenskapsakademien).
 - 2006 – shortlisted for the **August prize** for my book *I döda språks sällskap*.
 - 2007 – Awarded **work grant** (SEK 40 000) from the Swedish Author’s Fund.

- 2007-2009 – Served as **representative in the Swedish Research Council** section for Humanities and Social Sciences (Vetenskapsrådet-HS).¹
 - 2009 – awarded the **Mentor prize**.
 - 2009 – awarded the **Zibet prize (SEK 70 000) by the Swedish Academy**.
 - 2010 – awarded the **Clio prize (SEK 20 000)**.
 - 2012-2015– elected to serve in the **fiction working group of the Swedish Arts Council** (Statens kulturråd).
 - 2012 – Awarded **work grant** (SEK 70 000) from the Swedish Author's Fund.
 - 2012-2014 – **subject editor (Semitics and Ancient Near Eastern Studies)** for the web-based review journal *The Marginalia Review*.
 - 2013 – awarded **SEK 50 000 prize by The Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities (Kungl. Vitterhetsakademien)** for *Drought, Death, and the Sun*.
 - 2013 – awarded **SEK 20 000 prize by Svenska humanistiska förbundet**.
 - 2013 – awarded the **Westrup prize (SEK 50 000) for *Drought, Death, and the Sun* by the Royal Society of Letters at Lund (Kungliga humanistiska vetenskapssamfundet i Lund)**.
 - 2014 – Awarded the **Gårding prize in linguistics (SEK 220 000) by the Royal Physiographical Society, Lund**.
 - 2015-2017: **Recurring columnist** in *Kvällsposten* and sometimes in *Expressen*.
 - 2017: **Appointed Pro Futura Scientia fellow at SCAS**.
 - 2018-2019. **Residential fellowship at SCAS as part of Pro Futura**.
 - 2020 – awarded **Carlo Landberg prize for Semitic Linguistics (SEK 75 000)**
 - 2020 – **co-editor of the book series Coniectanea Biblica** (previously Eisenbrauns, later Lexington Books/Fortress Press Academic).
 - 2021– **co-editor of the prestigious journal *Ugarit-Forschungen***.
 - 2021-2022 – **Residential fellowship in Cambridge, at the Centre for Study in the Arts, Social, Sciences and Humanities**, staying at Wolfson College.
 - 2023: **Co-organized the annual OTSEM (Old Testament Studies: Epistemologies and Methods) conference**, this time in Lund.
 - 2023-2025: **Holder of three-year grant from the Swedish Author's Fund**.
- **Knowledge of and studies in a large number of ancient languages**, including (but not limited to) Latin, Greek, Classical Hebrew, Ugaritic, Akkadian, Sanskrit, Coptic, Gothic, Hittite, Luwian, Phoenician, Aramaic, Etruscan and to certain extent Sumerian, Hurrian, Oscan, Old Persian and Old English. Some study in Classical Ethiopic, Tocharian and Old Irish. Specializing in Hebrew, Ugaritic and other forms of Northwest Semitic. **Modern languages**: Swedish, English, German, and to some extent Yiddish, Italian, Modern Hebrew and Japanese. Reading ability in French.
 - Member of the Royal Physiographic Society, Lund (since 2019) and the New Society of Letters at Lund (since 2018). Member of the OTSEM network (*Old Testament Studies: Epistemologies and Methods*).
 - **Main international monographs:**
Drought, Death, and the Sun in Ugarit and Ancient Israel: A Philological and Comparative Study (Eisenbrauns 2014).

Unburning Fame: Horses, Dragons, Beings of Smoke, and Other Indo-European Motifs in Ugarit and the Hebrew Bible (Eisenbrauns 2017).

¹ The position was one of substitute member of the Working Group, but this makes a difference only on the very rare occasions where votes are necessary. In effect, I served as an active, working member of the Council.

- **Eight published Swedish-language books** on ancient languages, linguistics and biblical studies (etc.), as well as four novels (one co-authored with Örjan Wikander). Among the Swedish books, one can mention “I döda språks sällskap” (2006), a general introduction to the study of ancient languages, “Ett träd med vida grenar” (2008, a popular introduction to Indo-European linguistics), “Gud är ett verb” (2014, on historical-critical biblical study), and “Ett hav i mäktig rörelse” (2019, an introduction to comparative Semitic linguistics, published and introduced during my stay at SCAS during my Pro Futura scholarship and partly based on my Pro Futura scholarly work). Contract for a new popular book signed with Nirstedt/Litteratur, on dragon mythology in Semitic and Indo-European.
- **Presentations at numerous conferences:**
- many of the OTSEM conferences in various parts of Northern Europe and Great Britain (2008, 2009, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2023; I served as respondent in 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2023 and as chair of panels several times); am also on the coordinating committee for the conference. In 2023, I was the keynote speaker, discussing etymological poetics in Psalm 82 and later reception of its motifs.
- The Sophia Conference, 2011 (Bath, arranged by the University of Wales, Trinity St David); NORDITA (“The Solar Course, the Chemic Force and the Speeding Change of Water”), 2011;
- Conference in Paris on the nuclear semiotic question (2013);
- “Words of the Prophets”, Örebro School of Theology (2015).
- Exegetiska dagen (2020), invited speaker on what was published as the article ”L’s and S’s in the Land of Israel”
- Proto-Indo-European Reconstruction Conference (Cambridge): gave a talk on my loan-reconstruction of serpent slaying formulae from Indo-European to Semitic.
- “Song, Prayer, Scripture: Aspects of the Use of the Book of Psalms from the Hebrew Bible to the 20th Century”, Örebro School of Theology (2022).
- “Dead Poets and their Undying Fame: Perspectives on the Indo-European Poetic Traditions”, SCAS (2022). Lecture on storm god terminology in Indo-European and Ugaritic.
- “Tools, Trades, and Technologies – Exploring Prehistory through Archaeolinguistics”, SCAS (2023). Lecture on the “horse” word (cf. submitted article).
- Numerous invited lectures, among them in Göttingen, and Cambridge (including two presentations at the Faculty for Ancient and Middle Eastern Studies/ Cambridge Semitics/Middle Eastern Philology Seminar), as well as Lund and Uppsala (Semitics and Old Testament Seminars in the latter case). Stays at the Swedish Institute in Rome, carrying out work there (2012, 2016, 2019, 2022, 2023).
- A large number of popular lectures.

Major research projects after PhD

- ***Ancient Texts in Ancient Tongues – Nuclear Waste and Future Knowledge:*** The above-mentioned project, funded by the Swedish Nuclear Waste Management Co., on the light that exegetical and philological study can shed on humanity’s possible communication with future generations concerning our nuclear waste deposits. The project discussed what can be learnt from ancient Phoenician funeral inscriptions,

religious elite groups, ancient water power, the Greek “computer” known as the Antikythera Mechanism and historical/comparative linguistics and language development over time – for the purposes of letting our descendants know how and where we have stored our lethal nuclear waste (a field of study sometimes known as Nuclear Semiotics). A truly interdisciplinary research project that showed how classical humanities/theology can impact the modern world (and future ages). The articles “Don’t Push this Button – Phoenician Sarcophagi, ‘Atomic Priesthoods’ and Nuclear Waste” and “Language, Nuclear Waste and Society: The Preservation of Knowledge over Vast Periods of Time and its Relevance for Linguistics” (both 2015) have resulted from the project, which was also covered in many national media outlets (*Dagens Nyheter*, *ETC*, radio, etc.).

- ***Dragons and Horses: Indo-Europeans and Indo-European in the Old Testament World:*** major postdoctoral project, funded during 2014 by the Swedish Research Council. The project concerned borrowed motifs from Indo-European languages (mainly Anatolian and Indo-Iranian) in Old Testament and Ugaritic literature; the project also used the methodology of “etymological poetics” that I have employed and developed in my doctoral work, widening the scope to borrowings and calques from languages outside the Semitic ambit. Major motifs discussed in the research project were, among others, the battle against chaos serpents in Indo-European and biblical literature, smoke as an image for life’s inconstancy as a possible loan form Anatolian languages and its reception in the Hebrew Bible and words for horses and ploughs as possible Indo-European borrowings in the Hebrew language. The project is especially important not only because it elucidates many complex issues in the Hebrew and Ugaritic text corpora, but also because it traces ancient cultural interactions between two linguistic milieux – Indo-European and Northwest Semitic – often seen as more or less self-contained. Thus, it provides data of interest for studies of modern intercultural relationships as well, helping to tear down unnecessary mental walls perhaps imagined between ancient peoples – and studying how poetic material and formulas could help bridge chasms between linguistic cultures.
- ***The Words of the Storm Gods: Reconstructing the Common Mytho-Poetic Language of Northwest Semitic***
 My Pro Futura work was based in the interplay between historical linguistics, biblical exegesis and history of religion, in a project centered on reaching at the common poetic language reflected and transformed (in various ways) in the archaic poetry of the Hebrew Bible and in the epic Bronze Age texts from Ugarit (in Syria). The project used comparative linguistic method to reconstruct the poetic language of the common ancestor of Hebrew, Aramaic, Ugaritic and other related tongues. From there, it moved on to working with pieces of poetic diction, specific poetic formulae and poetically coded grammatical constructions that survived into the texts of the Hebrew Bible and other Ancient Near Eastern texts – and, finally, the results of these studies were applied to the biblical texts themselves, uncovering new interpretations and translations. It provided new, historically based interpretations of one of the most important textual canons of the world. The linguistic and poetic culture that we refer to today as Proto-Northwest Semitic is the “grandmother” of some of the most influential texts the world has known. Reconstructing that background is an unrivalled way of understanding the way in which the religious history of the world came to be.