

Ancient Tales of Giants from Qumran and Turfan

Contexts, Traditions, and Influences

Edited by

Matthew Goff,
Loren T. Stuckenbruck,
and Enrico Morano

Mohr Siebeck

MATTHEW GOFF is Professor of Hebrew Bible and Second Temple Judaism in the Department of Religion at Florida State University.

LOREN T. STUCKENBRUCK is Professor of New Testament and Second Temple Judaism in the Protestant Faculty of Theology, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München.

ENRICO MORANO is retired teacher of Classics in High Schools and the current President of the International Association of Manichaeic Studies (IAMS).

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Table of Contents

Preface	V
List of Abbreviations	IX

<i>Matthew Goff</i> Introduction	1
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Part One

Gibborim and Gigantes

Antecedents, Reception, and Comparative Contexts from the Hebrew Bible and Greek Literature

<i>Brian R. Doak</i> The Giant in a Thousand Years: Tracing Narratives of Gigantism in the Hebrew Bible and Beyond	13
--	----

<i>Samantha Newington</i> Greek Titans and Biblical Giants	33
---	----

<i>Michael Tuval</i> “Συναγωγὴ γιγάντων” (Prov 21:16): The Giants in the Jewish Literature in Greek	41
---	----

Part Two

Tales of Giants in their Ancient Jewish Context

The Dead Sea Scrolls, the *Book of Watchers*, and Daniel

<i>Joseph L. Angel</i> The Humbling of the Arrogant and the “Wild Man” and “Tree Stump” Traditions in the <i>Book of Giants</i> and Daniel 4	61
--	----

<i>Amanda M. Davis Bledsoe</i>	
Throne Theophanies, Dream Visions, and Righteous(?) Seers: Daniel, the <i>Book of Giants</i> , and <i>1 Enoch</i> Reconsidered	81
<i>Ida Fröhlich</i>	
Giants and Demons	97
<i>Matthew Goff</i>	
The Sons of the Watchers in the <i>Book of Watchers</i> and the Qumran <i>Book of Giants</i> : Contexts and Prospects	115
<i>Loren T. Stuckenbruck</i>	
The <i>Book of Giants</i> among the Dead Sea Scrolls: Considerations of Method and a New Proposal on the Reconstruction of 4Q530	129
Part Three	
Enochic Traditions in Central Asia and China	
Exploring Connections and Affinities between Giants in Ancient Judaism and Manichaeism	
<i>Gábor Kósa</i>	
The <i>Book of Giants</i> Tradition in the Chinese Manichaica	145
<i>Enrico Morano</i>	
Some New Sogdian Fragments Related to Mani's <i>Book of Giants</i> and the Problem of the Influence of Jewish Enochic Literature	187
<i>John C. Reeves</i>	
Jacob of Edessa and the Manichaean <i>Book of Giants</i> ?	199
<i>Jens Wilkens</i>	
Remarks on the Manichaean <i>Book of Giants</i> : Once Again on Mahaway's Mission to Enoch	213
Index of Citations of Ancient Texts	231
Modern Author Index	251

The Humbling of the Arrogant and the “Wild Man” and “Tree Stump” Traditions in the *Book of Giants* and Daniel 4

Joseph L. Angel
Yeshiva University

I. Introduction

There is no question that the Qumran *Book of Giants*, with its focus on the violence perpetrated by the progeny of the watchers and the elevated role of the patriarch Enoch in the revelation of divine judgment, belongs to the early Enochic tradition. There is, in fact, increasing agreement among scholars that the work depends upon the *Book of Watchers* as a main source.¹ One can point to significant thematic and ideological links between *Giants* and other early Enochic writings, such as the *Book of Dreams* and the *Apocalypse of Weeks*.² Moreover, if J. T. Milik’s suggestion that 4Q203 and 4Q204 belong to the same manuscript is correct, then *Giants* was copied together with parts of the *Watchers*, *Dreams*, and the *Epistle* as early as the late first century BCE.³ At the same time, intriguing points of contact between the *Book of Giants* and a diverse array of ancient sources, including, for example, the *Epic of Gilgamesh* and Pseudo-Eupolemus,

¹ See, e.g., Józef T. Milik, *The Books of Enoch: Aramaic Fragments of Qumrân Cave 4* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), 298–99; Émile Puech, *Qumran Grotte 4.XXII: Textes araméens, première partie: 4Q529–549* (DJD 31; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001), 13; Loren T. Stuckenbruck, *The Book of Giants from Qumran: Texts, Translation, and Commentary* (TSAJ 63; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997), 24–25; Devorah Dimant, “Themes and Genres in the Aramaic Texts from Qumran,” in *Aramaica Qumranica: Proceedings of the Conference on the Aramaic Texts from Qumran in Aix-en-Provence, 30 June–2 July 2008*, ed. Kathel Berthelot and Daniel Stökl Ben Ezra (STDJ 94; Leiden: Brill, 2010), 15–45 (25); Matthew J. Goff, “When Giants Dreamed about the Flood: The *Book of Giants* and its Relationship to the *Book of Watchers*,” in *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha and the Scriptures*, ed. Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar (BETL 270; Leuven: Peeters, 2014), 61–88.

² See, e.g., Stuckenbruck, *The Book of Giants*, 91–92.

³ See Milik, *The Books of Enoch*, 178–79, 310. His contention remains unverifiable. At the very least 4Q203 and 4Q204 appear to have been copied by the same scribe. Consult Jonas Greenfield and Michael E. Stone, “The Enochic Pentateuch and the Date of the Similitudes,” *HTR* 70 (1977): 51–65 (54); Loren T. Stuckenbruck, “203. 4QEnochGiants^a ar,” in *Qumran Cave 4.XXVI: Cryptic Texts and Miscellanea, Part 1*, ed. S. J. Pfann et al. (DJD 36; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), 8–41 (8–10).

encourage us to broaden the scope and consider this composition within its wider literary and historical settings.

In the present inquiry I focus on the place of *Giants* in relation to another body of roughly contemporary Aramaic Jewish tradition also quite popular at Qumran, namely the Danielic writings. That there should be affinities between *Giants* and Danielic literature is not surprising. It is clear from the so-called pseudo-Daniel texts from Qumran (4Q243–245), which contain an intriguing mixture of Danielic and Enochic elements, that these two bodies of tradition were not always understood in isolation from one another.⁴ As Loren Stuckenbruck puts it, there existed “a cross-fertilization between intellectual traditions associated with both Daniel and Enoch, [which] would have been in a state of flux, not only after but perhaps also before and during the Maccabean crisis.”⁵ As far as I am aware, almost all previous scholarship devoted to the relationship between the *Book of Giants* and Daniel has been limited to analysis of the strikingly parallel visions of the divine courtroom found in 4Q530 2 ii 15–20 and Dan 7:9–10.⁶ As I will attempt to show, the parallels are far more extensive than previously appreciated. The primary aims of this essay are, first, to bring to light a neglected constellation of shared themes, forms, and language in the *Book of Giants* and Danielic tradition, in particular, the fourth chapter of the book of Daniel; and, second, to explore some possible explanations and implications of the observed points of contact. As we shall see, while direct literary dependence in either direction cannot be proven, the shared features indicate dependence on a common pool of traditions, raising interesting questions about the social location

⁴ See George J. Brooke et al., *Qumran Cave 4.XVII: Parabiblical Texts, Part 3* (DJD 22; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 95–164. 4Q243–245 are edited by John J. Collins and Peter W. Flint.

⁵ Loren T. Stuckenbruck, “Daniel and Early Enoch Traditions in the Dead Sea Scrolls,” in *The Book of Daniel: Composition and Reception*, 2 vols., ed. John J. Collins and Peter W. Flint (VTSup 83; FLOT 2; Leiden: Brill, 2001), 2:368–86 (376) (now available in updated form in idem, *The Myth of Rebellious Angels: Studies in Second Temple Judaism and New Testament Texts* [WUNT 1335; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014], 103–19). See also Collins and Flint, *DJD* 22, 134–36.

⁶ See, e.g., Loren T. Stuckenbruck, “The Throne-Theophany of the Book of Giants: Some New Light on the Background of Daniel 7,” in *The Scrolls and the Scriptures: Qumran Fifty Years After*, 2 vols., ed. Stanley E. Porter and Craig A. Evans (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 2:211–20; idem, “Daniel and Early Enoch Traditions,” 378–84; Ryan Stokes, “The Throne Visions of Daniel 7, 1 Enoch 14, and the Qumran Book of Giants (4Q530): An Analysis of Their Literary Relationship,” *DSD* 15 (2008): 340–58; Jonathan R. Trotter, “The Tradition of the Throne Vision in the Second Temple Period: Daniel 7:9–10, 1 Enoch 14:18–23, and the Book of Giants (4Q530),” *RevQ* 25/99 (2012): 451–66; Joseph L. Angel, “The Divine Courtroom Scenes of Daniel 7 and the Qumran Book of Giants: A Textual and Contextual Comparison,” in *The Divine Courtroom in Comparative Perspective*, ed. Shalom E. Holtz and Ari Mermelstein (BIS 132; Leiden: Brill, 2015), 25–48. See also the essay of Amanda Davis Bledsoe in the present volume.

and proximity of the scribal circles responsible for these works and indicating a closer relationship between the texts than previously recognized.

II. Parallels in Daniel 4 and the *Book of Giants*

Before turning to the parallels, a review of the contents of Daniel 4 and a few observations about its literary history are in order. Different variations of this story appear in the Masoretic Text and the Old Greek.⁷ Presently it will suffice to offer a brief summary according to the more compact Masoretic version. Nebuchadnezzar, the great king of Babylon, reports in the first-person that he has had a frightening dream. The dream is about a mighty tree that reaches up to the heavens and provides shelter and food for all the creatures of the world. Suddenly a watcher descends from heaven and commands that the tree be chopped down, leaving only the stump in the ground. The subject of the dream (either the stump or the king – the language is ambiguous) is put in chains, fed grass, and given the mind of a beast for a period of seven years in order to illustrate that sovereignty belongs to God alone. Of all the sages summoned to interpret this rather transparent dream, only Daniel, who possesses unique access to divine knowledge, proves capable. Daniel recognizes in the dream a decree of divine judgment against Nebuchadnezzar, and begs the king to avert his punishment through acts of kindness. Twelve months later, the king cannot help himself. After an expression of royal hubris he is banished to the wilderness, where he is transformed into a wild beast. After seven years, the humbled king proclaims the glory of the one true God. He is then rehabilitated and his royal powers are restored.

It is widely recognized that this story has a complex literary history incorporating a number of earlier traditions. Most prominently, it has become clear from sources like the Harran inscription and 4QPrayer of Nabonidus that the versions of Daniel 4 represent creative adaptations of materials originally associated with Nabonidus, the last Neo-Babylonian king.⁸ Moreover, many scholars have recognized in the combination of the king’s dream of the great tree and the story of his transformation into a wild beast a melding together of two originally separate traditional motifs with roots in ancient Mesopotamia.⁹ I shall return to these motifs below. Presently we may turn to the parallels from the *Book of Giants*.

⁷ A useful comparison of the versions and discussion of secondary literature is provided by Matthias Henze, *The Madness of King Nebuchadnezzar: The Ancient Near Eastern Origins and Early History of Interpretation of Daniel 4* (JSJSup 61; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 9–49.

⁸ This is the case whether one maintains that 4QNabonidus represents an intermediate stage between the Harran inscription and Daniel 4 or that 4QNabonidus and Daniel 4 make independent use of the Harran inscription. See further the secondary literature cited in n. 26.

⁹ See, e.g., Ernst Haag, *Die Errettung Daniels aus der Löwengrube. Untersuchungen zum Ursprung der biblischen Danieltradition* (SBS 110; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1983), 23;

The first passage of interest is the relatively well-preserved account of the dream-visions of Hahyah and Ohyah narrated in 4Q530 2 ii.¹⁰

Report of Dreams and Reaction

³ ... Thereupon two of them had dreams (באדין חלמו תריהון חלמיו) ⁴ and the sleep of their eyes fled from them (ונדת שנת עיניהון מנהון), and they arose ... [and they o]pened their eyes ⁵ ... [and then] told their dreams in the assembly of [their] c[omrades] the monsters.

Hahyah's Dream (parallel: 6Q8 3 + 2 [italics])

⁶ [... In] my dream I was watching this very night (ב[חלמי הוית חזא בליליא דן]) ⁷ [and there was a *large* garden planted with all sorts of trees] and [i]t had gardeners and they were watering ⁸ [every tree in the garden all the days (?)] large [sho]ts came out of their stump ⁹ [and from one tree came *three shoots*. I watch]ed until tongues of fire from ¹⁰ [heaven came down. I watched *until* the di]rt [was covered] with all the water, and the fire burned all ¹¹ [the trees of *this orchard all around and it did not* burn the tree and its shoots on] the earth, whil[e it was ¹² devastated with tongues of fire and water of the deluge]. This is the end of the dream.

Giants Perplexed, Interpreter Wanted

¹³ [Then Hahyah asked them about the meaning of the dream and] the giants were [not] able to tell him ¹⁴ [the d]ream ([ת]למ[א]) לה לחויא גבריא לשכחו (ולא) [...] this [dr]eam you should give [to Eno]ch the interpreting scribe, and he will interpret for us ¹⁵ the dream ([לחונ]ך לספר פרשא ויפשור לנא חלמא). Thereupon his fellow Ohyah declared and said to the giants,

Ohyah's Dream

¹⁶ I too had a dream this night (אף אנה חזית בחלמי בליליא דן), O giants, and, behold, the Ruler of Heaven came down to earth ¹⁷ and the seats were arranged and the Great Holy One sat do[wn], one hundred hund[reds] served him, one thousand thousands ¹⁸ [prostrat]ed themselves; al] [of them] in front of him, were standing and behold [boo]ks were opened and a judgment was pronounced and the judgment of ¹⁹ [the Great One was w]ritten [in a book] and a signature was signed for ... is over all who live and (all) flesh ... ²⁰ ... And such is the end of the dream.

Mahaway Sent to Enoch

[... Thereupon] all the giants [and monsters] grew afraid ²¹ and called Mahaway. He came to the assembly [of the monsters] and the giants and they sent him to Enoch ²² [and they delib]erated and said to him: "Go [to him] ...] ... ²³ ... And he said to him, "He will tell [y]ou the interpretation of the dreams (יחוא [ל]כה פ[ש]ר חלמיא) ..."

Enoch Interprets (4Q530 7 ii)

⁶ and Enoch saw him and hailed him, and Mahaway said to him, "What ... ¹⁰ [in order that we may k]now from you their interpretati[o]n ([ו]ן) מנד פשרה ([ו]ן) ...] ... [Then Enoch

Larry M. Wills, *The Jew in the Court of the Foreign King: Ancient Jewish Court Legends* (HDR 26; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), 101–13.

¹⁰ For the reconstructed column, which actually consists of several fragments (2 ii + 6 + 7 i + 8–11 + 12[?]), see *DJD* 31, Pl. II. In using the text from 6Q8 3 + 2 to help restore the text of ll. 7–11, I follow Puech, *DJD* 31, 28. Note, however, the objections of Stuckenbruck in *DJD* 36, 80. See also his article in this volume. Unless otherwise noted, translations of *Giants* have been adapted from Edward Cook, "Book of Giants," in *DSSR* 3:472–511.

explained to Mahaway the dreams] ¹¹ [and he said to him, “With regard to the gar]deners that [came do[wn from heaven, (גג]נין די מן שמיין ג]חתו)] [these are the watchers who have come down ...]”

The pericope begins by noting that the two gargantuan brothers are disturbed by what they have seen. Lines 3–4 report that they have had dreams and that the contents of those dreams were disturbing enough to cause “the sleep of their eyes to flee from them.” In lines 6–12 Hahyah tells his dream of the destruction of an orchard by fire and water before the assembly of the giants. This is followed by Ohyah’s account of his dream of the descent of the divine courtroom to earth and its pronouncement of judgment (ll. 15–20). While the ominous implications of the two dreams are fairly transparent from the reader’s perspective, the giants are frightened and perplexed as to their meaning. They send the giant Mahaway to Enoch to seek the interpretation (ll. 20–23). Mahaway meets with the patriarch, who begins to interpret the dreams. The body of Enoch’s interpretation is not preserved, but it likely clarified the inescapability of the giants’ impending punishment.

While the role of Enoch looms large here, in some respects this passage is more reminiscent of Danielic than Enochic tradition. Most notably, the notion that the giants were informed of their own doom through dream-visions appears nowhere else in early Enochic literature. It does, however, closely resemble the motif of the humbling of arrogant kings through the revelation of their inferiority to God, which is attested not only in Daniel 4, but also in Daniel 2 and 5.¹¹ A closer comparison of the *Giants* passage with Daniel 4 indeed reveals a number of striking correspondences. In each text, a powerful figure renowned for violence, arrogance, and inflicting suffering on human beings has a dream-vision (Dan 4:2; cf. 2:1; 5:5). The dream-vision creates anxiety and a resulting physiological response in the seer (4:2; cf. 2:1; 5:5–6). The dream-vision perplexes the seer even though its meaning is somewhat obvious from the reader’s perspective (4:3–4; cf. 2:3; 5:7). The dream-vision is presented in the first-person before a group that is unable to grasp its meaning (4:4; cf. 5:8). The interpretation of the dream-vision is sought from the hero of the Jews who has the characteristics of a scribe and access to divine knowledge (e.g., 4:6; cf. 2:47; 5:12). The interpretation of the dream-vision foretells the imminent punishment and humbling of the seer, which entails his removal from a position of power by God (4:21–22; cf. 2:44–45; 5:26–28). Note, however, that according to the present form of Daniel 4, the king’s power is restored, whereas in *Giants*, the punishment appears to be irreversible. In this sense, the dream-visions of the giant brothers are perhaps more comparable to Belshazzar’s vision of the writing on the wall in Daniel 5. In terms of form, parts of the dream-vision are repeated in the course of interpre-

¹¹ The motif occurs elsewhere in Second Temple period literature as well. See, e.g., 2 Macc 3; 9:5–27; 1 Macc 6:1–17. Cf. Isaiah 14.

tation (4Q530 7 ii 11 and Dan 4:16–23; cf. 2:37–45; 5:26–28). Finally, there are some striking instances of shared vocabulary. Note, for example, שרשוהי (6Q8 2 1; Dan 4:12, 20, 23), עקרה[ו]ן (4Q530 2 ii 8) and עקר (Dan 4:12, 20, 23). Both texts also frequently use Aramaic roots associated with dream-visions and their interpretation, including חלם, חזי, פשר, חזי, and חזי.

In the light of this impressive list of shared elements, it is intriguing to note that variations of two central images in Daniel 4, namely those of the chopped down tree and the wild man among the beasts, also appear in the *Book of Giants*. The former motif appears in the dream-vision of Hahyah presented above (4Q530 2 ii 6–12). Of course the context is quite different and many specific details differ. Most notably, in Daniel there is one magnificent tree whereas in *Giants* there are many trees. However, several thematic and linguistic parallels may be observed. In both passages, there is a dream of a tree or trees representing the arrogant figure or figures. The tree or trees are destroyed by divine initiative, and only “shoots/roots” (שרשוהי) from a “stump” (עקר) are allowed to survive. In each text, the shoots/roots of the stump signify future life in recognition of the supreme power of God (that is, the converted Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel, and perhaps Noah and his sons in *The Book of Giants*).¹² In Daniel, the punishment is decreed by “the watchers” (v. 14). It is presumably they who follow the direct order to “chop down the tree!” (v. 13) shouted by the watcher who descends from heaven in verse 10. While in the *Giants* passage it is not clear by whose agency the trees are destroyed, the answer could perhaps be surmised from the parallel dream of the giant called Hiyya (= Hahyah) in the “Midrash of Shemhazai and Azael,” according to which “angels came with axes in their hands and cut down the trees.”¹³

The second motif from Daniel 4, namely that of the wild man, appears in a separate passage found in 4Q531 22 3–12.

¹² This interpretation of the giants tradition is explicit only in the later “Midrash of Shemhazai and Azael.” Based upon the attribution of narration to Rabbi Joseph bar Hiyya, Milik, *The Books of Enoch*, 339, dates the work to the fourth century CE. Annette Yoshiko Reed suggests that it is a much later compendium of traditions dating to the early medieval period (*Fallen Angels and the History of Judaism and Christianity: The Reception of Enochic Literature* [New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005], 258–59).

¹³ See John C. Reeves, *Jewish Lore in Manichaean Cosmogony: Studies in the Book of Giants Traditions* (HUCM 14; Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1992), 95. This reading is according to Milik’s “M” manuscript (Henoch Albeck, *Midrash Bereshit Rabbati ex libro R. Mosi Haddarsban collectus e codice Pragensi* [Jerusalem: Mekize Nirdamim, 1940], 29, 14–31, 8 [fol. 10–11]). In the Oxford Bodleian manuscript version (Milik’s “B” manuscript), the trees are destroyed by a single angel. For the texts, see Milik, *The Books of Enoch*, 325. For a recent attempt to delineate the literary relationship between the *Book of Giants* and the *Midrash*, see Ken M. Penner, “Did the Midrash of Shemihazai and Azael Use the Book of Giants?” in *Sacra Scriptura: How “Non-Canonical” Texts Functioned in Early Judaism and Early Christianity*, ed. James H. Charlesworth, Lee M. McDonald and Blake A. Jurgens (London: T&T Clark, 2014), 15–45.

³ [I am] mighty, and by the mighty strength of my arm and my own great strength (ובתקוף) ⁴ [and I went up against a]ll flesh, and I made war against them (חיל דרעי ובחסן גבורתי); but I did not ⁵ [prevail, and I am not] able to stand firm against them, for my opponents ⁶ [are angels who] reside in [heav]en, and they dwell in the holy places (ובקדשיא אנון שרין). *vacat* And they were not ⁷ [defeated, for they] are stronger than I (תקיפין מני). ⁸ [] *rb* of the wild beast has come, and the wild man they call [] (רה די חיות) [] [] ⁹ [] and then Ohyah said to him *vacat* “I have been forced to have a dream ¹⁰ [and] the sleep of my eyes [vanished], to let me see a vision. Now I know that because of ¹¹ [the vision I will not] sleep, and I will not hasten for ... ¹² [... O Gilgamesh, tell your [d]ream ... (... לגמיש אמר [ח]למכה ...)”

The identity of the speaker in this mysterious text is unclear. Noting the arrogant attitude attributed to the giants in roughly contemporary literature (e.g., 3 Macc 2:4, Wis 14:6, and Josephus, *Ant.* 1.73), John Reeves suggests that the speaker is a giant.¹⁴ Matthew Goff agrees and offers a sensible specification. Since Ohyah responds to the speaker in line 9, and Gilgamesh is the only other giant mentioned in the passage (in line 12), it is reasonable to claim that the latter figure speaks in lines 3–7.¹⁵ If he is correct, then here the giant Gilgamesh tells of his tremendous power, his conflict with both earthly and heavenly entities, and his defeat brought about by the superiority of the latter. The themes and some of the language here are reminiscent of the conflict in Daniel 7 involving the fourth beast. For my present purpose, however, I wish to focus on the continuation of this passage in lines 8–9 and its relationship to Daniel 4.

Émile Puech reconstructs and translates as follows:¹⁶

הי ארו קל געררה די חיות ברא אתה ואיש ברא קרין ⁹ [נקמתהו] וכדן אמר לה אוהיה ⁸]

⁸ [Voici que] parvint [le cri du gémi]ssment des bêtes des champs et (que) les hommes de la campagne crièrent ⁹ [leur(s) vengeance(s).] Et ainsi lui dit Ohyah.

According to this reading, this passage refers to the shrieks of both beasts and humans, who have suffered violence at the hands of the giants and are seeking justice. This would fit nicely with the report in the *Book of Watchers* that describes the earth as bringing accusation against “the lawless ones” (1 *En.* 7:6; cf. 8:4; 9:2–3, 10). However, such a narrative detail would awkwardly interrupt the speech in lines 3–7 and Ohyah’s response to it in line 9. Further, one might ask why beasts and men are specified as being “wild/of the field,” a detail lacking in the *Watchers* passages. Moreover, the interpretation of the word איש as “un substantif collectif” is very uncertain and in this context a singular meaning seems more likely. Edward Cook offers a preferable translation:¹⁷

¹⁴ Reeves, *Jewish Lore*, 118.

¹⁵ See Matthew J. Goff, “Gilgamesh the Giant: The Qumran *Book of Giants*’ Appropriation of *Gilgamesh* Motifs,” *DSD* 16 (2009): 221–53 (242).

¹⁶ *DJD* 31, 74–75.

¹⁷ *DSSR* 3:495.

⁸ [] of the wild beast has come, and the wild man they call [me] ⁹ [] and then Ohyah said to him

According to this reading, line 8 constitutes the continuation of the speech of Gilgamesh from lines 3–7. The singular “wild man” is thus best taken as referring to him.¹⁸ One advantage of this approach is that Ohyah’s response in line 9 appears directly after Gilgamesh is finished speaking, without any awkward intrusion.

Now we are prepared to note several tantalizing links to the story of the king’s animalization recounted in Daniel 4. Both passages are reflective first person accounts of powerful figures beginning with arrogant words and followed by the realization of inferiority to divine power. If the speaker in *Giants* is indeed Gilgamesh, then both may be understood as Mesopotamian kings who have been humbled. If the first visible words in line 12 are to be translated “[O Gi]lgamesh, tell your [d]ream,” then both figures have received dream-visions.¹⁹ Both passages refer to wild beasts in close relation to the protagonists, who are themselves characterized as beastly. The phrase “wild beasts” (חיות ברא), which appears in 4Q531 22 8, also appears six times in Daniel 4, where it denotes the wild beasts with whom Nebuchadnezzar will dwell as he transforms into a beastly figure himself.²⁰ Both protagonists are referred to as wild men. The phrase “wild man” (איש ברא) in 4Q531 22 8 does not appear in Daniel 4. However, in verse 13 Nebuchadnezzar is characterized as a man gone wild: “Let his mind be altered from that of a man, and let him be given the mind of a beast” (לבבה לה מן-אנושא [אנושא] ישנון ולבב חיוה יתיבה לה). There is recognition of an element of social separation engendered by the figure’s wildness (in *Giants*, “the wild man they call [me]” and in Dan 4:22, “You will be driven away from men”).²¹ Finally, the characterizations of Gilgamesh in *Giants* and Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel as wild men both appear to relate to the *Epic of Gilgamesh*. The portrayal of Gilgamesh roaming like a wild man after the death of Enkidu is a well-known image from the Mesopotamian epic.²² And, as Matthias Henze has pointed out, Daniel’s portrait of Nebuchadnezzar as a wild man is best understood as a polemical reversal of Enkidu’s metamorphosis portrayed in *Gilgamesh*.²³

¹⁸ On the “wild man” tradition in Mesopotamian texts (in relation to the book of Daniel), see Henze, *The Madness of King Nebuchadnezzar*, 93–99.

¹⁹ So Stuckenbruck, *The Book of Giants*, 164. Puech’s reading (“[Then Gi]lgamesh said, ‘Your [d]ream is ...’”) is also possible. See *DJD* 31, 75, 77–78.

²⁰ Vv. 9, 18, 20, 22, 29. Cf. Dan 2:38.

²¹ Cf. Henryk Drawnel, “The Mesopotamian Background of the Enochic Giants and Evil Spirits,” *DSD* 21 (2014): 14–38 (21–22 n. 24).

²² Gregory Mobley, “The Wild Man in the Bible and the Ancient Near East,” *JBL* 116 (1997): 217–33 (221–22).

²³ Henze, *The Madness of King Nebuchadnezzar*, 90–99.

III. Explanations and Implications

Having presented the parallel features in Daniel 4 and the *Book of Giants*, I would like to explore some possible explanations and implications. First, we may address how these tantalizing points of contact are best understood. While I have focused on similarities, the fact remains that these compositions are vastly different. The common elements are employed in diverse ways and in much different contexts, and direct literary dependence in either direction cannot be demonstrated. This is true even in the case of the most striking parallel between *Giants* and Danielic tradition, the twin throne theophanies (4Q530 2 ii 15–20 and Dan 7:9–10).²⁴ At the same time, it would be insufficient to describe the correspondences as entirely coincidental. It seems clear from the heavy concentration of shared themes, literary forms, and language that the scribal circles responsible for *Giants* and Daniel 4 made use of a shared pool of traditions and creatively adapted them in accordance with their own specific aims. It is worth noting that this conclusion is in harmony with a growing body of scholarship illuminating the extent to which the larger Aramaic corpus discovered at Qumran, which includes some thirty literary compositions, exhibits shared concerns and dependence on a common pool of language and tradition, suggesting that clusters of these texts originated in closely related scribal circles.²⁵ However, in our case the evidence can perhaps lead us to a greater degree of specificity. In particular, the striking combination of the tree stump and wild man motifs in connection with revelatory dreams portending the humbling of arrogant figures of power in each text raises a question: are we dealing with two works that have independently

²⁴ See the secondary literature cited in n. 6.

²⁵ See, e.g., the studies of Daniel A. Machiela and Andrew B. Perrin, “Tobit and the *Genesis Apocryphon*: Toward a Family Portrait,” *JBL* 133 (2014): 111–32; Andrew B. Perrin, “Dream-Visions in the Aramaic Dead Sea Scrolls: Shared Compositional Patterns and Concerns” (Ph.D. diss., McMaster University, 2013), a revised form of which is now available as *The Dynamics of Dream-Vision Revelation in the Aramaic Dead Sea Scrolls* (JAJSup 19; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2015). Some notable recent treatments of the Qumran Aramaic corpus, reflecting a variety of approaches and perspectives, include Devorah Dimant, “The Qumran Aramaic Texts and the Qumran Community,” in *Flores Florentino: Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Early Jewish Studies in Honour of Florentino García Martínez*, ed. Anthony Hilhorst et al. (JSJSup 122; Leiden: Brill, 2007), 197–205; Jonathan Ben-Dov, “Hebrew and Aramaic Writing in the Pseudepigrapha and the Dead Sea Scrolls: The Ancient Near Eastern Background and the Quest for a Written Authority,” *Tarbiz* 78 (2008–09): 27–60 (Hebrew), vi (English summary); Florentino García Martínez, “Scribal Practices in the Aramaic Literary Texts from Qumran,” in *Myths, Martyrs, and Modernity: Studies in the History of Religions in Honour of Jan N. Bremmer*, ed. Jitse Dijkstra et al. (SHR 127; Leiden: Brill, 2010), 329–41; Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, “Aramaic Texts from Qumran and the Authoritativeness of Hebrew Scriptures: Preliminary Observations,” in *Authoritative Scriptures in Ancient Judaism*, ed. Mladen Popović (JSJSup 141; Leiden: Brill, 2010), 155–71. See also the articles in Berthelot and Stökl Ben Ezra, *Aramaica Qumranica*.

combined a number of the same disparate motifs? Or, do these affinities reflect common dependence upon a nucleus of traditions that had already been gathered together by the time each work was composed?

In order to approach this question it will be helpful to return to the literary history of Daniel 4 in more detail. Fortunately, generations of curious inquiry into the background of this composition and some fortuitous archaeological discoveries have afforded us a unique opportunity to peer behind the curtain into the process of the transmission of traditions leading to the forms of the tale currently available to us in the Masoretic and Old Greek versions of the Bible. As I noted above, it is widely recognized that proto-Daniel 4 as well as 4QPrayer of Nabonidus reflect dependence upon traditions originally associated with Nabonidus. In particular it is clear that these two Jewish texts, which give no indication of a direct literary relationship,²⁶ are both closely related to the sixth century Harran inscription, in which Nabonidus speaks in the first person to a public audience, presents himself as a religious teacher, shares a dream vision, and recounts the story of his absence from Babylon for a period of ten years.²⁷ A recent essay by Carol Newsom illuminates the process by which Jewish authors of the Second Temple period could have produced new narratives about the Babylonian king, namely Daniel 4 and 4QPrayer of Nabonidus, utilizing a sixth century inscription deriving from across cultural and linguistic lines.²⁸ She is critical of previous attempts to explain the development of these narratives, which typically employ source and redaction critical methods, as “too mechanical in their understanding of the nature of literary production.”²⁹ Instead,

²⁶ In agreement with Henze, *The Madness of King Nebuchadnezzar*, 68–73; Carol A. Newsom, “Why Nabonidus? Excavating Traditions from Qumran, the Hebrew Bible, and Neo-Babylonian Sources,” in *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Transmission of Traditions and Production of Texts*, ed. Sarianna Metso, Hindy Najman, and Eileen Schuller (STDJ 92; Leiden: Brill, 2010), 57–79 (69). An alternative view of the evidence, namely that there is a linear tradition-historical development of sorts from the Harran inscription to 4QPrayer of Nabonidus to Daniel 4, is maintained by a number of scholars. See, e.g., Peter W. Flint, “The Daniel Tradition at Qumran,” in *Eschatology, Messianism, and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. Craig A. Evans and Peter W. Flint (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 41–60 (58); Florentino García Martínez, *Qumran and Apocalyptic: Studies on the Aramaic Texts from Qumran* (STDJ 9; Leiden: Brill, 1992), 129–35; Esther Eshel, “Possible Sources of the Book of Daniel,” in Collins and Flint, *The Book of Daniel*, 2:387–89; Collins, *DJD* 22, 86. Note, however, that Collins observes that “The fragmentary state of [4QPrNab] does not permit us to claim a direct literary relationship. The stories may be different developments of a common tradition” (*Daniel* [Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993], 218).

²⁷ See C. J. Gadd, “The Harran Inscriptions of Nabonidus,” *AnSt* 8 (1958): 35–92; and more recently, Hanspeter Schaudig, *Die Inschriften Nabonids von Babylon und Kyros’ des Grossen samt den in ihrem Umfeld entstandenen Tendenzschriften* (AOAT 256; Münster: Ugarit Verlag, 2001), 486–99.

²⁸ Newsom, “Why Nabonidus?” 57–80.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 73.

applying insights from cognitive literary theory, she proposes that a process of oral transmission and “conceptual integration” or “blending” stands behind their construction. For Newsom, the starting point was the public recitation of the Harran inscription. The contents of this long text most likely were not memorized verbatim. Instead, the “memory of it would be stored as a template, an outline with key points of content.”³⁰ Over a period of several centuries Jewish tradents creatively reconfigured and blended parts of this template with an array of stock elements from the repertoire of traditional Jewish sources. So, in the case of the *Prayer of Nabonidus*, elements from the Harran inscription could have been blended with a source like Isaiah 38, the tale of King Hezekiah’s illness, healing, and thanksgiving prayer. In proto-Daniel 4 elements of the same template could have been blended with Jewish traditions such as the dream interpretation in Genesis 41 or the story of royal disobedience, chastisement, and reform in 2 Samuel 12.³¹ Whether or not one agrees with these specific suggestions, Newsom’s general explanation of the process behind the construction of these narratives is compelling; its greatest strength is the realistic picture it provides of the centuries-long process of transmission of tradition and creativity lying behind the production of Daniel 4 and the *Prayer of Nabonidus*. Moreover, it illustrates how these two quite similar Jewish Aramaic texts could come to be constructed independently of one another, avoiding the improbable assumption of a direct literary relationship between them.

While Newsom does not concern herself with in-depth speculation regarding the complex web of component sources utilized to construct Daniel 4, scholars have already identified a number of traditions that were likely interwoven with the material from the Harran inscription. The most important of these for our present purposes are the images of the chopped down tree and the king as wild man, which, many source critics argue, originally circulated separately before being combined in Daniel 4.³² Each of these motifs can be traced back to Mesopotamian tradition and, within their Danielic context, may be understood to function as anti-Babylonian polemics.

The portrayal of the king as an enormous tree in Daniel 4 appears to derive from the image of the cosmic tree, a well-known symbol of cosmic order in the ancient Near East.³³ In Sumerian and Assyrian sources, the king is sometimes equated with the cosmic tree as a means of associating him with the maintenance

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 74.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 74–76.

³² Haag, *Die Errettung Daniels*, 23; Wills, *The Jew in the Court of the Foreign King*, 101–13. See also Collins, *Daniel*, 219.

³³ See, e.g., Geo Widengren, *The King and the Tree of Life in Ancient Near Eastern Religion* (UUA 1951.4; Uppsala: Lundequist, 1951); E. O. James, *The Tree of Life: An Archaeological Study* (SHR 11; Leiden: Brill, 1966).

of divine order.³⁴ In Nebuchadnezzar's inscription at Wadi Brisa in northern Lebanon, to which I shall return below, Babylon may be compared to a great shelter-providing tree.³⁵ Herodotus conveys the tradition of dreams associating the Persian kings Cyrus and Xerxes with enormous vegetation that grows to cover the earth (1.108; 7.19). In an apparent reversal of this widespread motif, the allegory of Ezekiel 31 represents the Assyrian empire as a magnificent cedar of Lebanon whose enormous height is equated with hubris.³⁶ The chopping down of the tree represents the divinely ordained judgment against the empire. Significantly, it appears that Ezekiel 31 represents one of the key input traditions utilized by Daniel 4. As P. W. Coxon notes, "the appropriation of the major theme (great height, impressive appearance and universal dominance of the tree)," as well as "the borrowing of several of the details, as for instance the picture of the birds at home in the branches and the shelter provided for the animals underneath," demonstrate the extent of the dependence of Daniel 4 on the Ezekiel passage.³⁷

The other motif of interest in Daniel 4 also appears to be connected to Mesopotamian tradition. As Henze has shown, each of the elements in the story of the king's transformation in the wilderness finds an "exact counterpart [within the *Epic of Gilgamesh*] in the description of Enkidu, the wild man, before his metamorphosis into a fully civilized human being."³⁸ He notes the following points of comparison:³⁹

³⁴ See, e.g., Widengren, *The King and the Tree of Life*, 42–48; Simo Parpola, "The Assyrian Tree of Life: Tracing the Origins of Jewish Monotheism and Greek Philosophy," *JNES* 52 (1993): 161–208; Miguel Civil, "Literary Text About Ur-Namma," *AuOr* 14 (1996): 163–67; and the discussion of Henze, *The Madness of King Nebuchadnezzar*, 73–83.

³⁵ So Rudolf Meyer, *Das Gebet des Nabonid: Eine in den Qumran-Handschriften wiederentdeckte Weisheitszählung* (SSAWL.PH 107.3; Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1962), 44; Aage Bentzen, *Daniel*, 2nd ed. (HAT 19; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1952), 43; Mathias Delcor, *Le Livre de Daniel* (SB; Paris: Gabalda, 1971), 113. For the passage of the inscription in question (WBN VIII 27–37), see Rocío Da Riva, *The Twin Inscriptions of Nebuchadnezzar at Brisa (Wadi Esh-Scharbin, Lebanon): A Historical and Philological Study* (AfOB 32; Vienna: Institut für Orientalistik der Universität Wien, 2012), 61. She translates as follows: "I united all mankind peacefully under its (Babylon's) everlasting protection." The possibility of tree imagery is perhaps more easily discerned in the translation of Stephen Langdon, "Under its everlasting shadow I have gathered all the peoples in peace." See his *Building Inscriptions of the Neo-Babylonian Empire. Part I: Nabopolassar and Nebuchadnezzar* (Paris: Leroux, 1905), 171–72. Cf. 4Q552 2 ii 5, where after being asked its name a personified tree identifies itself as Babylon.

³⁶ A thorough discussion to the tree imagery in Ezekiel 31 is provided by Walther Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 2 vols. (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979–83), 2:146–48.

³⁷ Peter W. Coxon, "The Great Tree of Daniel 4," in *A Word in Season: Essays in Honour of William McKane*, ed. James D. Martin and Philip R. Davies (JSOTSup 42; Sheffield: JSOT, 1986), 91–111 (102–3).

³⁸ Henze, *The Madness of King Nebuchadnezzar*, 98.

³⁹ The chart is reproduced from *ibid.*, 98.

<i>Daniel 4:30</i>	<i>Epic of Gilgamesh</i>
He was driven away from men,	There was a young man who came from the mountains [...] He ever walks about on the mountains [...] (I.150, 153)
he ate grass like cattle, and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven	All the time he eats herbs with cattle, all the time he sets his feet at the watering-place. (I.154–55)
until his hair grew like eagle’s [feathers] And his nails like [the talons of] birds.	Shaggy with hair his whole body, he is furnished with tresses like a woman. His locks of hair grew luxuriant like Nisaba. He knows neither people nor country. He is dressed like Sumuqan. (I.105–9)

According to his interpretation of these points of contact, which seems quite plausible, the story of Nebuchadnezzar’s animalization constitutes an ironic reversal of Enkidu’s transformation. The king of Babylon, supposedly the pinnacle of all civilization, is transformed into a wild beast by the hand of the true king, the God of Israel.⁴⁰

What emerges from this brief sketch is that the major components of Daniel 4 can be explained as the result of the blending of elements from the Harran inscription with two motifs with Mesopotamian roots that have been adapted subversively by Jewish scribes into anti-Babylonian polemics. Unfortunately it cannot be known exactly how or when these motifs were combined, and it is questionable whether we can reconstruct the actual sources of which they were originally a part, as attempted by some scholars.⁴¹ However, it is worth pausing to consider one intriguing piece of evidence which may suggest that the combination of the tree stump and wild man motifs were associated with Nebuchadnezzar already in the sixth century BCE. I am referring to the twin inscriptions at Wadi Brisa. These two texts sit across from one another on the facing slopes of a river bed and are accompanied by partially preserved images of the king. While the relevance of the inscription for the study of Daniel 4 has been recognized by

⁴⁰ Henze, *The Madness of King Nebuchadnezzar*, 99 n. 118, rightly observes that the play on elements known from the *Epic of Gilgamesh* in Daniel 4 does not necessitate a relationship of literary dependency. Rather “it would suffice to assume that that biblical author was aware of these traditions and shared them with the various accounts of the wild man throughout the ancient Near East.”

⁴¹ See, e.g., Haag, *Die Errettung Daniels*.

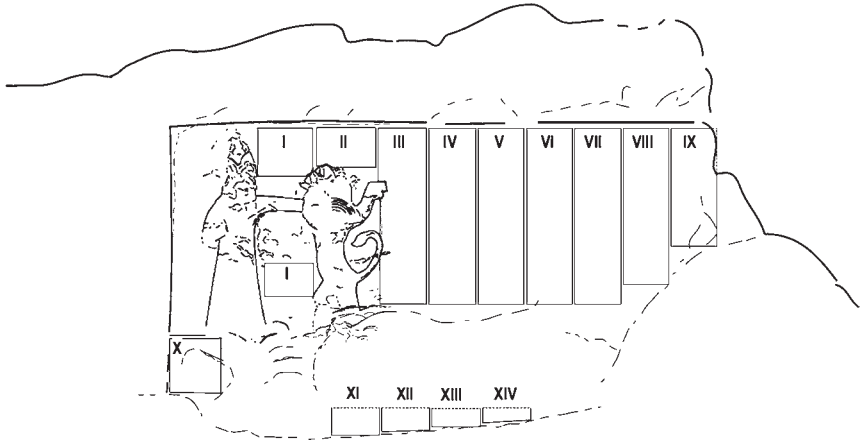


Fig. 1: Drawing of the Relief Decorating WBO.⁴²

some scholars,⁴³ the reliefs have largely been ignored.⁴⁴ The relief on the western side depicts Nebuchadnezzar battling a lion (see Figure 1). A similar image of the king is preserved at Wadi es-Saba, slightly to the north.

The relief on the eastern side of Wadi Brisa shows him standing in front of a tall tree with no leaves, perhaps a dead cedar (see Figure 2).⁴⁵ In the accompanying inscription, the Babylonian monarch speaks of the “strong cedars that I cut with my pure hands in the Lebanon.”⁴⁶ Following a long line of Mesopotamian leaders, Nebuchadnezzar apparently coveted the timber of the forests of Lebanon for his building projects.⁴⁷ He boasts of his ability to exploit the important resource: “Strong cedars, thick and tall, of splendid beauty, supreme their fitting appearance, huge yield of the Lebanon, I bundled them like reeds ... and I put them in Babylon like Euphrates poplars.” The continuation of this passage explicitly refers to the purpose of the monument in strongly propagandistic terms:

⁴² This image and that of Figure 2 were provided courtesy of R. Da Riva. They are also available in Da Riva, *The Twin Inscriptions*, 152–53.

⁴³ See, e.g., Collins, *Daniel*, 224.

⁴⁴ A notable exception is Jonathon Ben-Dov, who discusses the relationship of the Brisa reliefs to Daniel 4 and other contemporary Jewish texts in an unpublished essay entitled “Iconography and Myth from Nebuchadnezzar to the Fallen Angels.” I thank him for sharing this paper with me.

⁴⁵ See Rocío Da Riva, “A Lion in the Cedar Forest: International Politics and Pictorial Self-Representations of Nebuchadnezzar II (605–562 BC),” in *Studies on War in the Ancient Near East: Collected Essays on Military History*, ed. Jordi Vidal (AOAT 372; Münster: Ugarit Verlag, 2010), 165–93 (180 n. 76); eadem, *The Twin Inscriptions*, 94.

⁴⁶ Translations of the Brisa texts follow Da Riva, *The Twin Inscriptions*, 42–63.

⁴⁷ See, e.g., Andrew R. George, *The Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic: Introduction, Critical Edition and Cuneiform Texts*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 1:93–94.

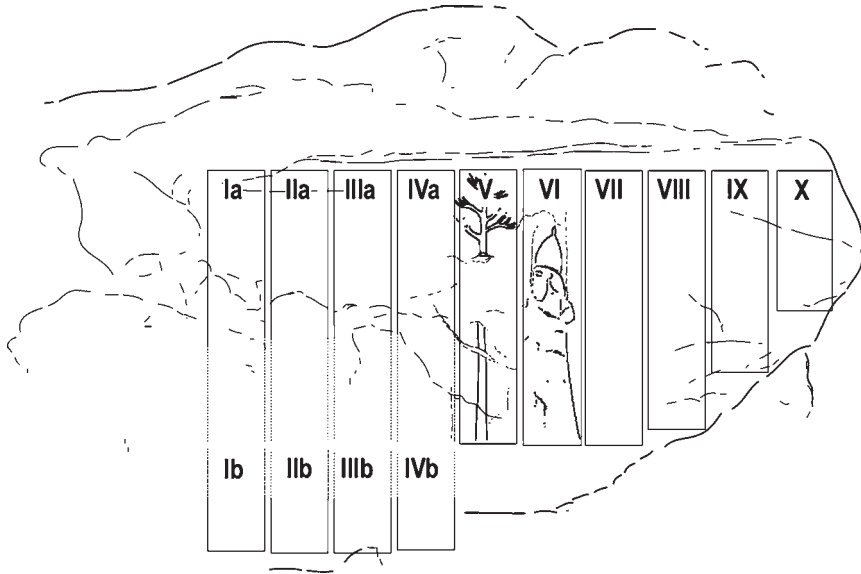


Fig. 2: Drawing of the Relief Decorating WBN.

“I installed an eternal image of myself as king to protect (them) ... I reunited the widespread people in the totality of all lands, and I wrote an inscription in the mountain passes and established (it) with my royal image for ever after.”

As Rocío Da Riva observes, this monument, as well as several others established by Nebuchadnezzar in the same region, was strategically located in an open, exposed area along a vital travel route. The clear purpose was to communicate imperial dominance to the broad public, including potential enemies, subdued natives, and future generations. While very few of those people who viewed the inscription, both during the reign of the king and generations later, would have been able to read Akkadian, the general elements of the empire’s message would still have been conveyed by the images of the king and “the monumentality of the cuneiform.”⁴⁸ Indeed it seems plausible that such monuments successfully fulfilled their purpose of conveying imperial ideology across cultural and linguistic boundaries. It is not difficult to imagine that Jews in the region also would have become aware of the message.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Da Riva, “A Lion in the Cedar Forest,” 169–71. The quotation appears on p. 171.

⁴⁹ Perhaps an analogy can be made with the Harran inscription, the contents of which clearly became known to and were creatively adapted by Jews in the Aramaic language. As mentioned above, according to Newsom, knowledge of the Harran inscription crossed cultural and linguistic boundaries by means of a process of public recitation and oral transmission (“Why Nabonidus?” 67–76). To be sure, the Brisa inscriptions are in many ways different from the Harran stelae, and it is not clear how widely the contents circulated, although preservation of

To be sure, the dead tree on the relief is a far cry from the flourishing cosmic tree of Daniel. Moreover, while the characteristically Assyrian image of the king wrestling the lion does evoke the wild man tradition, it is quite different from the passive bovine imagery of Daniel. Even so, it is tempting to suggest that Daniel 4 has adapted the imagery from Wadi Brisa. If this is the case, we can recognize a striking critical inversion of imperial propaganda. Whereas in the Brisa monument the king's ability to level cedar trees is projected as evidence of the empire's divinely ordained power, in Daniel the king is himself a chopped down tree, brought low by the *true* king, the God of Israel. Similarly, whereas the image of the king wrestling the lion at Brisa is meant to project the king's super-human might and territorial dominance, in Daniel his association with wild beasts is turned into a passive and pitiful image, again a loss of control brought about by the one *true* king. If these suggestions are accurate, then key elements of Daniel 4 may be explained as a creative blending of traditions associated with Nabonidus and Nebuchadnezzar dating to the sixth century BCE.

We may now return to the question of the meaning of the parallels in Daniel 4 and the *Book of Giants*. We cannot rule out the possibility that the fusion of the image of the humbling of the giants through dream-visions with the wild man and tree stump motifs in the *Book of Giants* simply indicates that the author of this work has utilized a number of the same motifs, which were readily available within contemporary scribal circles. After all, analogues for each of these individual themes can be found elsewhere in biblical and Second Temple tradition. However, to my knowledge, Daniel 4 and the *Book of Giants* are the only two compositions to combine all three of them. This fact, together with the shared linguistic and formal features already observed, makes it more likely that the two works reflect common dependence upon a nucleus of traditions that had already been gathered together.

I would like to suggest that the most likely scenario is that the author of the *Book of Giants* has drawn from the collection of traditions associated with the Babylonian king lying behind our current forms of Daniel 4. The most convincing support for this explanation relates to the remarkable innovation of the *Book of Giants* that the giants themselves were informed of their doom through dream-visions. As I noted above, this striking notion is found nowhere else in early Enochic tradition and seems foreign to it. However, given our discussion to this point, it is most sensibly understood as an Enochic adaptation of the tradition of the humbling dream-vision of the king akin to the one now pre-

part of the same text with minor variants at Nahr el-Kalb, located along the most important coastal road of the ancient Near East (Via Maris), indicates wider circulation. Nonetheless, if we permit ourselves to imagine an analogous process of public recitation and oral transmission across cultural and linguistic lines, it seems plausible that Jews would have become aware of the imperial message of the monuments, which was meant to be impressed upon the consciousness of the subjects of Babylonian rule in the Levant.

served in Daniel 4. The setting has shifted from the realm of history to that of primordial mythology. The dreamer is no longer a king but two giants,⁵⁰ and the post of the Jewish dream interpreter is now filled by Enoch. We may also note that the suggestion that *Giants* draws from this particular nucleus of tradition is entirely possible from a chronological perspective. Assuming that the *Book of Giants* depends upon the *Book of Watchers*, the earliest date of its composition would be in the late third century BCE.⁵¹ While the final form of the book of Daniel dates to the second century, we have seen that the sources of Daniel 4, and perhaps even the blending of our three separate motifs of interest, stretch back to the sixth century.

This interpretation of the evidence is enticing for another reason. There is a natural explanation for why a Jewish author of the Hellenistic period choosing to expand upon the Enochic *Watchers* tradition by shifting the spotlight onto the giants and their exploits would find it useful to blend elements from the collection of anti-imperial traditions lying behind our current forms of Daniel 4. Scholars have noted the great popularity of the gigantomachy during the Hellenistic period, and the fact that this myth was widely understood as a paradigm for the conflict between Greek and barbarian forces – the victorious Olympians representing the Greeks, who embodied the ideals of virtue and order, while the defeated giants stood for violent and uncouth outsiders.⁵² There are hints that some Jewish authors of the period playfully reversed this symbolism in order to impugn the Hellenistic empires – that is to say, they argued that it is the Greeks, and not the subdued natives, who are to be associated with the giants. Such an interpretation may be implied, for example, in certain traditions critical of Alexander and the Diadochi preserved in the *Sibylline Oracles* (e.g., 3.383, 390; 11.198).⁵³ Still closer to our present concern is the example of the *Book of Watch-*

⁵⁰ As Goff, “When Giants Dreamed about the Flood,” 75–76, observes, double dreams also appear in the roughly contemporary Enochic *Book of Dreams*. He also refers to the two dreams of Nebuchadnezzar recounted in Daniel 2 and 4 and notes that the doubling is perhaps to be explained in relation to Gen 41:32, which states: “As for Pharaoh having had the same dream twice, it means that the matter has been determined by God, and that God will soon carry it out.”

⁵¹ See n. 1.

⁵² See Susan A. Stephens, *Seeing Double: Intercultural Poetics in Ptolemaic Alexandria* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 63–64; Edith Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian: Greek Self-Definition Through Tragedy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 53, 68, 102. Note also David Castriota, *Myth, Ethos, and Actuality: Official Art in Fifth Century Athens* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), 138–43, who argues that the gigantomachy depicted on the east metopes of the Parthenon would have been conceived by Greeks of the fifth century as a paradigm for the defeat of the hubristic “gigantic ambitions” of the Persian Empire: “The gigantomachy, more than any other theme, could bring home the message that the Olympians had always supported and inspired the Athenians in their righteous struggles against arrogant lawlessness and disorder” (p. 142).

⁵³ So Anthea Portier-Young, “Symbolic Resistance in the *Book of the Watchers*,” in *The Watchers in Jewish and Christian Traditions*, ed. Angela Kim Harkins, Kelley Coblenz Baultch, and John C. Endres, S.J. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2014), 39–49 (45 n. 23). This article is

ers. A recent study by Anthea Portier-Young shows how this work inverts the common allegorical understanding of the gigantomachy, identifying the blood-thirsty giants with the Greeks.⁵⁴ In many ways, Portier-Young's argument aligns with that of George Nickelsburg, who famously suggested that the destruction and bloodshed wrought by the giants in the *Book of Watchers* are mythological representations of the devastation associated with the diadochic campaigns in Palestine at the end of the fourth century.⁵⁵ If early Enochic tradition indeed conceives of the giants in such a way, then the appropriation of the anti-imperialistic material behind Daniel 4 in the *Book of Giants* would be particularly poignant. Indeed, from this perspective the notion that the giants were informed of their own doom through dream-visions is not simply an entertaining mythological detail, but also an expression of the author's desire to portray symbolically the humbling of real imperial oppressors.⁵⁶ The ominous dreams of the giants would not only pertain to the inevitable subjugation of demonic evil in the *Urzeit*, but also to the eradication of empire in the *Endzeit*. And Gilgamesh's first person admission of inferiority to God's supreme power, coupled with his identification as a wild man and association with wild beasts could easily have evoked the image of Nebuchadnezzar, a paradigm for imperial hubris in Second Temple period tradition.⁵⁷ Such a typological understanding of traditions associated with the Babylonian king would not be unprecedented. Indeed, a diversity of Second Temple period works, including not only Daniel, but also texts such as Judith,

excerpted and adapted from eadem, *Apocalypse against Empire: Theologies of Resistance in Early Judaism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), 11–23.

⁵⁴ Portier-Young, "Symbolic Resistance," 43–46.

⁵⁵ George W.E. Nickelsburg, "Apocalyptic and Myth in 1 Enoch 6–11," *JBL* 96 (1977): 383–405.

⁵⁶ Given the likely origins of the *Book of Giants* in the late third or second century BCE, the giants would have originally represented Ptolemaic and/or Seleucid powers. If this suggestion is correct, it still remains the case that the work continued to be copied and read by Jews for several generations (the latest Qumran manuscripts date to the Herodian period [see Puech, *DJD* 31, 12]), during which time the multivalent quality of its apocalyptic symbolism could have been understood as referring to any number of perceived historical conflicts. Moreover, it is important to note that this socio-political understanding need not have remained the only or even the primary understanding of the text for any given audience since the mythological symbolism easily would have allowed for the work to have been understood simultaneously on different levels, e.g., as theological etiology or simply as entertainment. Of course the canonical status of the *Book of Giants* among the Manichaeans centuries later proves that the multivalent symbolism of the composition could be appropriated fruitfully by non-Jews as well. For the suggestion that the Manichaean *Book of Giants* was conceived as "a political pamphlet in the guise of allegory and myth" modeling the doom of historical empires and their human agents, see Michel Tardieu, *Manichaeism*, trans. M. B. DeBevoise (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2008), 47.

⁵⁷ Matthias Henze, "Nebuchadnezzar," in *The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism*, ed. John J. Collins and Daniel C. Harlow (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 992–93; Ronald H. Sack, *Images of Nebuchadnezzar: The Emergence of a Legend* (Selinsgrove: Susquehanna University Press, 2004).

2 Maccabees, and 4QApocryphon of Jeremiah show that Jewish authors of the time were accustomed to the typological equation of Nebuchadnezzar with the hostile rulers of the Hellenistic age.⁵⁸

To be sure, these suggestions require a fuller discussion, and I have attempted to develop some of them in a separate article.⁵⁹ Presently, however, I would like to conclude by mentioning two further implications of this interpretation. First, if I am correct that the *Book of Giants* has utilized the nucleus of traditions behind Daniel 4 in such a manner, this would affirm the view of many scholars who have suspected that the use of Mesopotamian elements in the *Book of Giants*, and particularly the attribution of the names Gilgamesh and Hōbābish to two of the giants, reflects an attitude of hostility toward Mesopotamian-Hellenistic culture or rule.⁶⁰ On a broader level, it would also lend weight to recent attempts by scholars such as Horsley and Portier-Young to read early Enochic tradition as a whole as literature of resistance which seeks to undermine imperial discourse by means of the revelation of a hidden reality in which the God of Israel reigns supreme.⁶¹

Finally, a word of caution. While the giants are portrayed collectively as perpetrating deceitful and murderous acts,⁶² such details are too general in nature to be related with certainty to events associated with particular conflicts known to have occurred during the period in which the work was composed. Moreover, while any of the intense military struggles between the Ptolemies and the Seleucids for control of Palestine in the Syrian Wars of 219–217, 202–200, 170–168, or the Seleucid-Jewish conflict of 167–164 could provide a suitable background, it

⁵⁸ On this phenomenon in Daniel, see George W.E. Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), 83, 369 n. 57; Norman W. Porteous, *Daniel: A Commentary* (OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976), 71; H.H. Rowley, “The Unity of the Book of Daniel,” in *The Servant of the Lord and Other Essays on the Old Testament* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1965), 249–80 (277); in 4QApocryphon of Jeremiah, see Devorah Dimant, *Qumran Cave 4.XXI: Parabiblical Texts, Part 4: Pseudo-Prophetic Texts* (DJD 30; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001), 210–11; in Judith, see Carey A. Moore, *Judith* (AB 40; Garden City: Doubleday, 1985), 52–56; and more recently Gabriele Boccaccini, “Tigranes the Great as ‘Nebuchadnezzar’ in the Book of Judith,” in *A Pious Seductress: Studies in the Book of Judith*, ed. Geza Xeravits (DCLS 14; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2012), 55–69. The story of the humbling and death of Antiochus IV in 2 Macc 9:5–27 shows that Jewish authors could model the fall of a hated Seleucid monarch upon the tradition of the fall of the neo-Babylonian kingdom exemplified in both Daniel 4 and 4QPrayer of Nabonidus. See further Doron Mendels, “A Note on the Tradition of Antiochus IV’s Death,” *IEJ* 31 (1981): 53–56.

⁵⁹ See Joseph L. Angel, “Reading the *Book of Giants* in Literary and Historical Context,” *DSD* 21 (2014): 313–46.

⁶⁰ See, e.g., Drawnel, “The Mesopotamian Background,” 38 n. 93; Reeves, *Jewish Lore*, 126; David R. Jackson, “Demonising Gilgameš,” *Gilgameš and the World of Assyria: Proceedings of the Conference held at Mandelbaum House, The University of Sydney, 21–23 July 2004*, ed. Joseph Azize and Noel Weeks (ANES 21; Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 107–14.

⁶¹ See Richard A. Horsley, *Revolt of the Scribes: Resistance and Apocalyptic Origins* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010); Portier-Young, *Apocalypse against Empire*.

⁶² See, e.g., 1Q23 14; 4Q531 19; 4Q533 4.

is not necessary to posit such a specific crisis as the motivation for composition. The realities of life under Hellenistic imperial occupation could have sufficed.⁶³ Moreover, there are hints in the *Book of Giants* that signal a more nuanced and developed plot. The giants argue with one another and there are perhaps different factions among them.⁶⁴ Thus, if I am correct that the *Book of Giants* models the humbling of Hellenistic figures of power, it seems that the composition now before us preserves only the remains of a complex allegory, whose original referents cannot be recovered.

⁶³ Daniel Smith-Christopher, "Daniel," *NIB* 7:23–33.

⁶⁴ See, e.g., 6Q8 1; 4Q530 2 ii 1–3. Note also the reconstruction of the plot by Goff, "Gilgamesh the Giant," 238–46.