

Lc 249 and Targum Yerushalmi

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An attempt to determine whether the Third Evangelist in his narrative of the birth and childhood of Jesus used Palestinian sources that were ultimately derived from Hebrew or Aramaic originals, or whether he composed the story himself while modelling his style on, and liberally adapting the phraseology of, the Greek Old Testament, cannot be based solely on the strength of lexical and philological grounds. It has been observed of the Third Evangelist's personal style that it "is never so totally wanting as to prove alien origin for a passage, and is never so pervasive as to exclude the possibility that a written source existed, although the source be no longer capable of detection by any residual difference of style"¹. An analysis of the narrative in Lc ch. 1. 2, for the purpose of reaching conclusions about the author, or authors, responsible for this narrative, requires besides lexical investigation a careful and detailed examination of questions pertaining to the general outlook on life, social conventions and traditions in the widest sense, ideology and folklore, that characterise the Nativity and Infancy Stories.

In this respect, the pericope Lc 241-51a is commonly held to support the view of a relatively late origin.

¹ Henry Joel Cadbury: *The Making of Luke-Acts* (New York 1927), p. 67. — The author's restrained statement is refreshing to read after one has painfully digested much of the inspired literature that sets out to prove that it was Mary, or Kleopas, or Philip, or Aristarch, or someone else of whom we possess equally exhaustive information, who provided the evangelist with written source material. The neglect of Mnason (Acts 21 16) and of Andronicus (Rm 16 7) so far is regrettable, but perhaps only temporary. We may yet expect that some scholar will discover that it was they who wrote parts of the Lucan record. In the meantime we cannot stop at mere indifference to the question as to whether the Third Evangelist used other documentary sources besides Mark and Q, and what the provenance of these sources was. Cadbury himself sometimes seems not satisfied with insisting upon repeating his 'non possumus'. When speaking of the canticles that are embedded in the stories of the Nativity and Infancy, he says on p. 192/3 that it seems "at present" likely to him that they are "mainly" the evangelist's own composition "proving how the evangelist conformed to the customs of his literary inheritance". We are not told exactly about the temporal fixation of "at present", but it appears to have been of short duration and the conviction which is expressed on p. 192 seems to have dissipated before the author arrived at p. 264 where he — though conditionally — entertains the idea of Semitic originals for the whole Nativity and Infancy Narrative.