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Luke's Doublets and the Synoptic Problem

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Abstract

The Synoptic Gospels contain a significant number of so-called doublets, i.e. sayings or narratives which appear twice in one and the same Gospel. Since the nineteenth century these doublets have functioned as a classical argument in favour of the existence of Q. Focusing on treatments of Luke's doublets within the contemporary rivalry between the Farrer hypothesis and the two-document hypothesis, the present article contributes to a not-Q-biased discussion of the evidence. While adherents of the two-document hypothesis should not overestimate the force of doublet-based arguments, defenders of the Farrer hypothesis should pay greater attention to the creation and elimination of doublets as part of Luke's alleged redactional activity.

Keywords: Gospel of Luke; Synoptic problem; doublets; Farrer hypothesis; two-document hypothesis; source criticism

Introduction

As an 'eternal' question of New Testament research,¹ the Synoptic problem constantly generates numerous publications almost each and every year. Like their forerunners in the nineteenth century and before, present New Testament scholars need to address simultaneously multiple literary phenomena if they wish to create a helpful proposal regarding synoptic relationships or to defend an older one convincingly. Although never boring,² at times such attempts may lead to moments of frustration³ because no hypothesis regarding the Synoptic problem answers all tantalising questions in a satisfactory way.⁴

¹ Cf. the topic of the 7th Annual Colloquium of the Leuven Center for the Study of the Gospels (convened by J. Verheyden and J. S. Kloppenborg in December 2017): 'The Eternal Problem: Revisiting the Issues at Stake in 19th and Early 20th Century Research on the Synoptic Problem'. In 2019, the *Zeitschrift für Neues Testament* (ABRL; New York: Doubleday, 1997) 111: 'Although much scholarly attention and even passion has been devoted to this problem, most readers of the NT find the issue complex, irrelevant to their interests and boring – a fact that causes me to be succinct in my treatment.'

² Despite the famous statement of R. E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (ABRL; New York: Doubleday, 1997) 111: 'Although much scholarly attention and even passion has been devoted to this problem, most readers of the NT find the issue complex, irrelevant to their interests and boring – a fact that causes me to be succinct in my treatment.'

³ M. F. Bird, *The Gospel of the Lord: How the Early Church Wrote the Story of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014) 155, writes: 'Indeed, the Synoptic problem is so complicated and challenging that it can make the most determined researcher want to escape from the frustration somehow. Such respite has eluded every Synoptic researcher apart from the most self-assured.'

⁴ Regarding the two-document hypothesis, the neo-Griesbach hypothesis and the Farrer hypothesis none other than J. S. Kloppenborg ('Conceptual Stakes in the Synoptic Problem', *Gospel Interpretation and the Q-Hypothesis*

In a certain respect, the synoptic ‘maze’ bears even a Hydraean characteristic:⁵ if a proposed hypothesis allows one to contextualise a particular feature of the synoptic data, two other features remain without an equally convincing explanation.

The present article focuses on one such fascinating phenomenon, the so-called ‘doublets’,⁶ and traces its impact on synoptic studies across the sometimes fiercely contested boundaries of different synoptic hypotheses. It does not provide a complete history of scholarship but analyses the most important doublet-based arguments in order to foster a more nuanced and methodologically sound treatment of doublets in synoptic research. Because the assessment of Luke’s redactional strategies is one of the most important issues at stake in the debate between advocates of the two-source or two-document hypothesis (still ‘the most widely held and accepted solution’)⁷ and proponents of the Farrer hypothesis (‘the current major rival proposal to the two-source theory’),⁸ special focus will be laid on the presence of doublets in the Gospel of Luke.

I. Conjoined Twins? Doublets and the Q-Hypothesis

Christian Gottlob Wilke (1788–1854)⁹ and Christian Hermann Weisse (1801–66),¹⁰ in their landmark studies both published in 1838, argued for Markan priority and thus challenged

(ed. M. Müller and H. Omerzu; LNTS 2018; London/New York/Oxford/New Delhi/Sydney: T. & T. Clark, 2018) 12–42, at 13) recently declared: ‘I am not of the view that definitive arguments for or against any of these hypotheses or variations on these are in fact possible. At best, we can propose compositional scenarios that account for most of the data, most of the time, by what we think of as the “most probable” explanations’ (emphasis original). In his contribution to the same volume, S. Alkier (‘Sad Sources: Observations from the History of Theology on the Origins and Contours of the Synoptic Problem’, *Gospel Interpretation and the Q-Hypothesis*, 43–77, at 76–7) rightly urges synoptic studies to overcome ‘unscholarly confidence’ and proposes ten hermeneutical theses for a more balanced and pluralistic approach.

⁵ Cf. the fitting subtitle of Mark Goodacre’s *The Synoptic Problem: A Way through the Maze* (London/New York: T&T Clark, 2001). M. Vogel (‘Buchreport’, *ZNT* 22 (2019) 199–229, at 217) takes the controversy between Christopher Tuckett and Francis Watson as an example: ‘dass die tiefere Befassung mit dem synoptischen Problem einem Labyrinth gleicht, in dem man sich früher oder später notwendigerweise verirrt, und es scheint nur eine Frage der Zeit zu sein, bis diejenigen, die darin unterwegs sind, einander die Schuld dafür geben, dass sie nicht mehr herausfinden’.

⁶ Short discussions of this phenomenon can be found in many commentaries on the Synoptic Gospels, cf. e.g. J. A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke 1–IX* (AncBib 28; New York/London/Toronto/Sydney/Auckland: Doubleday, 1981) 81–2; W. D. Davies and D. C. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew*, vol. 1: *Introduction and Commentary on Matthew 1–VII* (ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1988) 91–2; and J. Marcus, *Mark 1–8: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 27; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010 (2000)) 42–4. From the area of more detailed studies, the classical works of J. C. Hawkins, *Horae Synopticae: Contributions to the Study of the Synoptic Problem* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1909²) 80–107 and T. Stephenson, ‘The Classification of Doublets in the Synoptic Gospels’, *JTS* 20 (1918–19) 1–8, remain very helpful. However, the most recent articles of G. Van Oyen ‘The Doublets in 19th-Century Gospel Study’, *ETL* 73 (1997) 277–306 (rich bibliography!), H. T. Fleddermann, ‘The Doublets in Luke’, *ETL* 84 (2008) 409–44 and P. Foster, ‘The Doublets in Matthew: What Are They Good For?’, *An Early Reader of Mark and Q* (ed. J. Verheyden and G. van Belle; BTS 21; Leuven: Peeters, 2016) 109–38 build the appropriate starting point for this article. The only monograph on doublets in Luke that I am aware of, A. van Dulmen, ‘De doubletten in het evangelie van Lucas’ (Licentiate dissertation; Catholic University of Leuven, 1966), remained unpublished.

⁷ Thus H. Omerzu, ‘Introduction: What Is at Stake by Advocating or Disputing the Two-Source Theory?’, *Gospel Interpretation and the Q-Hypothesis*, 1–10, at 3, who adds (with examples) that ‘its character as a “hypothesis” is quite differently conceived of in Anglophone scholarship on the one hand, and German-speaking scholarship on the other’.

⁸ P. Foster, ‘The Rise and Development of the Farrer Hypothesis’, *The Q-Hypothesis Unveiled: Theological, Church-Political, Socio-Political, and Hermeneutical Issues behind the Sayings Source* (ed. M. Tiwald; BWANT 225; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2020) 86–128, at 86–7. I am very grateful to Paul Foster for generously sharing unpublished material with me.

⁹ C. G. Wilke, *Der Urevangelist, oder exegetisch kritische Untersuchung über das Verwandtschaftsverhältniss der drei ersten Evangelien* (Dresden and Leipzig: G. Fleischer, 1838).

¹⁰ C. H. Weisse, *Die evangelische Geschichte kritisch und philosophisch bearbeitet*, 2 vols. (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1838). As B. Reicke, ‘The History of the Synoptic Discussion’, *The Interrelations of the Gospels: A Symposium Led by*

the traditional view which regarded the Gospel of Matthew as the oldest of the three Synoptic Gospels¹¹ but disagreed on the origin of the so-called double-tradition material shared (only) by Matthew and Luke.

Wilke explained the presence of the double-tradition material by Matthew's dependency on Mark and Luke.¹² Although this *Matthean posteriority solution* never became a major player in the field of synoptic studies, it has recently witnessed some sort of revival thanks to detailed monographs published by Alan Garrow¹³ and Robert MacEwen.¹⁴ Weisse, however, attributed the double-tradition material to a second source (independently used by Matthew and Luke alongside Mark) and pointed to 'a new kind of evidence', i.e. the doublets ('Doubletten').¹⁵ This proposal contained all of the crucial elements of what was later labelled the 'two-document hypothesis'. In a later work, Weisse defined doublets as 'the appearance of one and the same pithy saying at different places in one and the same Gospel' and produced a list of doublets in the Synoptic Gospels.¹⁶ Although many such lists have been compiled since Weisse,¹⁷ no definitive list of doublets exists.¹⁸ Most scholars, however, agree on the approximate numbers of doublets in the Synoptic Gospels (about twenty in Matthew, about ten in Luke, one or two in Mark).

Closely linked to the 'birth' of the two-source hypothesis, the argument from doublets has remained a classical argument for the existence of Q ever since,¹⁹ and has even been called 'the decisive evidence' for the existence of a common, written source of Matthew

M.-É. Boismard - W.R. Farmer - F. Neiryneck, *Jerusalem 1984* (ed. D. L. Dungan; Leuven: Peeters/Leuven University Press, 1990) 291-316, at 295 points out, the title of Weisse's work reveals his attempt to refute D. F. Strauss, *Das Leben Jesu kritisch bearbeitet*, 2 vols. (Tübingen: Osiander, 1835-6). Moreover, Weisse's study even starts with an extensive discussion of Strauss' position (cf. Weisse, *Geschichte*, 3-16). On this philosophical context, see also Alkier, 'Sad Sources', 74-6.

¹¹ However, even before Weisse and Wilke, G. C. Storr, *Ueber den Zweck der evangelischen Geschichte und der Briefe Johannis* (Tübingen: Jakob Friedrich Heerbrandt, 1810² [1786]) had argued for the priority of Mark.

¹² Therefore Wilke should not be credited with the development of the two-source hypothesis, contra I. Broer and H.-U. Weidemann, *Einleitung in das Neue Testament* (Würzburg: Echter, 2010⁴) 49, and already J. Schmid and A. Wikenhauser, *Einleitung in das Neue Testament* (Freiburg/Basel/Vienna: Herder, 1973⁶) 279.

¹³ A. J. P. Garrow, *The Gospel of Matthew's Dependence on the Didache* (JSNTSup 254; London/New Delhi/New York/Sydney: T. & T. Clark, 2004). Cf. also *idem*, 'Streeter's "Other" Synoptic Solution: The Matthew Conflator Hypothesis', *NTS* 62 (2016) 207-26 and 'An Exstant Instance of Q', *NTS* 62 (2016) 398-417. For a short presentation of Garrow's position, see R. K. MacEwen, *Matthean Posteriority: An Exploration of Matthew's Use of Mark and Luke as a Solution to the Synoptic Problem* (LNTS 501; London/New Delhi/New York/Sydney: Bloomsbury T. & T. Clark, 2015) 16-7.

¹⁴ MacEwen, *Matthean Posteriority*. B. Adamczewski, *Q or not Q? The So-called Triple, Double, and Single Traditions in the Synoptic Gospels* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2010) is another recent monograph that argues for Matthean posteriority, but in view of its evident shortcomings (cf. the review by P. Foster, 'A Self-deluded Attempt to Solve the Synoptic Problem', *ExpTim* 122 (2010) 177-80) this study will hardly win any new followers for the 'Wilke hypothesis'.

¹⁵ Weisse, *Die evangelische Geschichte*, 1.81: 'eine neue Gattung von Beweismitteln'.

¹⁶ C. H. Weisse, *Die Evangelienfrage in ihrem gegenwärtigen Stadium* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1856) 146: 'des wiederholten Vorkommens eines und desselben prägnanten Ausspruchs an verschiedenen Stellen eines und desselben Evangeliums'.

¹⁷ Cf. the very valuable table in Van Oyen, 'Doublets', 283-5.

¹⁸ In some sense, Hawkins' list (*Horae Synopticae*, 80-107) has achieved an almost 'canonical' status due to its wide reception. For a recent list, see H. T. Fleddermann, *Q: A Reconstruction and Commentary* (BITS 1; Leuven/Paris/Dudley, MA: Peeters, 2005) 56-9.

¹⁹ Van Oyen, 'Doublets', 285: 'The phenomenon of sayings doublets has been and continues to be of great importance for the study of the synoptic problem. Again and again, the value of the argument has been repeated by representatives of the two-source hypothesis, and lists of Matthean and Lukan doublets have been published by every generation of scholars'.

and Luke'.²⁰ More recently, however, prominent Q-scholars have articulated hesitations about the force of the argument from doublets. According to Paul Foster, it 'is certainly true that by themselves the doublets are incapable of providing definitive proof of either the existence of Q, or the veracity of the two-source theory'.²¹ Christopher Tuckett even calls the argument from doublets 'perhaps one of the weakest arguments for the existence of a Q source'.²² Maybe this 'radical shift'²³ in the study of doublets is best illustrated by a comparison of two of the most influential books on the two-document hypothesis: while in Paul Wernle's classic *Die synoptische Frage* from 1899 (credited with giving the two-document hypothesis its final shape) doublets are regarded as 'main argument' ('Hauptargument') for the two-document hypothesis,²⁴ John Kloppenborg Verbin's *Excavating Q* from 2000 (probably the most detailed and balanced defence of the two-document hypothesis ever published) mentions the argument from doublets only in a single footnote and describes it 'as an instructive subset of the argument from order'.²⁵

Nevertheless, such an important study as Harry T. Fleddermann's reconstruction of and commentary on Q still uses the doublets as one out of four basic arguments for the existence of Q.²⁶ Other adherents of the two-source hypothesis, especially German-speaking scholars such as Martin Ebner,²⁷ Udo Schnelle²⁸ and Markus

²⁰ W. G. Kümmel, *Einleitung in das Neue Testament* (Heidelberg: Quelle & Meyer, 1978¹⁹) 40: 'den entscheidenden Beweis für eine gemeinsame, schriftliche Quelle des Mt und Lk' (emphasis added); approvingly quoted (from the English translation) by F. Neiryck, 'The Two-Source Hypothesis', *The Interrelations of the Gospels*, 3–22, at 12.

²¹ Foster, 'Doublets', 137.

²² C. M. Tuckett, *Q and the History of Early Christianity: Studies in Q* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1996) 11. This is certainly a bit surprising given his assessment of the doublets elsewhere 'as a powerful argument in favour of the view that there are two streams of tradition' (C. M. Tuckett, 'Mark and Q', *The Synoptic Gospels* (ed. C. Focant; BETHL 59; Leuven: Peeters, 1993) 149–175, at 153). Van Oyen, 'Doublets', 277 points to the tension between both assessments.

²³ Foster, 'Doublets', 110.

²⁴ P. Wernle, *Die synoptische Frage* (Freiburg/Leipzig/Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1899) 209 (cf. 111–3).

²⁵ J. S. Kloppenborg Verbin, *Excavating Q: The History and Setting of the Sayings Gospel* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000) 56 n. 2. To be precise, Kloppenborg Verbin also mentions doublets in the perspective of the history of research when discussing the concepts of Holtzmann (306) and Boismard (48–50).

²⁶ Fleddermann, Q, 54, 59–60. Regarding the 'single doublets' Fleddermann ('Doublets', 412 n. 8) observes that 'when Matthew and Luke eliminate a doublet, they always drop the Markan half, never the Q half' and judges this as evidence 'that both later evangelists preserved all of Q'. For a critique of this logical error ('never-without-Q-fallacy'), cf. W. Grünstäudl, 'Continuity and Discontinuity in Luke's Gospel: Luke 9:51 and the Pre-Jerusalem Phase as a Test Case', *Modern and Ancient Literary Criticism of the Gospels: Continuing the Debate on Gospel Genre(s)* (ed. R. M. Calhoun, D. Moessner and T. Nicklas; WUNT 1/451; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2020) 381–96, at 391.

²⁷ According to Martin Ebner ('Die synoptische Frage', *Einleitung in das Neue Testament* (ed. with S. Schreiber; KStTh 6; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2020³) 73–91, at 81–4), four textual phenomena find a plausible explanation by the two-source hypothesis: (1) The 'missing' of discourse material in Mark, (2) the sequence of pericopae, (3) mistakes in the composition of Matthew and Luke, and (4) doublets. Because (1), (2) and (3) might only be used as arguments (of very different value) for Markan priority, this turns the doublets (4) into crucial evidence for the existence of Q.

²⁸ In Udo Schnelle's presentation (*Einleitung in das Neue Testament* (UTB 1830; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2017⁹) 244–5), doublets are one out of two basic arguments for the existence of Q (the other one being simply the *traditio duplex* itself; 'theological coherence' is given as an additional argument (at 246)). Schnelle (at 245; emphasis added) concludes: 'Da Markus lediglich eine Dublette aufweist (Mk 9,35b/10,43f), müssen Matthäus und Lukas eine weitere gemeinsame Quelle benutzt haben.' This comes very close to the assessment of Kümmel, *Einleitung*, 40 ('Stellt man diesen Tatbestand der Dubletten und Doppelüberlieferungen bei Mt und Lk neben die Tatsache, daß das Mk nur eine einzige Dublette aufweist (Mk 9,35; 10,43f), so ergibt sich unbestreitbar, daß Mt und Lk eine zweite Quelle neben Mk benutzt haben müssen.'), which Foster, 'Doublets', 110, quotes as a prime example of the older approach to the doublets (cf. n. 20 above).

Tiwald,²⁹ express similar convictions. Even some scholars who remain unconvinced by the postulate of Luke's and Matthew's complete independence stop short of dispensing with Q precisely because of the doublets.³⁰ Paul Foster, too, complements his statement quoted above with an assessment clearly in favour of the two-document hypothesis: 'However, on balance, it appears that the two-source theory explains the presence of doublets in the synoptic tradition in the most plausible manner.'³¹ Robert Morgenthaler formulates the doublets' role within competing synoptic hypotheses in a much less diplomatic way: 'Any comprehensive and detailed analysis of the phenomenon of doublets is given a wide berth by opponents of the Q-hypothesis (Butler, Farrer, Farmer). They do have good reasons for doing so.'³²

2. Doublets and the Farrer Hypothesis

Morgenthaler's statement is provocative indeed. But is it true? Obviously, the three scholars mentioned by Morgenthaler (Butler, Farrer, Farmer) represent very different synoptic hypotheses which were received very differently within most recent research.

Basil Christopher Butler's defence of the so-called Augustinian hypothesis (Mark used Matthew, Luke used both of them) did not convince many New Testament scholars,³³ and even the much more influential revival of the Griesbach hypothesis (Luke used Matthew while Mark used both Matthew and Luke) by William Farmer and his followers has clearly passed its prime.³⁴ Therefore only one rival of the Q hypothesis – the solution proposed by Austin Farrer³⁵ – seems to be alive and well.³⁶

However, doublets have received surprisingly little attention in the camp of the Farrer hypothesis. In his ground-breaking *The Case Against Q*, Mark Goodacre mentions the argument from doublets only in a footnote and states that it 'does not appear to be used as an argument for Q in any of the recent literature'.³⁷ This non-discussion seems to be echoed

²⁹ M. Tiwald, *Die Logienquelle: Text, Kontext, Theologie* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2016) 19: 'Dublekten und Doppelüberlieferungen stellen ein starkes Argument zugunsten der Zweiquellentheorie dar: Einmal folgt der Evangelist der Mk-Vorlage, einmal der Logienquelle.'

³⁰ Cf. Bird, *Gospel*, 166.

³¹ Foster, 'Doublets', 137. Shortly before, Foster ('Doublets', 134) calls the doublets 'an important aspect of the cumulative evidence in favour of the two-source theory'.

³² R. Morgenthaler, *Statistische Synopse* (Zürich/Stuttgart: Gotthelf-Verlag, 1971) 296: 'Die Gegner der Q-Hypothese (Butler, Farrer, Farmer) gehen in weitem Bogen um eine umfassende und genaue Analyse des Doublettenphänomens herum. Sie haben gute Gründe dazu.'

³³ B. C. Butler, *The Originality of St. Matthew: A Critique of the Two-Document Hypothesis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951). Butler devotes a whole chapter to the doublets in Matthew and assesses them as 'a very powerful argument for Mark's dependence' on Matthew (*Originality*, 146). For arguments against the 'Augustinian' hypothesis, cf. Kloppenborg Verbin, *Excavating Q*, 38–43.

³⁴ According to Foster ('Farrer Hypothesis', 86), 'support for this theory appears to have quite literally "died out".'

³⁵ The hypothesis that explains the double-tradition material not by the assumption of a source independently used by Matthew and Luke alongside Mark ('Q'), but by Luke's use of Mark and Matthew is widely known as the 'Farrer hypothesis'. Although different names (e.g. 'Mark without Q hypothesis', 'L/M hypothesis') have been proposed and various forms of this hypothesis can be discerned (cf. Foster, 'Farrer Hypothesis', 98–122), the present contribution uses the designation 'Farrer hypothesis' for the sake of simplicity.

³⁶ For sure, several very insightful and inspiring attempts to solve the Synoptic problem have been published recently: e.g. D. R. MacDonald, *Two Shipwrecked Gospels: The Logoi of Jesus and Papias's Exposition about the Lord* (Early Christianity and its Literature 8; Atlanta: SBL, 2012), M. Klinghardt, *Das älteste Evangelium und die Entstehung der kanonischen Evangelien: Untersuchung* (Tübingen: Francke, 2015), and the defences of Matthean posteriority mentioned above (cf. nn. 13 and 14). None of them, however, has gained widespread scholarly support so far.

³⁷ M. Goodacre, *The Case Against Q: Studies in Markan Priority and the Synoptic Problem* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity, 2002) 66 n. 40. Goodacre quotes only Tuckett's sceptical assessment (see n. 22 above) as a recent example.

in the most important collected volumes on the Farrer hypothesis,³⁸ as well as in Francis Watson's seminal study on the development of gospel literature.³⁹ Thus, one has to go back to Michael Goulder's *Luke* to find a substantial treatment of doublets by an advocate of Lukan posteriority.

2.1 Michael Goulder and the Argument from Doublets

Goulder, who opens his impressive Farrer-style reading of Luke's Gospel with a 68-pages-long argument against Q ('a house built on sand'), dedicates only one and a half page to the discussion of doublets.⁴⁰ Drawing on Hawkins' *Horae Synopticae*, Goulder points out that Hawkins explains six of his twenty-two Matthean doublets as duplications of Markan material. Seven more of Hawkins' Matthean doublets, Goulder adds, bear identical or closely similar marks of Matthean redaction in both of their halves (e.g. ἐξελε αὐτὸν καὶ βόλε ἄπὸ σοῦ in Matt 5.29 and 18.9 or the mention of πορνεία in both Matt 5.32 and 19.9). After stressing what he sees as the methodological flaw behind the argument from doublets ('a simple circle'),⁴¹ Goulder concludes: 'Matthew may well have used a Marcan logion a second time and adapted it; and Luke (who in the Q-passages is eschewing Mark as a source) will have copied in the Matthean adaptation.'⁴²

This remark perfectly illustrates how the phenomenon of doublets is to be explained in the perspective of the Farrer hypothesis in its pure form: *all of* Matthew's doublets are the product of 'a rather didactic writer',⁴³ while the doublets in Luke witness the use of two sources – but not of Mark *and* Q, as the two source hypothesis would have it, but of Mark *and* Matthew. Both of these assumptions have been challenged by defenders of the Q hypothesis and it is worth taking a closer look at two arguments against the Farrer hypothesis that make explicit use of the doublets.

2.2 Luke's 'Elimination' of Doublets as a Challenge to the Farrer Hypothesis

Michael Bird's study on gospel origins provides us with a first illustrative example. Bird challenges the Farrer hypothesis by stating that 'if Luke used Matthew, then we are wondering why Luke kept four of these Matthean doublets, eliminated five by dropping the Markan version, and then created five more by augmenting units he had inherited from Matthew and Mark',⁴⁴ and judging that 'Luke's dual elimination and formulation of doublets' is not the most convincing explanation of the data.⁴⁵

³⁸ Cf. M. Goodacre and N. Perrin, eds., *Questioning Q: A Multidimensional Critique* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2004), as well as J. C. Poirier and J. Peterson, eds., *Marcan Priority Without Q: Explorations in the Farrer Hypothesis* (LNTS 455; London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015).

³⁹ To be precise, F. Watson, *Gospel Writing: A Canonical Perspective* (Grand Rapids/Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2013) mentions doublets (e.g. 178) and even criticises Fleddermann's concept of 'condensed doublets' (183 n. 36) in passing. It contains, however, no substantial critique of the use of doublet-based arguments in favour of the two-source hypothesis.

⁴⁰ M. D. Goulder, *Luke: A New Paradigm* (2 vols.; JSNTSupp 20; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1989) 1.3–71 (treatment of doublets at 34–5).

⁴¹ Goulder, *Luke*, 1.35: 'With Papias and "Matthew's" discourses behind him, Weisse has a natural presumption that the doublet of a Markan logion in the double tradition comes from the Logia-source; and the doublets then become evidence for the Logia-source.'

⁴² Goulder, *Luke*, 1.35.

⁴³ Goulder, *Luke*, 1.34.

⁴⁴ Bird, *Gospel*, 168.

⁴⁵ Bird, *Gospel*, 168. Following the late Holtzmann, Morgenthaler and Gundry, Bird argues for Luke's dependence on Matthew without dispensing with a sayings source used by both writers.

This argument may be countered from the perspective of the Farrer hypothesis in a twofold way. To begin with, the surprisingly low number of doublets in Bird's argument – only nine doublets in Matthew compared to twenty-two in Hawkins' list – reveals that Bird deals only with those doublets which constitute of a 'Markan half' and a 'double tradition half' but completely ignores the bigger part of Matthew's doublets that seem to contain material from *one and the same tradition*. In Matthew, we find doublets of Markan material (e.g. Mark 1.15 in Matt 4.17b, but also in Matt 3.2b), of double-tradition material (e.g. Matt 3.7b parallels Luke 3.7b but reappears in Matt 23.33; Matt 3.10b parallels Luke 3.9b but reappears in Matt 7.19) and even of *Sondergut* material (e.g. Matt 9.13a // 12.7a; Matt 16.19 // 18.18). In other words, Bird's argument rests on a flawed set of data (i.e. only a small part of the evidence) and betrays a logical error – only doublets which are identified as *source* doublets from the outset are used in support of a certain *source* hypothesis. However, this *petitio principii* is not uncommon in discussions of the Synoptic problem: it is visible in Joel Marcus' case against the Griesbach hypothesis,⁴⁶ it is the formative principle behind Harry T. Fleddermann's lists of doublets,⁴⁷ and it is evident in Paul Foster's argument that 'the doublets, especially those examples that have been labelled as *source* doublets (and in particular "the double doublets"), are an important aspect of the cumulative evidence in favour of the two-*source* theory'.⁴⁸ On a methodological level this argumentative fuzziness points to a crucial aspect of any discussion of the phenomenon of doublets: in order to clarify the synoptic relationships, it is extremely desirable to distinguish 'source doublets' from 'redactional doublets' – but it is very difficult to draw this distinction without implicitly presupposing a certain solution to the Synoptic problem.

Yet another problem of Bird's argument emerges if one takes a closer look at Luke's redactional activity and especially at those five doublets which Farrer's Luke, according to Bird, 'eliminated ... by dropping the Markan version':

- (a) Matt 9.34 // 12.24 – The Leader of the Demons
- (b) Matt 12.38–42 // 16.1–2 – Demand for a Sign
- (c) Matt 5.32 // 19.9 – On Divorce
- (d) Matt 19.30 // 20.16 – The First and the Last
- (e) Matt 17.19–20 // 21.21 – On Faith

In the case of (b), the Markan parallel (Mark 8.11–12 // Matt 16.1–2) is part of the so-called 'great omission' (Mark 6.45–8.26 is missing in Luke), while in the case of (c), the Markan parallel (Mark 10.11–12 // Matt 19.9) is part of the so-called 'smaller omission' (Mark 9.41–10.12). If one does not want to argue that Luke made both relatively extensive omissions *exactly because* he wanted to avoid *these* doublets,⁴⁹ then the 'elimination' of

⁴⁶ Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, 44: 'Matthew's Gospel contains nine doublets, presumably resulting from different oral sources he used and/or from written sources that are lost. (Nine, however, is a lot of doublets to be created in these ways. Mark, the first Gospel in the Two-Source Hypothesis, has only one.) Luke retained four of these Matthean doublets and eliminated five by dropping one of the doubled sayings in each case; he then created five more by supplementing pericopes he had inherited from Matthew with other traditions that were available to him. Mark then came along and eliminated all of the doublets except one. The weak points in this reconstruction are the unexplained presence of so many doublets in Matthew and the weird Lukan combination of elimination and creation of doublets.'

⁴⁷ Cf. Fleddermann, 'Doublets', 411, 413; Foster, 'Doublets', 132; and W. Grünstäudl, 'Wieviele Dubletten finden sich im Lukasevangelium? Forschungsgeschichtliche und methodologische Klärungen', *ETL* 97 (2021) 191–222, at 211–12.

⁴⁸ Foster, 'Doublets', 134 (emphasis added).

⁴⁹ Pace Schnelle, *Einleitung*, 226: 'Lukas wollte wahrscheinlich Dubletten vermeiden (vgl. die Speisung der 4000 in Mk 8,1–10), zudem interessierte ihn die Thematik "rein-unrein" in Mk 7,1–23 wohl nicht mehr.' Compare,

these doublets (or better: of their Markan half) is just a corollary of Luke's major compositional strategies.

With (a) and (e) the situation is similar. Mark 3.22 (// Matt 9.34), the Markan parallel of (a), is located at a position where Luke leaves Mark's sequence (after Luke 6.12–16 // Mark 3.13–19). After the integration of non-Markan material in Luke 6.20–8.3 (the so-called 'smaller insertion'; Luke 6.17–19 is just relocated material from Mark 3.7–12) Luke joins Mark again in Luke 8.4–15 // Mark 4.1–20. From the Markan material after Mark 3.20 and before Mark 4.1, only a softened version of Mark 3.31–5 reappears a bit later in Luke (cf. Luke 8.19–21) while its bigger part (Mark 3.20–30) is not taken over by Luke. In view of this omission of Mark 3.20–30 in the context of Luke's compositional rearrangement, it seems unnecessary to look for a special explanation for the 'elimination' of Mark 3.22 in Luke. The Markan parallel to (e), Mark 11.22–3 // Matt 21.21, fits into the same scheme, as Luke 19 displays some rearrangement of the Markan narrative leading not only to a *relocation* of the cursing of the fig tree (as in Matthew: cf. Matt 21.18–21) but to the *elimination* of this puzzling story (Mark 11.12–14, 20–5). Hence, four out of five 'eliminated' Matthean doublets do not appear in Luke simply because their Markan context was not taken over by Luke – for whatever reasons. Doublet (d) seems to be the exception that proves the rule, because Luke takes over Mark 10.28–31 but omits the last verse (Mark 10.31), which is the Markan parallel to Matthew's doublet (// Matt 19.30). However, the significant reshaping of the Markan material by Luke should not be overlooked: Luke omits Mark's καὶ ἄγροῦς (Mark 10.29) but adds ἡ γυναικί (Luke 18.29) to complete the elements of the οἶκος.⁵⁰ Luke further drops the Markan constraint μετὰ διωγμῶν (Mark 10.30).⁵¹ Finally, Mark's concrete list of the coming rewards (Mark 10.30) is substituted by the abstract πολλαπλασίονα. Thus, the avoidance of a doublet is hardly the decisive factor behind the omission of Mark 10.31 after Luke 18.30.⁵²

To sum up, Bird's argument, that 'Luke's dual elimination and formulation of doublets' seems difficult to explain on the Farrer hypothesis, raises two objections. First, Bird treats only a sub-group of doublets (so-called 'source doublets'), which leads to circular reasoning. Second, even if Bird's starting point is accepted, Luke's elimination of some of Matthew's doublets is not that awkward once Luke's redaction of Mark is taken into account.

2.3 Luke's Reception of Matthew's Non-Markan Doublet Halves as a Challenge to the Farrer Hypothesis

No less than four decades before Bird's study an even more extensive argument against the Farrer hypothesis (and its explanation of doublets in Matthew and Luke) was developed by Morgenthaler in his already quoted *Statistische Synopse*. After a detailed discussion of every single doublet in the Synoptic Gospels (twenty-eight pages!) and the creation of

however, the different explanation of the great omission at 213: 'Übrig bleibt allein die Annahme, dass Mk 6,45–8,26 noch nicht oder aber nicht mehr in dem Lukas vorliegenden Markusexemplar stand.'

⁵⁰ M. Wolter, *Das Lukasevangelium* (HNT 5; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008) 602: 'Das Profil der Veränderungen ist deutlich: Lukas nimmt das "Haus" als Leitbegriff und nennt aus der Perspektive des verheirateten Mannes alle familiären Relationen.'

⁵¹ F. Bovon, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas* (4 vols.; EKKNT 3/3; Düsseldorf/Zürich: Benziger/Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 2001) III.239–40 emphasises that Luke does not intend to downplay the existence of persecutions: 'Falls er die Erwähnung der Verfolgungen in seinem Markusexemplar gelesen und dennoch vorgezogen hat, sie zu übergehen, so tat er dies aufgrund literarischer Konvenienz und theologischer Steigerung.'

⁵² Pace Bovon, *Evangelium nach Lukas*, III.233 (emphasis added): 'Lukas läßt schließlich Mk 10,31 aus, den Spruch über die Ersten und die Letzten, sicher deshalb, weil er ihn bereits in 13,30 zitiert hat.'

three (although not identical!) lists of doublets,⁵³ Morgenthaler presents a series of objections against the Farrer hypothesis based on the phenomenon of doublets.

Like Goulder on the other side of the debate, Morgenthaler starts with the observation that most of Matthew's doublets appear to be products of Matthew's 'redactional' duplication. In contrast to Goulder, however, who assumed it to be 'perfectly believable that what he [i.e. Matthew] has done eight times with total repetitions, and seven times with partial ones, is an indication of his general manner in writing the rest',⁵⁴ Morgenthaler insists that eight of Matthew's doublets do not fit into this scheme that easily (the 'Markan half' is given first):

- (a) Matt 13.12 // 25.29 – To One Who Has Will be Given
- (b) Matt 16.24b // 10.38 – The Cross Saying
- (c) Matt 16.25 // 10.39 – Losing One's Life
- (d) Matt 16.27 // 10.33 – Jesus and the Son of Man
- (e) Matt 18.5 // 10.40 – On Accepting
- (f) Matt 19.9 // 5.32 – On Divorce
- (g) Matt 19.30 // 20.16 – The First and the Last
- (h) Matt 21.21b // 17.20 – On Faith

According to Morgenthaler, these eight doublets share the following three characteristics: (1) one half of the doublet has a close parallel in Mark and appears in Matthew in a similar context as that parallel ('Markan half'); (2) the other half of the doublet shows a certain degree of difference from the 'Markan half'; (3) this non-Markan half has a (relatively) close parallel in Luke.

To take one example, 'The Cross Saying' appears (1) in Matt 16.24b (εἴ τις θέλει ὀπίσω μου ἔλθειν, ἀπαρνησάσθω ἑαυτὸν καὶ ἁράτω τὸν σταυρὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀκολουθεῖτω μοι) in a version almost identical with Mark 8.34 (εἴ τις θέλει ὀπίσω μου ἀκολουθεῖν, ἀπαρνησάσθω ἑαυτὸν καὶ ἁράτω τὸν σταυρὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀκολουθεῖτω μοι). Moreover, it can be found (2) in a slightly different version in Matt 10.38 (καὶ ὃς οὐ λαμβάνει τὸν σταυρὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀκολουθεῖ ὀπίσω μου, οὐκ ἔστιν μου ἄξιος). For this non-Markan version of the saying, Luke 14.27 offers (3) a parallel (ὅστις οὐ βασιτάζει τὸν σταυρὸν ἑαυτοῦ καὶ ἔρχεται ὀπίσω μου, οὐ δύναται εἶναι μου μαθητής).⁵⁵

Regarding the second characteristic ('certain degree of difference' between the doublet halves) Morgenthaler notes that none of Matthew's doublets with high verbatim agreement between both halves can be found in Luke and calls it 'improbable' that Luke, on the Farrer hypothesis, would have eliminated every single one of these doublets with high verbatim agreement.⁵⁶ As for the third characteristic ('non-Markan half with parallel in Luke'), Morgenthaler emphasises that these non-Markan halves 'never' appear in the same context as in Matthew, that all of them can be found within the great insertion Luke 9.51–18.14 (with the sole exception of Luke 19.26) and that all of them fit snugly within their immediate contexts. Taken together, these observations form an impressive pattern leading to the conclusion that the non-Markan halves of these eight doublets

⁵³ For detailed discussion, see Morgenthaler, *Statistische Synopse*, 128–56. The final list at 156–7 should be compared with the list of 'Markan doublets' (i.e. duplications of Markan sayings in Matthew and Luke) at 69, as well as with the list of 'Q-doublets' (i.e. duplications of double-tradition material in Matthew and Luke) at 84.

⁵⁴ Goulder, *Luke*, 1.35.

⁵⁵ Moreover, the 'Cross Saying' forms a doublet also in Luke (cf. Mark 8.34 // Luke 9.23).

⁵⁶ Morgenthaler, *Statistische Synopse*, 297: 'Lk nun hätte, die Existenz von Q ausgeschlossen, genau darauf geachtet, jede einzelne dieser Traditionsverdoppelungen des Mt sorgfältig aus der Welt zu schaffen. Schon dies ist unwahrscheinlich.'

stem from a common source ('Q')⁵⁷ used by Matthew and Luke besides Mark. According to Morgenthaler, 'no other explanation makes sense'.⁵⁸

However, Morgenthaler's arguments require careful scrutiny. To begin with, his observation that Matthew's doublets with high verbatim agreement are missing in Luke while eight Matthean doublets with more different halves are included into the third Gospel gives the impression of a compelling argument indeed: how should it be explained that Luke *consistently* avoided a certain category of Matthean doublets but *just as consistently* took over another category of doublets? Did Luke check the tradition-historical background of Matthew's doublets to separate them like Cinderella's lentils? Of course, this would be absurd. But Morgenthaler's own assessment of Luke's attitude towards doublets unwillingly points to an alternative solution: 'No, Luke is not afraid of doublets. He rather wants to be a witness. He is avoiding the twofold incorporation of *one and the same incident* or the duplication of *one and the same* element of tradition. If, however, he found a logion both in Q and in Mark, yet in different context and in *different form*, he was happy to include both versions of it.'⁵⁹ If one simply changes 'Q' to 'Matthew', Morgenthaler's statement leads to a plausible Farrer-based explanation of the evidence.

Similarly, the argument from the placement of non-Markan doublet halves in Luke loses some of its force if one studies the individual texts carefully. For Morgenthaler, the appearance of all of Luke's non-Markan doublet halves (except Luke 19.26) in Luke 9.51–18.14 is 'the most strange piece of evidence'.⁶⁰ But it can hardly be called 'strange' to find certain elements of the double tradition precisely at that place where most of the double tradition in Luke's Gospel appears. On the Farrer hypothesis, Luke makes use of non-Markan material he finds in Matthew's discourses to build up his central section. One can certainly challenge this concept in general – but it is not surprising at all that Farrer's Luke moves Matthew's non-Markan doublet halves to Luke 9.51–18.14.

For the very same reason, Morgenthaler's claim that these non-Markan doublet halves 'never' appear in the same context as in Matthew does not lead to an independent argument against Luke's redaction of Matthew: in most cases the 'Matthean' context simply does not exist in Luke's framework. This is most evident with regard to the four doublet halves in Matt 10.33, 38, 39, 40 (see items (b)–(e) in the list above). Matthew's mission discourse (Matt 10) has no equivalent in Luke, who, on the Farrer hypothesis, integrated Mark's mission discourse in Luke 9 but used some of Matthew's additions to build his second mission discourse in Luke 10 and moved yet other of Matthew's additions to other places of his Gospel.

The situation is similar in Matt 5.32 (see item (f)) and Matt 20.16 (see item (g)) – neither the Sermon on the Mount nor the parable of the workers in the vineyard (note the inclusion Matt 19.30; 20.16) is part of Luke's Gospel.

In Matt 17.20 (see item (h)) things are a bit more complicated: Matthew answers the disciples' question about their incompetence as exorcists (Matt 17.19: 'Why were we not able to cast him out?'; cf. Mark 9.28) with the saying 'On Faith'. If the disciples had faith *ὡς κόκκον σινάπεως*, the Matthean Jesus explains, they would be able to dislocate mountains and surely every demon would listen to them (Matt 17.20: οὐδὲν

⁵⁷ H. Schürmann ('Die Dubletten im Lukasevangelium: Ein Beitrag zur Verdeutlichung des lukanischen Redaktionsverfahrens', *ZKT* 75 (1953) 338–45, at 341 n. 25) explicitly avoids the label 'Q'.

⁵⁸ Morgenthaler, *Statistische Synopse*, 297: 'Tatsächlich gibt es kaum eine andere, einleuchtende Antwort.'

⁵⁹ Morgenthaler, *Statistische Synopse*, 297 (emphasis added): 'Nein, Lk kennt keine Dublettenfurcht. Er will ja Zeuge sein. Was er scheut, ist die zweimalige Wiedergabe *ein und derselben* Begebenheit oder die Verdoppelung *ein und desselben* Traditionsstoffes: Ein Logion aber, das ihm einmal in Q und einmal in Mk, jedesmal in anderem Zusammenhang und *in anderer Form*, überliefert war, hat er mit vollem Bewußtsein gerne beidemal aufgenommen und so doppelt bezeugt.'

⁶⁰ Morgenthaler, *Statistische Synopse*, 297: '(d)as Seltsamste'.

ἀδυνατήσει ὑμῖν; cf. Mark 9.23). Luke, however, tightens the Markan sequence (transfiguration (Mark 9.2–8) | *Schweigegebot* (Mark 9.9–10) | request about Elijah (Mark 9.11–13) | healing of a demon-possessed boy (Mark 9.14–27) | request about (in)competence as exorcists (Mark 9.28–9) | second passion prediction (Mark 9.30–2)) significantly. Not only does he drop the *Schweigegebot*, the request about Elijah and the secret journey through Galilee (Mark 9.30) during which the second passion prediction takes place in Mark, he also omits the disciples' question about spiritual powers (Mark 9.28–9; diff. Matt 17.19–20) and by doing so eliminates the context of Matt 17.20.

If we turn to Matt 25.29 (see item (a)), speaking of a different context is highly problematic for another reason. Advocates of the Farrer hypothesis have tried to read Luke 19.11–27 as Luke's reworking of Matthew 25.14–30.⁶¹ But a majority even of Q-scholars assess Matthew 25.14–30 and Luke 19.11–27 as two variations of the same tradition (possibly pointing to a predecessor in Q).⁶² In any case, it is unconvincing to emphasise the 'different context' of Luke 19.26 compared to Matt 25.29.⁶³

If neither the fact that Luke's non-Markan doublet halves all appear within the great insertion (Luke 9.51–18.14) nor the separation of these doublet halves from their Matthean context can be called 'strange' or surprising, we are left with Morgenthaler's last trump card, i.e. his claim 'that within the central section (as well as in the case of Luke 19.26) all of the Lukan doublet halves are integral parts of a pericope and none of them appears as an isolated logion'.⁶⁴ Following the lead of Heinz Schürmann's influential articles on doublets in Luke,⁶⁵ Morgenthaler obviously assumes that this observation should best be explained as evidence for Luke preserving the original (Q-)context of the respective sayings.

Besides the general question of whether Luke's well-woven narrative contains any 'isolated logion', this argument too is not particularly strong. The sayings in Luke 14.27 (see item (b)), 12.9 (see item (d)) and Luke 17.6 (see item (h)) all received a narrative introduction by Luke (cf. Luke 14.25; 12.1; 17.5),⁶⁶ while the saying in Luke 17.33 (see item (c)) is not seen as appearing in its Q-context even by advocates of the two-document hypothesis. Moreover, Luke 13.23–9 would be perfectly understandable without Luke 13.30 (see item (g)) attached at its end; similarly, Luke 10.16 (see item (e)) forms a fitting – yet hardly indispensable – conclusion to Luke 10.2–15. Perhaps the much-discussed saying 'On Divorce' in Luke 16.18 (see item (f)) approximates an 'isolated saying' as scholars struggle to understand the intention behind the arrangement of sayings in Luke 16.14–18.⁶⁷ Only

⁶¹ Cf. e.g. Goulder, *Luke*, II.679–85. M. Goodacre, 'Fatigue in the Synoptics', *NTS* 44 (1998) 45–58, at 55–6.

⁶² Even in the perspective of the two-document hypothesis there is no need to assume that Matthew and Luke derived this shared tradition from Q; cf. M. Konradt, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus* (NTD 1; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2015) 386 and Wolter, *Lukasevangelium*, 617.

⁶³ Moreover, the saying fits well as a final remark to the narrative ('Schlusswort') both in Matthew and Luke, cf. M. Tiwald, *Kommentar zur Logienquelle* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2019) 169, 171.

⁶⁴ Morgenthaler, *Statistische Synopse*, 297.

⁶⁵ Besides Schürmann, 'Dubletten', cf. *idem*, 'Die Dublettenvermeidungen im Lukasevangelium: Ein Beitrag zur Verdeutlichung des lukanischen Redaktionsverfahrens', *ZKT* 76 (1954) 83–93.

⁶⁶ Luke 12.1a serves as an introduction to all of Luke 12.1b–12 (cf. Matt 10.26–33; 12.32; 10.19–20), just as Luke 14.25 to Luke 14.26–35 (cf. Matt 10.37–8; 5.13 // Mark 9.50). Similarly, Luke 17.5 provides the saying on faith (Luke 17.6), which appears in Matthew as Jesus' answer to the disciples' question why they could not help the possessed boy (Matt 17.20; diff. Mark 9.29), with a fitting narrative context.

⁶⁷ For example, in the view of J. A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke (x–xxiv)* (AB 28A; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1985) 1119, this saying 'is almost as isolated there [i.e. in Matt 5.32] as it is here in Luke', while Watson, *Gospel Writing*, 210 notes that Luke does not express any explicit connection of the saying to the law (diff. Matt 5.32), 'but in placing this saying after the two law-related sayings he appears to take it for granted'. J. J. Kilgallen, 'Luke 18.11: Pharisees and Lukan Irony', *RB* 113 (2006) 53–64, at 63 proposes that Luke arranged Luke 16.14–18 'to provide a bitter comment on the self-description of the Pharisee Luke knows will be presented

Luke 19.26 (see item (a)) is definitely essential within Luke 19.11–27 – but this is a text that was heavily formed by Lukan redaction also in the perspective of Q-scholars. Thus the claim that non-Markan doublet halves of Matthew’s doublets appear in Luke as ‘encapsulated’ (‘eingemauert(e)’) ⁶⁸ elements of their surrounding pericopae remains unconvincing too.

Summing up the discussion of our second example of a doublet-based case against the Farrer hypothesis, it should be emphasised that Morgenthaler’s *Statistische Synopse* is packed with valuable philological observations on the Synoptic problem in general and on the doublets in particular. It remains an indispensable tool for the student of synoptic relationships and is rightly referred to in every recent publication on doublets in Matthew and Luke. Exactly because of the lasting influence of Morgenthaler’s monograph, however, it is very important to recognise that his attempt to create a decisive argument against the Farrer hypothesis based on the phenomenon of doublets is hardly convincing.

3 Conclusion

For obvious reasons, the history of research on doublets in the Synoptic Gospels is closely tied to the emergence of the two-document hypothesis. From Weisse onwards, a long tradition of scholarship has used the doublets as a classical argument for the existence of Q, culminating in the judgement of a very influential introduction to the New Testament that doublets provide ‘the decisive evidence for the existence of a common, written source of Matthew and Luke’.⁶⁹ Present scholarship on Q, however, is divided on the issue: while some scholars (e.g. Ebner, Fleddermann, Foster, Schnelle, Tiwald) still consider the doublets a strong or even decisive argument for the existence of Q, others (e.g. Kloppenborg, Tuckett) are more hesitant on this point.

Since according to the Farrer hypothesis Luke made use of Matthew *and* Mark, proponents of this solution to the Synoptic problem have no need of ‘theoretical contortions’⁷⁰ to account for Luke’s different list of doublets compared to Matthew’s. On the one hand, Luke’s redaction of Mark naturally leads to the elimination of some of Matthew’s doublets, while, on the other hand, Farrer’s Luke treats doublet material in just the same way as he treats double-tradition material in general. Therefore the argument from doublets is not to be considered an *independent argument* in favour of Q and against the Farrer hypothesis but more (1) ‘an instructive subset of the argument from order’⁷¹ and (2) an easily understandable *illustration* of Matthew’s and Luke’s redactional activity on the assumption of Q.

The present author aims not to ally with one or the other side of the debate. Just as the two-document hypothesis needs to make Matthew’s redaction of Q plausible,⁷² the crucial challenge for the hypothesis of Lukan posteriority is to explain Luke’s redaction of

in Jesus’ parable to come’ (cf. Luke 18.11). Cf. also the careful discussion in H. Scherer, *Königsvolk und Gotteskinder: Der Entwurf der sozialen Welt im Material der Traditio duplex* (BBB 180; Göttingen: V&R Unipress/Bonn: Bonn University Press, 2016) 385–90.

⁶⁸ Schürmann, ‘Dubletten’, 343.

⁶⁹ Kümmel, *Einleitung*, 40 (emphasis added): ‘den entscheidenden Beweis für eine gemeinsame, schriftliche Quelle des Mt und Lk’.

⁷⁰ According to Foster, ‘Doublets’, 137 the Farrer hypothesis ‘can accommodate doublets in its explanation of the synoptic data, but perhaps with some theoretical contortions’.

⁷¹ Kloppenborg Verbin, *Excavating Q*, 56 n. 2.

⁷² A. Kirk, *Q in Matthew: Ancient Media, Memory, and Early Scribal Transmission of the Jesus Tradition* (LNTS 564; London/New York/Oxford/New Delhi/Sydney: T. & T. Clark, 2016) 162: ‘The different dispositions of the double tradition in Matthew and Luke must be faced by any utilization hypothesis; this is not just a problem for the 2DH. But accounting for Matthew’s significant rearrangement of the Q materials constitutes a particularly daunting challenge for the 2DH. According to the 2DH, Matthew collates materials from his non-narrative source, Q, on a topical, “peg” principle at locations deemed appropriate in the Markan narrative sequence.’ See also

Matthew in a convincing way. It is important, however, to understand that doublets are *a part of that very challenge* and not an independent proof that Luke's second source besides Mark could not have been Matthew. In any case, the doublets are worthy of studying more thoroughly by adherents of the Farrer hypothesis given that proponents of Q keep using them as an important argument in their favour.

These methodological considerations already allude to what is maybe the most important task for further research on the doublets. Because of its close connection to the development of the Q-hypothesis, research on doublets is partly Q-biased both in its terminology and its argumentation (for examples, see § 2.2 above), which sometimes leads to circular reasoning. It goes without saying that scholars should avoid terminology that presupposes a certain solution to the Synoptic problem (e.g. 'Q half' of a doublet) while they are arguing which solution is the right one. Furthermore, any discussion of the doublets should take into account all of the evidence; starting from reduced lists of doublets that contain only supposed 'source' doublets may lead to flawed results. In particular, it should never be forgotten that even on the Q-hypothesis most doublets in Matthew and Luke do *not* result from overlap of two sources (see the lists of Hawkins, Morgenthaler). Finally, the common distinction between 'source doublets' (both halves are taken over from different sources) and 'redactional doublets' (one half of the doublet is the evangelist's reduplication of the other half) is a desirable analytical tool. Drawing this distinction without implicitly presupposing a certain solution to the Synoptic problem remains, however, a daunting task.

Matthew's and Luke's rather different usage of doublets was evident throughout this article. This suggests that doublets illustrate different redactional interests and even different theological agendas.⁷³ Exploring this connection is beyond the scope of this article with its focus on source-critical considerations but is a much needed endeavour indeed. Foster correctly states that 'the doublets repay close attention since they cast light not only on source-critical questions, but perhaps more importantly on the compositional practices of the evangelists'.⁷⁴ Seen from this perspective, Fleddermann's imperative is certainly to be followed: 'No one should underestimate the importance of the doublets.'⁷⁵

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M. Hölscher, *Matthäus liest Q: Eine Studie am Beispiel von Mt 11,2–19 und Q 7,18–35* (NTA 60; Münster: Aschendorff, 2017).

⁷³ Cf. Foster, 'Doublets', 136.

⁷⁴ Foster, 'Doublets', 137. Cf. Van Oyen, 'Doublets', 286.

⁷⁵ Fleddermann, Q, 60. This statement forms a doublet in itself, as it reappears in a slightly different version at p. 59.