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NOTES AND STUDIES

THE CLASSIFICATION OF DOUBLETS IN THE
SYNOPTIC GOSPELS.

UPON any literary theory of the composition of the Synoptic Gospels, a certain amount of repetition results from the interweaving of material from different sources; and, conversely, the presence of doublets is taken to indicate divergent sources. This argument is employed, on a large scale, in the attempt to prove that the whole of Luke's Great Insertion is independent of Mark. If all doublets were of one kind, the procedure would be simple enough; but this is by no means the case. They belong to several classes; and it is evident that, until the exact nature of any particular doublet is determined, it is of no use as an index of sources. The presence of a doublet always raises a question; but will not so readily provide an answer.

Again, the phenomena of doublets shade into those of conflation and overlapping. In cases where two sources record the same incident in very similar words, and in the same context, there will be overlapping. As the phraseology varies there will be conflation; and if the similar words do not occur in the same context there will be a doublet.

A classification of doublets is outlined by Hawkins in *Horae Synopticae* Part ii Section 4, p. 65, ed. 1; p. 80, ed. 2. An attempt is here made to carry that classification a little further. The numbers in brackets refer to the list in HS. Where no such number occurs the passage is not contained in that list. For the most part, Hawkins's analysis of the doublet is followed, the chief divergence being that no. 20 (= Mt. no. 3 in HS) is taken as a case in which Lk. is a conflation, and not Mt. an expansion. No. 21 (= Lk. no. 4 in HS) is a very complex passage. In Lk. ix 1-5 Mk. and Q overlap. In Mt. x 1-16 Mk. and Q overlap; and there is also the conflation of the two sets of instructions from Q which Lk. keeps apart in chs. ix and x.

The following method of grouping is suggested :—

1. Cases where the doublet is due to the editor, and not to his sources.

It may be noted, in parenthesis, that in the Diatessaron of Tatian there are several examples of the use twice over of a passage from the same source.¹

1 (a). Repetition of a Mk. passage.

1. (Mt. 1) Mt. v 29 f
Mt. xviii 8 f = Mk. ix 43, 45, 47

Mt. xviii 8 f is Marcan, and Mt. v 29 f is derived from it. Hawkins takes the latter as Q.

2. (Mt. 5) Mt. x 22 a
Mt. xxiv 9 b = Mk. xiii 13 a = Lk. xxi 17

Mt. has transferred a section from the later position to the earlier, and repeated a part.

3. (Mt. 6) Mt. x 22 b
Mt. xxiv 13 = Mk. xiii 13 b

The situation is the same as in no. 2.

4. (Mt. 12) Mt. xix 30 = Mk. x 31
Mt. xx 16 Lk. xiii 30

Lk. xiii 30 undoubtedly belongs to Q. Mt. has omitted the parable of the Laggard Guests because he has the more striking parable of the Virgins; but he uses sayings from the Q section, Lk. xiii 23-30 in chs. vii 13 f and viii 11 f. Mt. xix 30 is identical with Mk. x 31, and is clearly taken from Mk. About Mt. xx 16 there is some doubt. Though not identical in form with Lk., it is nearer to it than to Mk., and is therefore held by Hawkins to come from Q. The objection to this is that it forms the conclusion of a parable (the Labourers in the Vineyard) which does not appear to come from Q, and is not accepted by Hawkins himself as part of Q, either in section A, B, or C of his tentative reconstruction of Q in *Oxford Studies in the Synoptic Problem* p. 113 ff. On the other hand, it may very well be an editorial repetition by Mt., who wishes to bind up the parable with the previous Marcan section. This is a marked feature of his method. Cf. Mt. vii 16 a and 20, and Mt. xii 39 a and 45 c.

5. (Lk. 6) Mt. x 39
(Mt. 8) Mt. xvi 25 = Mk. viii 35 = Lk. ix 24
Lk. xvii 33. See also no. 27.

¹ *The Diatessaron of Tatian and the Synoptic Problem*, Hobson, Chicago, 1904, pp. 69 ff.

Lk. xvii 33 may be a repetition of the Marcan passage, with the phraseology changed, for the sake of variety. Mt. also repeats the one word *εἰρήσει*.

6. Lk. ix 22 = Mk. viii 31 = Mt. xvi 21
Lk. xvii 25

Lk. xvii 25 appears to be a brief repetition of the Marcan passage.

7. (Lk. 8, Mk. ix 34 = Mt. xviii 1 = Lk. ix 46
Ed. 2) Lk. xxii 24

The Lucan forms are very similar and thoroughly characteristic of the Lucan style:—

*Εἰσῆλθε δὲ διαλογισμὸς ἐν αὐτοῖς, τὸ τίς ἂν εἴη μείζων αὐτῶν.
Ἐγένετο δὲ καὶ φιλονεικία ἐν αὐτοῖς, τὸ τίς αὐτῶν δοκεῖ εἶναι μείζων.*

Mk. and Mt. only agree verbally in the phrase *τίς μείζων*. In all three Gospels two disputes for precedence are recorded. In the first case they agree, but in the second Lk. omits the Request of James and John, probably because it is derogatory to the dignity of the Twelve. On the other hand, he records a dispute on the eve of the Last Supper which is not contained in Mt. and Mk., but is presupposed in John's account of the Washing of the Disciples' Feet. In recording this new fact Lk. uses words in which he almost repeats himself from ch. 9, 46, and at the same time attaches some of the reply of Jesus to the Twelve when they murmured against James and John. We have here considerable freedom in dealing with our Lord's words, the kind of thing a modern editor would carefully avoid.

8. Lk. x 25 (= Mk. xii 28-34 = Mt. xxii 35-40)
Lk. xviii 18 = Mk. x 17 (= Mt. xix 16)

In Lk. x 25 the question is 'What shall I do to inherit eternal life?' This is practically the same as in Lk. xviii 18 = Mk. x 17, where a quite different incident is recorded. As it is not likely that Lk. has confused the two incidents, probably his non-Markan source contained a question so much like that of Mk. x 17 that he has given the Mk.-phraseology in both cases.

9. Mt. xxiv 23
Mt. xxiv 26

Here *μὴ πιστεύσητε* is repeated from the previous verse. Cf. also nos. 12 and 29.

1 (δ). Repetition of a Q-Passage.

10. (Mt. 4) Mt. x 15 = Lk. x 12
Mt. xi 24

Mt. xi 24 is a repetition of Mt. x 15.

11. (Mt. 9) Mt. xii 39 = Lk. xi 29
Mt. xvi 4 Mk. viii 12

Mt. xvi 4 repeats the Q-form of Mt. xii 39, but in the Mk.-context. This involves a slight overlapping. Mt. xvi 4 is really a witness both for Q and Mk.; and the doublet may be referred also to class 3 (a). Cf. Harnack *Sayings of Jesus* p. 23.

12. (Mt. 15) Mt. iv 23 = Mk. i 39 = Lk. iv 44
 Mt. ix 35 = Mk. vi 6 b
 Mt. x 1

Here Mk. vi 6 b = Mt. ix 35 forms the pivot. In Mt. iv 23 there is the use of phraseology both from the Mk. and Q elements of Mt. ix 35. The words *καὶ περιῆγεν . . . διδασκῶν* are taken, indirectly, from Mk. vi 6 b; but Mt. iv 23 b is moulded on the Q element in ix 35, which is also partly repeated in Mt. x 1. This passage would also belong to 1 (a).

13. (Mt. 17) Mt. ix 32-34
 Mt. xii 22-24 = Lk. xi 14 f. Cf. Mk. iii 20-22.

There is little doubt that Mt. is recording the same miracle twice over, and in the Q-version. Mt. ix 34 is omitted in some Western authorities; but its resemblance to Lk. xi 15, rather than to Mt. xii 24, is in its favour. A copyist would have been more likely to assimilate to the passage in Mt. Mt. ix and Lk. have also in common the word *ἐθαύμασαν*.

14. (Mt. 20) Mt. iii 10 = Lk. iii 9
 Mt. vii 19

The second passage in Mt. is a repetition of the first.

15. Mt. vi 8 anticipates Mt. vi 32 b.

16. Mt. vii 20 repeats Mt. vii 16 a.

17. Mt. xxiii 33 repeats Mt. iii 7. Note also that Mt. xii 45 c is a repetition of phraseology from *vv.* 39 f above. Cf. also no. 24.

1 (c). *Repetition of material peculiar to Mt.*

18. (Mt. 19) A. (Mt. iii 2) = Mk. i 4 = Lk. iii 3
 B. Mt. iv 17 = Mk. i 14 f

A has reference to the Baptist, B to Jesus. Mt. has modified the language of A to conform to that of B. The words identical in Mt. A and B are *Μετανοείτε, ἤγγικεν γὰρ ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν*. Here the phrase *τῶν οὐρανῶν* appears to be due to the editor. See also nos. 22, 23 and part of 25.

1 (d). *Repetition of material peculiar to Lk.* See no. 33.

2. **Doublets in one source.**

2 (a). *In the Mk.-source.*

19. (Mt. 13) Mk. ix 35
 Mt. xx 26 f = Mk. x 43 f
 Mt. xxiii 11 Lk. xxii 26

This is the only doublet in Mk. Jesus may have had occasion often to use such words. The Mt. doublet is no. 30.

2 (b). *Doublets in Q.*

20. (Mt. 3) Mt. vii 16-18

Lk. vi 43-45

Mt. xii 33-35

This is a difficult set of parallel passages, and there is not room for a full discussion of them. Hawkins considers that Mt. has expanded a single passage of Q in two directions. Harnack (*Sayings of Jesus* p. 69) traces the passages of Mt. to different sources. He may have overlooked Mt. xii 35 = Lk. vi 45 as a probable constituent of Q. The theory is preferable that Mt. vii 15-18 represents faithfully Q of the Sermon; but *vv.* 19 f are editorial additions. *V.* 19 repeats exactly Mt. iii 10 b, and *v.* 20 repeats *v.* 16 a by way of closing the paragraph. In Mt. xii 33 the aphorism is stated in a positive form, but differently from ch. xvii 7. It has a good connexion, for without it *v.* 34 would be very abrupt. *Vv.* 34 b and 35 continue the same thought in a changed figure. *V.* 33 b might be an editorial addition, but this is not likely, because it just balances *v.* 34 b. We conclude, therefore, that Mt. xii 33-35 probably belongs to the Q-form of the saying on Blasphemy, or at any rate forms a complete section of Q. In that case we have a Q-doublet, which Lk. has conflated. On 20 and 21 cf. p. 1 above.

21. (Lk. 4)

In Mt. x 1-16, Lk. ix 1-5, and Mk. vi 7-11 Q and Mk. overlap.

Properly speaking, the doublet is in Lk., and this is taken as being also a doublet in Q, which Mt. has conflated to a considerable extent. This is the converse case to no. 19. There is repetition in the following cases:—

Lk. ix 3, 4, 5

Lk. x 4, 5-7, 10 f.

2 (c). *Doublets in material peculiar to Mt.*

22. (Mt. 21)

Mt. ix 13, inserted parallel to Mk. ii 17

Mt. xii 7, inserted parallel to Mk. ii 27

The positive and negative sides of the principle, 'I will have mercy and not sacrifice', are illustrated. The repetition may be editorial, and so come under 1 (c). It is placed here because it *may* be a doublet in Mt.'s source.

23. (Mt. 22)

Mt. xvi 19

Mt. xviii 18

Here again, the repetition may be due to the editor, or to his source.

If the former, it is not certain which passage is original. Cf. Allen's comment on Mt. xvi 19.

24. Mt. v 34
Mt. xxiii 22

Swearing by the Throne of God is the idea common to both passages, which may both belong to Q, though Lk. has neither of them. If that were so, we should have another Q-doublet, which should be classed as 2 (b).

3. Doublets traceable to more than one source.

3 (a). Doublets in Mk. and Q.

25. (Mt. 2) A. Mt. v 32 = Lk. xvi 18
B. Mt. xix 9 = Mk. x 11 f

A is from Q, and B is Marcan, both in position and language. Mt. adds in A, *παρεκτὸς λόγου πορνείας*, and in B, *μὴ ἐπὶ πορνείᾳ*. This appears to be a sort of editorial doublet, no doubt reflecting the Church-interpretation of Mt.'s circle. Cf. 1 (c).

26. (Mk. 7) Mt. x 38 Lk. xiv 27
Lk. 5) Mt. xvi 24 = Lk. ix 23 = Mk. viii 34

This is a doublet in Mt. and Mt. x 38 is from Q; but Lk. xiv 27 may come from a source which is neither Mk. nor Q. See also no. 39.

27. (Mt. 8) Mt. x 39
Mt. xvi 25 = Mk. viii 35 = Lk. ix 24
Lk. xvii 33

Mt. x 39 is from Q, and the rest is Marcan. See no. 5.

28. (Mt. 10) A. Mt. xiii 12 = Mk. iv 25 = Lk. viii 18
Lk. 3) B. Mt. xxv 29 = Lk. xix 26

Although the position of Mt. xiii 12 is not exactly that of the original source, and Mt. and Lk. are only partly parallel in B, still, no doubt A is from Mk. throughout, and B is from Q. In Mt. A and B *καὶ περισσευθήσεται* appears to be due to the editor.

29. (Mt. 11) Mt. xvii 20 Lk. xvii 6
Mt. xxi 21 = Mk. xi 23

Lk. xvii 6 seems nearest Q. Mt. xvii 20 has a mixture of Mk. and Q. Mt. xxi 21 also has, from Q, *ἐὰν ἐχητε πίστιν*. *Ἄμην λέγω ὑμῶν* may be editorial. The rest is Marcan.

30. (Mt. 13) For the parallels see no. 19, where the Mk.-doublet has been noted.

Mt. xxiii 11 probably comes from Q. Lk. xxii 26 is perhaps Marcan; for Lk. has brought into a later position the words which, in Mk., are connected with the request of the sons of Zebedee. At the same time Lk. may be slightly affected by the Q-form.

31. (Mt. 14) Mt. xxiv 42 = Mk. xiii 35
Mt. xxv 13

Probably Mt. xxv 13 is from Q.

32. (Mt. 18) Mt. xii 38 f Lk. xi 16
Mt. xvi 1 = Mk. viii 11 f

Mt. xii 38 f is from Q, and the rest is Marcan. Hawkins takes Lk. xi 16 as from Q.

33. (Lk. 1) A. Lk. viii 16 = Mk. iv 21
B. Lk. xi 33 = Mt. v 15

A is probably Marcan, and B is from Q. A and B, in Lk., are very similar, owing to the editor's modification of the wording. In both places he has οὐδεὶς . . . ἄρας . . . ἵνα οἱ εἰσπορευόμενοι βλέπωσιν τὸ φῶς (τὸ φῶς βλέπωσιν). This editorial repetition might be classed as 1 (d), along with nos. 18 and 25, as in the case of Mt.

34. (Lk. 2) A. Lk. viii 17 = Mk. iv 22
B. Lk. xii 2 = Mt. x 26

A appears to be Marcan, B as from Q.

35. (Lk. 7) A. Lk. ix 26 = Mk. viii 38
B. Lk. xii 9 = Mt. x 33

There is very little doubt that both Lk. and Mt., in B., are from Q. A is Marcan.

36. (Lk. 8) Lk. xi 43
(Lk. 9, Ed. 2) Lk. xx 46 = Mt. xxiii 6 f = Mk. xii 38 f

Probably Lk. xi 43 is from Q. The rest is Marcan.

37. (Lk. 9) A. Lk. xii 11 f
(Lk. 10, Ed. 2) B. Lk. xxi 14 f = Mk. xiii 11 = Mt. x 19 f

B is Marcan. Lk. xii 11 f is from Q. In ch. xxi 14 f Lk. may omit the reference to the Holy Spirit, because he has already given it from Q.

3 (δ). *Doublet in Q and a special Lucan source.*

38. (Lk. 10) Lk. xiv 11 Mt. xxiii 12
(Lk. 11, Ed. 2) Lk. xviii 14

In Lk. the same application is given to opposite, but complementary illustrations, in Mt. the saying has a wider scope. Mt. is probably from Q, as also Lk. xiv 11. Lk. xviii 14 is from Lk.'s special source. Hawkins takes all as from Q. On the possibility of a special source of Lk. overlapping Q see Sanday *Expository Times* xi 473, and Buckley *Int. to Synoptic Problem* p. 138.

3 (ε). *Doublet in Mk. and Lk.'s special source.* See nos. 26 and 39.

4. **Traces of more than two sources.**

39. In no. 25 the Mt.-doublet is from Q and Mk.; but it is every

way likely that the Lk.-doublet is from Mk. and a special source. In that case three sources are involved.

One other case remains.

40. (Mt. 16) Mt. ix 27-31

Mt. xx 29-34 = Mk. x 46-52 = Lk. xviii 35-43

The miracle one would have expected to find here in Mt. is recorded in Mk. viii 22-26; but a good deal of it was not attractive to Mt. (cf. Allen on Mt. pp. xxxi and xxxii) and was therefore omitted. Some think that the *two* blind men in Mt. ix as well as in Mt. xx 30, and the *two* demoniacs in Mt. viii 28, are due to the editor. Moreover, the language of Mt. ix 27-31 is most of it paralleled elsewhere in the Synoptic Gospels, so that it is very doubtful whether we ought to reckon a doublet in Mt.'s source. In that case we should have an editorial doublet, on the lines of those in 1 (c). An alternative is that Mt. is recording a piece of tradition not contained in any written source. He would, in that case, naturally clothe it in phraseology which was running in his mind. The command not to make the miracle known has no relation to chronology, but to the mental condition of the healed person. This command would not enable us to judge whether the miracle was earlier or later in the ministry, in any case. Neither does the word *ἐκεῖθεν* give an historical connexion. It is an editorial link in Mt.'s Miracle Section.

To illustrate the probable overlapping of triple sources suggested in no. 39, reference may be made to the parallels Mk. xii 28-34, Mt. xxii 34-40, Lk. x 25-28 (the Scribe's Question), and to Mk. xii 39, Mt. xxiii 6, Lk. xx 46 (the Chief Places at Feasts). These passages should be allowed to modify the statement in Hawkins (H.S. p. 82 ed. 2) that evidence of triple sources is only found in the case of the phrase, 'He that hath ears to hear let him hear.' See also H.S. p. 87 ed. 1, and pp. 106 f ed. 2.

It will be noted that nos. 5 and 7, 19 and 30, 26 and 39 are compound doublets. To some extent this is true of nos. 11, 12, and 25. In the case of nos. 22, 23, and 24 the class is somewhat uncertain. The examples given under 1 (c) and 1 (d) might be very much extended. They are given chiefly for the sake of illustration.

Of the forty doublets considered, at least eighteen, and possibly more than half, are due to the editors, and so are useful mainly in illustrating their methods of work. On the other hand, the undoubted doublets in the sources themselves are very few, at most one in Mk., two or three in Q, and about two besides. About sixteen, that is, less than half, are traceable to a double source, and thus receive a real double attestation.

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