

“GREATER THAN THEY” (LUKE 9:46) ON THE RECEPTION OF A MARKAN DOUBLET IN LUKE

WOLFGANG GRÜNSTÄUDL

Abstract. The most widely accepted example of a Markan doublet is the logion on greatness in Mark 9:35//10:43–44. Both halves of this “sayings doublet” are themselves part of two episodes on quarrels among Jesus’ disciples (cf. Mark 9:33–37; 10:35–45) which build something like a “narrative doublet” in Mark. Assuming Luke’s redaction of Mark, the present study analyzes the fate of this striking Markan doublet(s) within the Lukan framework in order to shed some new light at Luke’s redactional activity as well as his theological agenda. After a brief look at Luke’s incorporation of Mark 9:33–37 and Mark 10:35–45, this paper highlights some unexpected interpretative challenges in Luke 9:46–48 and argues for a fresh reading of Luke 9:46 (based on a very old proposal) that may offer a solution to the riddles of Luke’s redaction of Mark 9:33–37.

Keywords: Gospel of Mark – Gospel of Luke – doublets – quarrel over greatness – redaction criticism.

One of the main reasons for the importance of so-called “doublets” in the history of the Synoptic Problem is their uneven distribution. While the gospels of Matthew and Luke contain a significant number of doublets, hardly any of them can be found in Mark.¹ The most widely accepted example of a Markan doublet is the logion on greatness in Mark 9:35//10:43–44. Both halves of this “sayings doublet” are themselves part of two episodes on quarrels among Jesus’ disciples (cf. Mark 9:33–37; 10:35–45) which build something like a “narrative

¹ For terminological discussions (e.g., “sayings doublet”, “narrative doublet”) and the history of research on doublets in Luke, cf. W. GRÜNSTÄUDL, ‘Wieviele Doubletten finden sich im Lukasevangelium? Forschungsgeschichtliche und methodologische Klärungen’, *ETL* 97 (2021), 191–222. For a discussion of doublets in Matthew, see P. FOSTER, ‘The Doublets in Matthew: What Are They Good For?’, in *An Early Reader of Mark and Q*, eds. ed. J. VERHEYDEN and G. VAN BELLE. BTS 21 (Leuven: Peeters, 2016), 109–138. Possible doublet-based arguments for or against a certain solution to the Synoptic problem are evaluated in W. GRÜNSTÄUDL, ‘Luke’s Doublets and the Synoptic Problem’, *NTS* 68 (2022), 13–25.