In groups where written texts were central, individuals able to serve as text-brokers accordingly occupied a position of power and prestige.\textsuperscript{1} Mastery of the Torah was a source of prestige and power.\textsuperscript{2}

The present chapter will build upon the conclusions of Chapter Three by highlighting the concomitant social significance of grapho-literacy in the world reflected by the canonical gospels. Second Temple Judaism and early Christianity were both cultures dominated by sacred texts that the majority of the population could not access for themselves. Literacy in this context often (but not always) amounted to ‘scribal’ or ‘sacred’ literacy. A full discussion of Jewish scribes or scribal/sacred literacy is beyond the scope of the present study, and thus what follows will be concentrated upon Jesus’ opponents in PA, whom John 8.3 introduces as ‘the scribes and the Pharisees.’ At the outset of this chapter, I must note the significance of the mere presence of the scribes in John 8.3, for this is the lone occurrence of οἱ γραμματεῖς in GJohn. Though the following chapters will demonstrate that PA’s interpolator weaved this story into GJohn with careful consideration of its narrative location between John 7 and 8, the appearance of the scribes in John 8.3 is one of the visible seams left from the interpolator’s work that betrays PA’s non-Johannine origin.\textsuperscript{3} When PA’s interpolator includes the

\textsuperscript{1} Snyder, Teachers, 3.

\textsuperscript{2} Seth Schwartz, Imperialism and Jewish Society, 200 BCE to 640 CE (JCM; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 74.

\textsuperscript{3} Another seam that shows PA’s non-Johannine origin is that ‘the crowd’ (ὁ δῆμος) of John 7 (7.12, 20, 31, 32, 40, 43, 49) becomes ‘the people,’ more specifically ‘all the people’ (πᾶς ὁ λαός), of John 8.2. The full phrase occurs nowhere else in the Johannine narrative and λαός occurs only twice outside PA (11.50, 18.14). Barrett, Gospel According to St. John, 591, claims, ‘λαός is a Lucan word,’ and lists occurrences in the NT.
scribes alongside the Pharisees, he alters the makeup of Jesus’ opposition in a manner that has not appeared before PA in GJohn and will not appear after it. The contention of the present study is that it is no coincidence that the interpolator includes scribes—Jewish practitioners of grapho-literacy—amidst Jesus’ opponents in John 8:3, given that Jesus demonstrates grapho-literacy himself in John 8:6, 8.4

I will first provide an introduction to scribal literacy and the concept of ‘text-brokerage,’ then argue that the skill of writing was integral for the social position of scribes in Second Temple Judaism as text-brokers. Finally, I will consider the portrayal of scribes as text-brokers alongside other recognized Jewish text-brokers in the NT. The NT is the most important background for the present study, since that particular symbolic universe is where PA’s interpolator chose to place his unique image of Jesus, including Jesus’ opponents in the pericope—‘the scribes and the Pharisees.’5 Thus, while I will discuss historical studies of text-brokers and assert that the general image of scribes and Pharisees as authoritative interpreters in the NT is an accurate reflection of first-century Judaism,6 this chapter’s primary focus is upon the NT depiction of scribal literacy.

4 Chapter Seven will suggest further that the presence of ‘all the people’ is not a coincidence either given the charge against the adulteress in PA.

5 Chapter Nine will observe that the earliest possible evidence for PA’s inclusion in GJohn is the second century CE with the Prot. Jas. The current chapter is concerned with what the interpolator may have thought about scribes from his reading of Christian texts (that were authoritative in the same manner as GJohn). Thus, the designation ‘NT’ for the evidence from the Synoptic Gospels, Acts, and Pauline corpus here is admittedly anachronistic since a canon had not yet fully arisen. It is likely, however, that the fourfold collection of the Synoptic Gospels and John had arisen by this stage (prior to 150 CE), as well as a collection of Pauline letters (by the end of the first century CE), and that some ‘orthodox’ (or ‘proto-orthodox’) Christians recognized them as authoritative in contrast to other texts eventually labelled apocryphal or even heretical. Thus, though an anachronism, I will here retain the designation ‘NT’ in reference to those texts that later became the NT but already carried authoritative status in the context of the interpolator. On the date of the fourfold collection, see Stanton, Jesus, 85. On the date of the Pauline collection, see Gamble, Books and Readers, 59, or, more fully on the subject, see David Trobisch, Paul’s Letter Collection: Tracing the Origins (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994); G. Zuntz, The Text of the Epistles: A Disquisition upon the Corpus Paulinum (London: Oxford University Press, 1953).