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978-1-107-02638-4 - The Social World of Intellectuals in the Roman Empire: Sophists, Philosophers, and Christians

Kendra Eshleman

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THE SOCIAL WORLD OF INTELLECTUALS IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE

This book examines the role of social networks in the formation of identity among sophists, philosophers, and Christians in the early Roman Empire. Membership in each category was established and evaluated socially as well as discursively. From clashes over admission to classrooms and communion to construction of the group's history, integration into the social fabric of the community served as both an index of identity and a medium through which contests over status and authority were conducted. The juxtaposition of patterns of belonging in Second Sophistic and early Christian circles reveals a shared repertoire of technologies of self-definition, authorization, and institutionalization, and shows how each group manipulated and adapted those strategies to its own needs. This approach provides a more rounded view of the Second Sophistic and places the early Christian formation of "orthodoxy" in a fresh context.

KENDRA ESHLEMAN is an assistant professor of Classical Studies at Boston College.

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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town,
Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi, Mexico City

Cambridge University Press
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781107026384

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First published 2012

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data
Eshleman, Kendra, 1973–

The social world of intellectuals in the Roman Empire : sophists, philosophers, and Christians /
Kendra Eshleman.

pages cm. – (Greek culture in the Roman world)
Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-107-02638-4

1. Social networks – Rome. 2. Social structure – Rome. 3. Group identity – Rome.
4. Identity (Philosophical concept) – History – To 1500. 5. Rome – Intellectual life.
6. Sophists (Greek philosophy) 7. Second Sophistic movement. 8. Philosophers – Rome.
9. Christians – Rome. I. Title.

DG78.E75 2012

305.5'520937 – dc23 2012018821

ISBN 978-1-107-02638-4 Hardback

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This book began life as a dissertation written at the University of Michigan. Its seed was planted by David Potter: hearing that I wanted to write on early Christian heresy, he sent me off to read Hippolytus and Philostratus, two authors unknown to me, but who he promised would have much to say to each other. He was right, as he usually is. The project has evolved considerably from its initial form, but it has been nourished throughout by David's wisdom, enthusiasm, and apparent omniscience.

On the road to publication, a book accrues many debts. The bulk of the revisions were completed with the help of a Boston College Faculty Fellowship in the spring of 2010. An earlier version of Chapter 4 appeared in *Classical Philology* 103 (2008). Lauren Caldwell read more drafts than she probably cares to remember, and she helped to make straight much that was tangled and inelegant. The book would never have been completed without her. Others who commented on drafts, fielded queries, and asked inconvenient questions include Sara Ahbel-Rappe, Derek Collins, John Finamore, Daniel Harris-McCoy, Meredith Monaghan, Catherine R. Osborne, PHEME Perkins, Jim Porter, Adam Serfass, William Turpin, Chris van den Berg, Tim Whitmarsh, Meghan Williams, Ralph Williams, and two anonymous readers at Cambridge University Press. I am grateful as well to the many others who responded to portions of the work in progress at the American Philological Association, the Classical Association of the Middle West and South, the Boston Patristics Group, the MACTe Junior Faculty group, the University of Toronto, Georgetown, Oberlin, Skidmore, Boston College, and the Mennonite Congregation of Boston. Aaron Hertzmann helped to find the cover image and has generally been a font of practical wisdom. Corey Streitweiser was a prince among proofreaders.

To my family – Ken and Myrna Eshleman, Tina Eshleman, Don Harrison, Olivia Page Harrison, Lin Albertson Thorpe – are due special thanks

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Acknowledgments

for setting my feet on paths of scholarship and for their love and support
through the long gestation of this book.

Finally, my husband, Jeremy Thorpe, to whom this book is dedicated.
He prepared the figures, talked me through the hard bits, and knows more
about Alexander the Clay-Plato than a reasonable person ought.

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Note on abbreviations

Citations of periodicals follow the abbreviations used by *L'Année philologique*. Abbreviations for ancient authors and works follow the *Oxford Latin Dictionary* and Liddell–Scott–Jones' *Greek–English Lexicon*; for Christian texts not covered by those two works, I have followed the system of the Society of Biblical Literature.