

*From Professor Richard Hunter,
Regius Professor of Greek*

Trinity College
Cambridge CB2 1TQ
Telephone: (01223) 338400
338410 (direct line)
Fax: (01223) 338564
e-mail : rlh10@cam.ac.uk

Cistaro's monograph on Lucian's *Imagines* and *Pro Imaginibus* is an impressive piece of work, which combines attention to art history with a thorough knowledge of Lucian's rhetorical strategies and the intellectual and cultural background of these two works. C traces the origins of Lucian's encomiastic methods through its earliest seeds in Homer to the elaborate theorizations of the Second Sophistic, and sets out with great clarity the strategies of defence which Lucian is then forced to employ in the *Pro Imaginibus*. These works have attracted considerable attention as part of the general surge in interest in the literature of the Second Sophistic and, in particular, as examples of ekphrasis and ephrastic theory, for many years now a 'hot' topic. I am not aware, however, of any study which deals with them in such detail and with such coverage (in parts the monograph resembles a commentary on the two essays). I would expect C's monograph to attract considerable international attention; I look forward to following her career with interest.

Meliadò's publication profile is very different indeed. M is a skilled papyrologist and his expertise lies, in particular, with dealing with fragmentary texts; his only monograph to date is a short book which is an edition with full commentary of the very interesting Goodspeed papyrus. M's skills are here all on show: attention to detail, philological precision, appropriate caution before reaching wide-ranging conclusions, firm grasp of Greek literature as a whole. This is a work of very sound, exact scholarship. Beyond this, M has a very impressively long list of articles on (largely) Hellenistic poetry – both reconstruction and interpretation – and has been a major contributor to the LGGA for which he has written many careful articles. If this work was put together, it would fill a sizeable volume ranging across the full breadth of Hellenistic poetry. M has already made a number of contributions, in particular, to the study of Theocritus, both through his command of the papyrological evidence and through his knowledge of the conventions of these poems. If I was to contemplate doing an edition of Theocritus, he would be the first collaborator of whom I would think.

The publication profile of the two candidates is thus very different. It is a paradox of the discipline that C's book will probably attract a deal of attention outside Italy, whereas M's many small-scale articles, often on rather obscure subjects, are always likely to be known only to real specialists in the discipline of Hellenistic poetry. Nevertheless, I have a clear feeling that M has the weight of serious publications behind him to be an outstanding candidate for the current position; C has written an excellent first book, but she cannot compete with M's breadth and philological range. On the basis of published work, I would therefore give a clear preference to M, despite my admiration for C's monograph.