


 PART ONE 

*Achille Bocchi:
A Life
in Its Context*

 CHAPTER ONE 

The Early Years

On dit qu’Achille, en remaschant son ire,
 De tels plaisirs souloit s’entretenir,
 Pour addoucir le triste souvenir
 De sa maistresse, aux fredons de sa lyre.
 (Joachim Du Bellay, *Les Regrets*)¹

When the *Symbolicae Quaestiones* appeared in print in 1555, its author was sixty-six or sixty-seven years of age. The book had evolved over many years and recorded the literary, philosophical, and cultural trends of half a century. Its author, Achille Bocchi, either through the accidents of history or through an innate cautiousness, remains a somewhat shadowy and ambivalent figure, the product of a period of turmoil and change that is itself not fully understood. His vision, expressed in the union of verbal and visual symbols, requires a new introduction.

To what extent, however, can a modern biographer get beyond the bare and scattered facts of a sixteenth-century life? How much can the biographer reconstruct the ideas that nourished a sixteenth-century work without in the process freightening them with twentieth-century notions of the Renaissance? In order to determine “the precise location of our ignorance,” in the words of Bernard O’Kelly, we need to reconsider both the life and times of the subject.² The study of an author’s life in its context still offers one way to trace the threads through the labyrinth of a complex work of art. Yet the validity of this pursuit will always be tempered by the problems E. H. Gombrich found inherent in the “old-fashioned biography of the ‘Life and Letters’ type”:

The average academic lacks the nerve to deal with a man of the past who was not also a specialist. Nor is his reluctance dishonourable; we know how little we know about human beings and how little of the evidence we have would satisfy a psychologist interested in the man’s character and motives. The increasing awareness of our ignorance about human motives has led to a crisis of self-confidence.³

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Nevertheless, the desire to know more about Bocchi and his vision is enough to impel this researcher to risk the charge of superabundance of nerve or even of “vana curiositas.” But because not even Bocchi’s contemporaries could paint a clear picture of him, there will be no attempt to provide a psychological portrait of Bocchi here.

Achille Bocchi had no contemporary biographer. A manuscript dated 1587 with the title “Informat[ion]e della familg[ia] et propria linea di Fran[cesc]o Bocchj . . .” (Bologna, Archiginnasio, MS. B. 470, no. 9), which contains materials gathered to prove the family’s nobility, provides some details and their dates of Bocchi’s career. The earliest printed biography is the brief notice in Giovanni Nicolò Pasquali Alidosi’s *Dottori bolognesi di teologia, filosofia, medicina, e d’arti liberali dall’anno 1000 per tutto marzo del 1623*.⁴ Another brief seventeenth-century account appears in Pompeo Scipione Dolfi’s *Cronologia delle famiglie nobili di Bologna*.⁵ By the eighteenth century, a greater interest in Bocchi as a writer, and in the works of writers in general, led to entries in Pellegrino Antonio Orlandi’s *Notizie degli scrittori bolognesi*, Francesco Saverio Quadrio’s *Della storia e della ragione d’ogni poesia*, Giannaria Mazzuchelli’s *Gli scrittori d’Italia*, and Giovanni Fantuzzi’s *Notizie degli scrittori bolognesi*.⁶ Fantuzzi, the last of this group to write, gives the most detailed account; he includes the texts of some documents available to him and is generally reliable except when attempting to reconcile conflicting earlier accounts.⁷ The major biography presently available is that contributed by Antonio Rotondò to the *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani (DBI)*, which, although carefully researched and thorough, reflects Rotondò’s preoccupation with Bocchi as a supporter of Catholic reform.⁸

Part I of this study assumes that the making of Achille Bocchi’s *Symbolicae Quaestiones* cannot be fully understood without some grasp of the author and his personality, his family and social standing, his teachers and colleagues, and his personal friends and enemies and of the outstanding events and ideas of Bocchi’s times. Although all these factors have been taken into account in the ensuing chapters, it has not always been possible to discuss them chronologically. This first chapter takes Bocchi from his birth through the early stages of his public teaching.

Bocchi’s Birth and Education

Achille Bocchi was born into a patrician family in Bologna, Italy, in 1488. The Bocchi family had had associations with the Studio (University) of Bologna since the early fifteenth century when Giovanni Bocchi (or Bucchi) taught natural philosophy and medicine there. After his death, Giovanni’s daughter Dorotea (fl. ca. 1417–33) was said to have continued teaching his students both in private and in public lectures.⁹ Achille’s cousin, Romeo Bocchi, taught law for many years until his death in 1577. Of Bocchi’s immediate family not too much is known. One sister, a nun, Suor Giulia in the Convent of Santa Cristina, was a beneficiary of Bocchi’s will of 1556.¹⁰ His mother, Constantia Zambeccari Bocchi, also came from a noble family with ties to the Studio. His father, Giulio, served Bologna as a member of the *Anziani* (Senate) in 1497 and probably was a merchant.¹¹ The Bocchi family were partisans of the ruling Bentivoglio line, which had maneuvered by shifting alliances with Florence and Milan and, between 1474 and 1506, with the invading French forces to maintain the power it had seized from the Papal State.¹²

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All that is certain about Bocchi's education is that he had as his principal teacher Giovanni Battista Pio degli Andali, who was born in Bologna around 1475 and died in Rome after 1537. Before reaching grammar school (the age of entrance varied), Bocchi may have learned the rudiments of reading and arithmetic in the vernacular, perhaps from the type of teacher known as a *ludi magistro*.¹³ Whether Pio taught young grammar school pupils is not certain. Depending on a family's wealth, grammar school teaching could be carried out by home tutoring, by independent private instruction in a grammarian's home-based school (sometimes these were boarding schools with a wide reputation), or by the public grammar school in the student's neighborhood. In Bocchi's case, his musical training (to be discussed in the section "The Musical Context of Bocchi") also raises the possibility that he attended a choir school at a local church. Any of these types of school could have afforded him a solid humanist foundation during this period.¹⁴

Bocchi's university education was interrupted by several turbulent years. A severe earthquake that struck Bologna in 1505 was followed by a typhus epidemic and, not many months later, by the papal invasion. The popular Filippo Beroaldo the Elder died just before the invading armies arrived. During Beroaldo's funeral procession, in which the entire Studio took part, the cortège was forced to turn back from its original destination just outside the city when sounds of an approaching army could be heard; the procession retreated to the Carmelite church of San Martino Maggiore, where Beroaldo was buried (and Bocchi would be as well).¹⁵ Following several months of siege by the combined papal and French forces under the command of Lieutenant-general Chaumont (Charles II d'Amboise), governor of Milan, and some unsuccessful negotiations between Giovanni II Bentivoglio and the French, the city surrendered in 1506. The Bentivoglio family was banished, and Pope Julius II made his triumphal entry into the restored Papal State on November 11, 1506. In order to assert his power, the pope set about building a fortress for which Michelangelo was summoned to create a huge bronze statue of Julius.¹⁶ A German student in Bologna, Christoph Scheurl, reported to a friend:

Vidi ego Bononiae pestem, terrae motum, caritatem annonae et haec omnia extrema; reservavit me quoque fortuna, ut bellum quoque viderem, intestinas discordias et triduo trinam reip. Bononiensis mutationem: quae omnia spero mihi aliquando non mediocriter profutura.¹⁷

(In Bologna I myself saw pestilence, an earthquake, high food prices, and every kind of distressing condition; and fortune spared me so that I might also see war, internal dissension, and three changes in the government of Bologna in as many days. I hope that all of these things will at some time be of no little use to me.)

The impact on the Studio of this violent transition from government by local nobility to administration from Rome was felt immediately. Not only did the Studio close for two months and lose a number of students, but it also lost faculty to other schools: Johannes Baptista Plautius (rhetoric and poetics, on the *Rutuli dei lettori legisti e artisti dello Studio bolognese*, 1504–6), Benedictus de Pistorio (rhetoric and poetics, 1482–1505), Giovanni Grecolino (rhetoric and Greek, 1500–6), and Gaspare Mazzoli

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Argilensis (rhetoric and poetics, 1485–1505).¹⁸ In addition to Beroaldo, typhoid had claimed the lives of a promising young poet, Diomede Guidalotti (rhetoric and poetics, 1504–5), and of Giovanni Garzoni, a physician and teacher of philosophy and medicine in Bologna from 1466 to 1505. Garzoni, who had studied rhetoric with Lorenzo Valla in Rome and Greek with Antonio Codro Urceo (d. 1500) in Bologna, was a close friend and sometime critic of his philologist colleagues.¹⁹ Bocchi's own teacher, Pio, fled Bologna to Brescia for perhaps a year but returned to serve as one of only a few teachers of rhetoric during the transition between the lively years at the turn of the century and the more subdued period that followed.²⁰ There were as well some new faces: Paolo Bombace (*Rotuli*, 1505–13), Bernardino Novello (1506–11), Sebastiano Scarpo (1506–43), and Giulio Bonhomini Valeriano (1507–29).

Bocchi obtained his *laurea* in 1508. Apparently, his family was able to afford the expenses entailed by the degree and therefore must have escaped serious repercussions from the fall of the Bentivoglio, although at least two Bocchi relatives (Cesare and Fabio) went into exile and had their property confiscated.²¹ In this same year, Achille's marriage to Taddea Grassi, or at least the formal arrangement for it, was settled by Taddea's relative and Bocchi's cousin, Cardinal Achille Grassi.²² With Bocchi's appointment to the Studio as an instructor of Greek in 1508, his future seemed assured.

Bocchi and the Faculty of Rhetoric

The *Symbolicae Quaestiones* stands as testimony to Bocchi's association with the Studio both before and after the watershed year of 1506, yet we do not really know what he taught before 1555 or about his teaching methods. Few commentaries and textual notes remain, either in print or in manuscript, from the first forty-six years of his teaching career, beginning with his lectureship in Greek from 1508 to 1512, in rhetoric and poetics from 1513 to 1524 and from 1527 to 1539, and in *Studia Humanitatis* from 1524 to 1527 and from 1539 to 1562.²³ One lengthy inaugural lecture, *Democritus, Id est Vanitas*, in an undated Vatican manuscript (Fondo Barbariniano Lat. 2030), probably represents a reworking of the "Democritus" requested by Marcantonio Flaminio in a letter of 1515.²⁴ The Vatican Library also possesses an *Argumenta in orationes invectivas Ciceronis*, some scattered and fragmentary texts relating to Bocchi's teaching, and two copies of a dialogue entitled *Ptolemaevs, Sive De Officio Principis In Obtretores* (Fondo Barbariniano Lat. 2030 and 2163); again, these are undated and the dialogue falls perhaps around 1540.²⁵ What survives in print are Bocchi's defenses of his mentor, Giovanni Battista Pio: the 1508 *Apologia in Plautum*, to which Bocchi appended his own translation of Plutarch's *Vita Ciceronis*, and his 1509 *Carmine in laudem Io. Baptistae Pii*. The *Apologia*, probably a mouthpiece for Pio, answered the detractors of Pio's *Commentario in Plautum* with testimonials from Beroaldo the Elder, Bembo, and others.²⁶ It is to Pio and to Bocchi's other teachers and colleagues, therefore, that we turn to develop the background for Bocchi's early teaching in terms of academic genres, curriculum, philosophic content, linguistic style, and teaching method.

Of the university genres, the commentary was the oldest and traditionally the one closest to university teaching, although surviving commentaries on works of

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literature do not appear in Italy until the second half of the thirteenth century. The popularity of the commentary as a mode of access to newly discovered texts and a corrective to poorly preserved and corrupted texts peaked in the late fifteenth century.²⁷ Pio, with at least eleven published works on authors from Nonus Marcellinus and Lucan to Lucretius and Fulgentius, was the most prolific commentator of the early sixteenth century.²⁸ However, he could never equal in popularity his own teacher, Filippo Beroaldo the Elder, who earned the sobriquet “commentator bononiensis” for published works on Pliny (1476), Propertius (1487), Suetonius (1493), Cicero’s *Tusculanae Disputationes* (1496), Apuleius (1500), and Columella (1504).²⁹

The commentary permitted the scholar a measure of freedom in interpreting literal and allegorical meanings, in bringing a wide range of erudition to bear on a text (especially etymology and mythology), and in digressing for the purposes of stylistic effect, humorous diversion (to rouse the *lector vegetus*), moral asides, or autobiographical detail.³⁰ Nevertheless, the line-by-line and often word-by-word approach to texts adopted by commentators precluded unified treatment of a single work or author or subject. According to Bernard Weinberg,

It inculcated and promoted the habit of regarding texts as collections of fragments and hence as collections of isolated precepts; contrariwise, it prevented any effort to see over and beyond the single line or paragraph to the total philosophical form of the work.³¹

For an eloquent overview of an author or authors, *praelectiones* (lectures introducing a single course) and *prolusiones* (formal lectures before an entire school to inaugurate a new term) served as media for the teaching humanist.³² Here we find Beroaldo and Pio taking advantage of the printing press, as for example, with Pio’s undated *Praelection in Plautum, Aelium et Apulejum*, and *Praelectio in Lucretium et Suetonium* and Beroaldo’s *Oratio Proverbialis*, all of which were first issued as separate publications.³³ Beroaldo and Antonio Codro Urceo produced collective editions of orations and poetry as well.³⁴ These lectures allow a glimpse at the emerging authority and individuality of the scholar beyond the constraints of the *auctor* of the text; in them we see the rigorous Hellenism and ironic wit of Urceo and the cultural encyclopedism espoused by Beroaldo in orations in praise of music, history, symbols, and many other topics.³⁵

Another mode of evading the constraints of the commentary form was the collection of various annotations, which developed an independent academic genre in the late fifteenth century. Angelo Poliziano’s *Miscellaneorum centuriam primam* (published in 1489 but completed by 1488), Beroaldo’s *Annotationes centum* (1488), Pio’s *Adnotamenta* (1488, 1496), and Jacopo Cruce’s *Annotationes* all cast back to the unsystematized annotations of the *Noctes Atticae* of Aulus Gellius to justify extended and selective studies of textual *cruces*, proverbs, obscure gods, ancient trees and plants, and Egyptian hieroglyphs.³⁶ The intense interest in culling from a multiplicity of ancient texts these brief notes and miniature essays on myth and symbol, on proverbs, and on many other topics of interest to humanists carried over into the emblems of Bocchi and Alciato (who studied law in Bologna from around 1511 to 1514 or 1515).³⁷ Annotations were the academic contribution to those “keys to culture or

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convenient agents of cultural transfer” that Rosalie Colie described in her lecture “Small Forms: Multo in Parvo” as miniature genres.³⁸

Through these academic genres, some information about which authors were taught at Bologna during Bocchi’s university years can be gleaned. The curriculum of the faculty of rhetoric at Bologna had widened dramatically with the advent of printing. If the *Elegies* of Propertius were first published in 1472, then the elder Beroaldo would soon teach them (*Oratio habita in principio enerrationes Propertii continens laudes amores*) and comment on them (Bologna, 1487). If editions of Lucretius appeared around 1473 (Brescia), 1486 (Verona), 1495 (Venice), and 1500 (the Aldine edition of Avantius in Venice), then G. B. Pio would publish before 1501 his *Praelectio in Lucretium et Suetonium* and, in 1511, the first Renaissance commentary on Lucretius.³⁹ Furthermore, a rhetorician such as Beroaldo soon learned how to boost his own sales by publishing his commentary on the *Golden Ass* of Apuleius (1500) prior to a course for which it was recommended.⁴⁰ After 1506 the curriculum probably expanded at a slower rate. Paolo Bombace, for example, taught Plautus and Lucian in 1507 and the *Odes* of Horace and *De bello civili* of Caesar in 1509.⁴¹

Nevertheless, the new generation of rhetoricians was less prolific and has been less studied. With the exception of the steadfast Pio, Bolognese philologists almost ceased publishing full commentaries and annotations. Several did publish editions of ancient texts or Latin translations from the Greek, as, for example, Filippo Beroaldo the Younger’s edition of Tacitus (1515) and Filippo Fasanini’s translations of the *Opusculum De non credendis fabulosis narrationibus* of Palaephatos (1515) and the *Hieroglyphica* of Horapollo (1517).⁴² The two Fasanini translations have admiring dedicatory poems by Bocchi and Pio respectively. His *Hieroglyphica* was explicitly intended for a course given in the fall of 1516: To the text of Horapollo was appended a *praelection*, the “*Declaratio Sacrarum Literarum*,” which Fasanini delivered “to the common utility of the studious” in the Studio of Bologna on September 1, 1516.⁴³ Romolo Amaseo (*laurea*, 1512; *Rotuli*, 1512–21, 1524–45), despite a high reputation for scholarship, published only editions of Pausanias and Xenophon, the latter with “interpretation” (1534), and some orations – not much considering the length of his career and warmth of praise accorded to him.⁴⁴

Bocchi’s lack of scholarly publishing after 1508 reflects the pattern of his generation. The reasons are multiple. Bologna’s shift from princely state to papal state ended the kind of encouragement the Studio had been shown by Giovanni II Bentivoglio rather than producing overt repression. The economic climate changed, leaving fewer presses to publish academic work.⁴⁵ Taste changed and literary commentaries were no longer seen in a positive light; more often they were now dismissed as “*verbosos commentarios*.”⁴⁶ Suddenly teachers had a mass of materials readily available in print that rendered their own labors less significant and their own notes less urgently needed. The turbulence of the first third of the century also took its toll: Paolo Bombace lost most of his manuscripts and ultimately his life in the Sack of Rome in 1527, and Camillo Paleotti (*Rotuli*, 1503–13), after an abortive attempt to bring back the Bentivoglio, was imprisoned in Rome by Julius II from 1512 to 1513 and never returned to teaching.⁴⁷ Bocchi’s life, as much as is known of it, was less eventful, so that the scarcity of manuscript teaching materials before the 1556 lectures on Cicero’s *Laws* suggests the loss of some of his works.

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The drying up of scholarly publication in Bologna, however, does not indicate a withering of interest in broadly based rhetorical studies but rather a temporary slowdown. The recuperation by late fifteenth-century scholars, especially Beroaldo, of the total culture of the ancients remained a goal of sixteenth-century scholars. Compendious tomes began to appear with the term *encyclopedia* in their titles for the first time, and their readers and authors were praised as universal men. Ancient authors prized for their encyclopedic breadth – Varro, Quintilian, Martianus Capella, and Vitruvius – fascinated *litterati* both within and without the faculties of rhetoric.⁴⁸ For rhetoricians, what began as a joyous exploration of ancient learning and as confidence in philology as a guide for the study of texts in any and every subject would bear fruit toward the middle of the century in a more systematic encyclopedism. Bocchi's universality of culture took root in the Studio of Bologna, the school where Beroaldo told his students: "Cultura animi est ingenuas disciplinas amplexari. Cultura animi est ipsa eloquentia . . ." (The culture of the mind consists in embracing liberal studies. The cultivation of the mind is eloquence itself . . .).⁴⁹

The Debates on Latin Style

Bolognese rhetorical styles before 1506 encompassed a spectrum of Latinity from "Attic" austerity to "Asian" (or "Apuleian") luxuriance.⁵⁰ Because the generation of Beroaldo, Urceo, and Pio was censured for founding a Bolognese school of soft and "sordid" Asianism by the following generation, especially by Francesco Florido Sabino (studying law in Bologna from 1533 to around 1538) and after him by the nineteenth-century classicist, Remigio Sabbadini, its real contribution to teaching and scholarship has been ignored until recent decades.⁵¹ Renaissance and post-Renaissance polemics have left the impression that the stylistic debates had only to do with Ciceronianism and anti-Ciceronianism or with Cicero's early "lapses" into an Asian style versus late Ciceronian Attic restraint. Beroaldo, however, greatly admired and praised the mature Cicero and, at the same time, practiced a florid style that suited his own warm, effusive personality, sonorous voice, and photographic memory.⁵² Urceo, drawn to Attic models in Homer and Hesiod, also advocated a balanced "middle" style. He joked that he always carried under his arms the two "asses" of Lucan and Apuleius, the one for *brevitate* (brevity) and the other for *copia* (abundance) and *eloquentia* (eloquence).⁵³ Rather, Bolognese styles represent the coming together of certain trends: the practice of a *stile a mosaico* advocated by Quintilian and by the leading teachers of the fifteenth century,⁵⁴ the study of early and minor or provincial Latin texts, the expansion and enrichment of Latin lexicons,⁵⁵ and a parallel Latin and vernacular taste for a mannered literary style.⁵⁶

Both Beroaldo and the more pedantic Pio had their followings, at least for a time. By 1500, Beroaldo, observing the excesses of his former pupil, Pio, was already beginning to restrain and modify his own style, and he included an apology for his loquacity in his *Oratio Proverbialis*. Pio announced a new style in the *Annotamenta* (also published as *Annotationes Posteriores*) of 1505; in reality he found it difficult to move toward a chastened practice.⁵⁷ Criticism came early from within the Studio. Battista Spagnuoli Mantuano, the Carmelite poet and teacher, charged the Apuleius commentary of his friend Beroaldo with weakness of style and with immorality.⁵⁸

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Garzoni, in his *De eloquutione libellus* (1503), urged his colleagues to adopt a Ciceronian *misura* and objected specifically to Pio's use of "verba nova aut prisca" (new and archaic words). Pio responded by dedicating the 1505 edition of his *Annotamenta* to Garzoni with praise for the latter's Ciceronian fecundity and *anima*, adding a section of emendations in a cleaner style.⁵⁹ The jibe at Pio's "verba sesquipedalia ed ampullosa" (one-and-a-half-foot-long and bombastic words) by Filippo Beroaldo the Younger in 1502 was not so gracefully resolved and was only the first of a series of increasingly hostile attacks from that quarter.⁶⁰

After 1506, a moderate Ciceronianism, or Quintilianism, prevailed at the Studio of Bologna. According to Carlo Dionisotti, this triumphant Ciceronian style was built upon the cultural foundations made possible by the stylistic aberrations of Pio, Beroaldo, and Poliziano.⁶¹ Everywhere, experiments in the Asian, Apuleian, and early Latin styles were condemned or in retreat. Declarations of adherence to a Ciceronian prose model were now the rule in Italy and often beyond her borders. Although this new decorum brought the poles of the controversy closer, there remained the basic issue of whether Latin prose was a living, evolving language or whether it was a sacred language that had attained perfection with Cicero.⁶² Increasingly, elements of nationalism, politics, and religion complicated the language issue.⁶³ For this reason, the term "anti-Ciceronian" is inappropriate for sixteenth-century polemicists; even "Ciceronian" and "Ciceronianism," as J.-C. Margolin reminds us, are ambiguous terms and shift with each step in the controversies involving Erasmus.⁶⁴

A number of younger Bolognese scholars moved to Rome during the papacy of Leo X (1513–21), a period in which the pro-Ciceronian forces were at their peak.⁶⁵ Of these, most sided with the Ciceronians against Giovanni Battista Pio (in Rome between 1512 and 1514), who was the butt of scathing satires by Roman academicians in 1513. Bocchi himself visited Rome in 1513; whether he sided openly with his friend and mentor Pio is not clear.⁶⁶

These Bolognese in Rome may have "done as the Romans do," but in Bologna, rhetoricians could not afford to antagonize their large numbers of foreign pupils by claiming Ciceronian Latin to be an Italian monopoly. They taught more courses on Cicero, but they also taught Quintilian and appear to have kept out of pro-Ciceronian polemics. Throughout the first third of the century, they still offered a range of styles, from Pio's somewhat chastened archaisms to Romolo Amaseo's ornate Ciceronianism.⁶⁷

Characteristic of Bologna is the friendship between Erasmus and Paolo Bombace, who hosted the young Dutch scholar in his Bologna home for thirteen months in 1506 and 1507, a friendship that continued despite Bombace's later association with the Academia Coryciana and Erasmus' mocking of the Roman Ciceronianism that the group espoused.⁶⁸ Erasmus condemned both extremes and treated the elder Beroaldo and even Pio with unusual mildness for the times.⁶⁹ This may reflect Erasmus' personal debt to Beroaldo's writings (which has not yet been fully studied) or his own penchant for occasional use of "Asian" elements ("filthy Apuleian tags," charged Dolet), but it is more likely to have grown out of the Erasmus campaigns to salvage the notion of *copia* (abundance) from the "Asian" debacle (*De Copia Verborum*, 1512) and to push for a linguistic decorum that takes into account genre

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(*Opus de conscribendi epistolis*, 1522) and historic linguistic change (*Ciceronianus*, 1528).⁷⁰

After the *Ciceronianus* was published, polemics continued; hardly anyone now, however, defended extreme Ciceronianism.⁷¹ The debate was shifting to whether Latin was, in fact, a living language, a view that Romolo Amaseo defended by promulgating Latin as the language of the noble class in his university prolusion *De linguae latinae usu ritenendo*, delivered before Emperor Charles V and Pope Clement VII in Bologna in December 1529, or whether it had died, as Giulio Camillo argued in his *Della imitazione*, written around 1530.⁷²

Bocchi maintained a middle style: He was neither praised as a Ciceronian nor blamed as an Apuleian. His first and only published prose work, the *Apologia in Plautum* (1508), was similar enough in style to his mentor's that Ezio Raimondi and others suspect Pio's close involvement in or even authorship of the text.⁷³ The *Apologia* served the double function of reducing the damage to Pio's career from the virulent attack of Giovan Francesco Boccardo ("Pilade") of Brescia and of gaining for the young Bocchi, whose *Vita Ciceronis, auctore Plutarcho* was appended to the defense, an increase in salary.⁷⁴ The *Vita Ciceronis* may have been the only work of Bocchi known to Erasmus, who in the *Ciceronianus* placed him in a list of those whose styles cannot be properly judged because they published only translations from the Greek into Latin rather than original works.⁷⁵ In his *Apologia adversus linguae latinae calumniatores*, Francesco Florido Sabino judged Bocchi (along with Romolo Amaseo, Alessandro Manzuoli, and Sebastiano Delio) a minor Latinist, reserving honors in style for nonacademics such as Scipione Bianchini, a Bolognese noble who never published his writings, and Cardinals Sadoletto and Contarini.⁷⁶

When Bocchi was praised for style, it was for his elegance, as in Marcantonio Flaminio's early poem "Ad Achillem Philerotem Bocchium," which begins "Achille pater elegantiorum" (Achilles, father of eloquence), and in Leandro Alberti's "Proemio" to his *Historie di Bologna* (1541) with its reference to Bocchi "col suo elegante stile," or in Ovidio Montalbani's description of Bocchi's history as in an "elegantissimo stilo" (1641) and in the early-eighteenth-century Ghiselli's *Memorie* of Bocchi as a "scrittore elegantissimo."⁷⁷ In the *Symbolicae Quaestiones*, Bocchi's dedicatees were more often known for their Ciceronianism – Gaspare Mazzoli Argilensis, Mario Nizolio, Giulio Camillo, Marcantonio Flaminio, and Romolo Amaseo – than for an Asian style, although one symbol was dedicated to Pio. Even in Bocchi's early poetry, Cicero was the one "who flowed with a milky torrent of sweet eloquence."⁷⁸

To Bocchi, the best style meant imitating all the best stylists, not just Cicero. His Quintilianesque approach to the Latin language and Latin style probably paralleled the position taken by a fictional Bocchi as chief interlocutor in the *Annotationi Della Volgar Lingva* (Bologna, 1536) of Giovanni Filoteo Achillini. Achillini's dialogue appears to respond to Claudio Tolomei's as yet unpublished *Il Cesano de la Lingua Toscana*, a defense of the use of the Tuscan language written at least in part before 1529.⁷⁹ Although there are no extant vernacular works by Bocchi to permit a study of his Italian prose style, Achillini used Bocchi to defend the Bolognese Italian of his verse epic *Fedele* against an aulic, Bembesque vernacular defended by interlocutor Romolo Amaseo and a pure Tuscan advocated by Fra Leandro Alberti.⁸⁰ The host,