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Achille Bocchi and the Emblem Book as Symbolic Form examines the life and work (the *Symbolicae Quaestiones*) of one of the sixteenth century's greatest intellectuals. Esteemed by his contemporaries, Achille Bocchi was a renowned poet, teacher of rhetoric, local historian, publisher, and founder of a literary academy in Bologna. Part One of this study establishes the life of and intellectual context for Bocchi, who is here presented as a participant in the debates at the academy and university and as an individual whose views were shaped by the syncretic philosophical currents of his time. No evidence supports the widely held view that Bocchi concealed heretical leanings in his writings. Part Two explores poetic theory and the role of the symbol in the development of Bocchi's *symbola* and also examines the rhetorical strategies of paradox and the symbolism of mythology as they shape the content of his work. The iconography of the emblematic units of poem, engraving, and motto in the *Symbolicae Quaestiones* and the related facade design of Bocchi's *palazzo* are revealed to be a programmatic statement of Bocchi's interrelated projects, all of which were informed by the intellectual and cultural themes of his day.

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Portrait of Achille Bocchi. *Symbolicarum Quaestionum... Libri Quinque.*
Bologna, 1555, Symb. II. By courtesy of the Princeton University
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Preface

I have conceived of this book as an introduction to Achille Bocchi and his Symbolic Questions rather than as a definitive study of the emblems by themselves. For this reason, I have stressed Bocchi's debt both to his Bolognese ambiance and to a broad range of intellectual and cultural strands. Bocchi's work may seem atypical for the sixteenth century, but it was not without precedent.

For references within the text and for the symbol numbers I have used the 1572 edition of the *Symbolicae Quaestiones* because it is available in reprint form, because the order and number of its symbols have been standardized, and because in it the errata of the first edition have been corrected. However, I have reproduced illustrations from the original 1555 edition (two copies were used) in order to show the engravings as they looked to Bocchi himself, because most modern reproductions come from retouched plates. I have expanded abbreviations in italics but have not modernized the spelling.

Those to whom I owe my thanks are legion. First and foremost are Nancy Struever and Elizabeth Cropper of The Johns Hopkins University, who were dissertation advisers for this work in its thesis form and who kindly read the revised and expanded version (or parts of it) and offered comments and continuing encouragement. The suggestions and support of other members of the dissertation committee, of Humanities Center faculty, and of Charles Dempsey have been most valuable.

Without the assistance of graduate fellowships from the Humanities Center and from the Charles S. Singleton Center for Italian Studies in Florence, I could never have undertaken any serious research on Bocchi. I especially appreciate the Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities for its Post-Doctoral Fellowship, which gave me time to turn my dissertation into a book; with its helpful staff, its facilities and library, and its access to other Los Angeles-area institutions, the Center proved a most congenial base for productive labor.

I also have all the libraries and librarians I consulted to thank. I did the basic research at the Milton S. Eisenhower Library of The Johns Hopkins University, where the Special Collections and the most helpful Interlibrary Loan Departments

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contributed to my progress. Also in the United States, I had access to the collections of the Library of Congress, the Folger Library, the University of California at Los Angeles Library, and the University Library of Princeton University, besides the Getty Center Library. In Italy, the library staffs of the University of Bologna and the Archiginnasio of Bologna, the Riccardiana, the Laurenziana, the Kunsthistorisches Institut, the National Library of Florence, and the Vatican Library patiently assisted my research.

In addition, I am most grateful to Thomas Marier for his assistance in revising my translations of, and in some cases himself translating, the Latin passages. He generously shared his time with me to thrash out problems.

Finally, I want to recognize the support of my family and especially of Amanda, who understands the writing process.