

Acknowledgements

I first came across anatomical fugitive sheets as a doctoral student, at the Apostolic Library in the Vatican. Fascinated and seduced by their unusual appearance, I began to digress from the topic I had been focusing on—the practice of dissection in the Renaissance—and to indulge in gathering some information on those sheets, finding the location of other copies, wondering who had produced them and for whom they had been intended. In 1990, I mentioned my interest to Carlo Ginzburg, who by then had become my thesis advisor temporarily; he had suggested I turn the thesis into a study of anatomical fugitive sheets. It is to him therefore that I owe the idea of making a catalogue of anatomical fugitive sheets which would be something more than a bibliographical tool.

An interest in printing and printed objects, along with the almost perverse pleasure I take in bibliographical details, were instilled in me during the course of my pre- and postgraduate studies through the teaching and company of Armando Petrucci and Roger Chartier. This book is also a mark of my gratitude for everything I learned from them.

I began the research at the European University Institute in 1993–4, thanks to a Jean Monnet fellowship, and was able to pursue it for the two following years with the help of an EUI Research Fellowship granted by John Brewer, who was then heading a project on *Graphic culture in early modern Europe*. I owe especially to John the possibility of finishing most of the research necessary for the conception and realization of the catalogue, as well as the intellectual support needed to develop it.

While I was hunting for a publisher who might be able to take on a book of this kind, Roy Porter suggested I look to his own academic home. There are many reasons for me to be deeply grateful that he directed me to the *Medical History* Supplements: indeed, there I was able to count on Caroline Tonson-Rye, a patient and exceptional editor; to rely on the logistical and intellectual support offered by the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine; and to abuse the patience of the staff of the Wellcome Library and of its Photographic Library. Nor could I have wished for better, more competent and devoted advisors and critics than Vivian Nutton and John Symons: not only did they check every line of this book, ensuring that I avoided careless errors, but they shared with me precious bibliographical information to which, probably, I could otherwise not have had access.

This book is first and foremost concerned with images. Certainly the person who has inspired my—sometimes rather too undisciplined—passion for images is Marina, who in over a decade of shared life has taught me, amongst thousands of other things, how to “look”. During the years I spent at the European University Institute, I have been able to

share this passion with John Brewer, and have painstakingly tried to discover how one might turn printed images into an exciting topic in cultural history, beyond connoisseurship and beyond a kind of art history of which I sometimes tired. Amongst those art historians to whom I owe thanks is Monique Kornell, who more than once warned me against my rashness, and who read the introductory essay attentively and meticulously. To her I owe, too, the discovery of the whereabouts of fugitive sheets at the Huntington Library of San Marino, California. Peter Parshall not only gave me, thanks to his writings on Renaissance prints, the key to understanding what was an *imago contrafacta*, but also went over the introduction, correcting many inaccuracies and oversights. I also want to thank Jean Wirth for reading the introduction and for giving me some extremely useful suggestions about the invention of images with superimposed flaps.

Many friends and colleagues contributed, each in their own way, to the realization of this book. I would like to thank especially Leonard Barkan, Michele Bernardini, Bill Eamon, Sergio Luzzatto, Deanna Petherbridge, Emilie Savage-Smith, my “Mary Poppins” companions at the European University Institute and the whole team at the Institut Romand d’Histoire de la Médecine in Switzerland. A particular thanks to Anne and Joseph Rykwert, who not only have been present at every step of work on the book, read and commented on the manuscript in all its various phases and versions, but also made it possible for me to complete my research in London over the past years by putting me up in their Hampstead house-library. I owe the possibility of putting together the catalogue and the introductory text to a large number of librarians and curators of museums and departments of prints and drawings. It is impossible to name them all, but I would like to thank sincerely for their collaboration: Toby Apple (Harvey Cushing/John Hay Whitney Medical Library, Yale University), Monika Butz (University Library, Basel), Brigitte Clerc (Institut Louis-Jeantet d’Histoire de la Médecine, Geneva), Ove Hagelin (Karolinska Institute, Stockholm), Sheila O’Connell (Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum), Suzanne Porter (Medical Center Library, Duke University), Heidi Seger (Medizinhistorisches Institut und Museum der Universität Zürich), and, especially, John Symons (Wellcome Library).

Parts of the introductory text and some copies of the fugitive sheets reproduced here have already appeared in print in articles I have published over the years: ‘Knowe thyself. Anatomical figures in early modern Europe’, in *RES. Anthropology and Aesthetics*, 1992, 27: 52-69; ‘Corpi di carta: fogli volanti e diffusione delle conoscenze anatomiche nell’Europa Moderna’, in *Physis*, 1995, 31 (1): 731-769, and ‘Il bracconaggio dell’anatomia nell’Europa del XVI secolo: i fogli volanti anatomici come *imagines contrafactae*’, in *Etnosistemi*, 1998, 5 (5) (*Figure della corporeità*, edited by G. Pizza), pp. 17-36. I have presented and discussed many of the themes covered here at the international workshop on the *International Image Business: taste and commerce in early modern Europe*, held at San Domenico di Fiesole and organized by John Brewer in October 1994; at a conference at the Musée Olympique in Lausanne organized to coincide with the exhibition ‘Anatomie de la couleur’, under the curatorship of Florian Rodari in June 1996; in the paper ‘Poaching anatomy: anatomical fugitive sheets in early modern Europe’, which I presented at the session on ‘Carving the public domain: “élite” and “popular” cultures of science’, Annual Meeting of the History of Science Society, San

Diego, November 1997. Many thanks to all those who gave me the chance to present my work on those occasions, and to those who listened, discussed and criticised.

A particular word of thanks to Noga Arikha, who translated the introductory essay into English without giving me the *brutta figura* of the publication of an Anglo-Italian text. The translation was made possible thanks to generous funding from the Publications Committee of the European University Institute.

The writing of this book has taken longer than I had initially planned; finding specimens of the fugitive sheets, comparing various editions and copies, identifying the authors, printers, woodcutters and engravers, the actual writing of the introductory text (constantly revised with each unexpected find, however small), all this has absorbed me for many months, especially over the past three years. Glad as I am to have devoted this time to anatomical images, I do regret having stolen so much time away from the gynaeceum with whom I share my life: from Marina, who cannot bear to hear any more about fugitive sheets, from Gaia, who, barely born, saw me disappear behind a door, and from Zoe, who would have preferred “andare sabato” more often. Nevertheless, it is with Zoe, in these first years of her life, that I have been able to create a complicity which reminds me of a film made some twenty years ago, called—*comme par hasard*—*Paper Moon*. *Paper Bodies* is dedicated to her.