

Pierre Molinier and the Phantom Limb

BY: WARREN NEIDICH

Downloaded from www.warrenneidich.com

Fetish

The original definition of the fetish finds its roots/routes in the religious practices of so called “primitive” societies. The fetish was defined as a menagerie of objects connected through their properties as magical charms. In nineteenth century Europe the definition of fetish evolved into anything that was irrationally worshipped.

It was not until the seminal work of Alfred Binet (mostly known for his I.Q. test) that the fetish became linked to sexual practice. “Normal love is the result of complicated fetishism. Pathology begins only at the moment where the love of a detail becomes preponderant.”(3) Kraft-Ebing drew attention to the idea of pathologic erotic fetishism in which the fetish itself becomes the exclusive object of sexual desire, “while instead of coitus strange manipulations of the fetish become the sexual aim.”(4) Today the American Psychiatric Association in its Diagnostic and Statistical Manual defines fetishism as recurrent, intense sexually arousing fantasies, sexual urges or behavior involving the use of non-loving objects, inanimate or animate material which can be hard or soft.(5)

But the subject of fetishism is much more complex than the above definitions would imply, and in order to discuss Pierre Molinier a slight digression to review pertinent literature is needed.

Freud wrote in 1905 that the fetish was an unsuitable substitute for the sexual object that serves to disavow knowledge of the differences between the sexes. (6) Five years later, in “Leonardo Da Vince and Memory of His Childhood”, 1910, he reiterated that the fetish is linked to intense castration anxiety in men.(7). Agreeing with Kraft-Ebing he organized the fetish around the notion in which an inanimate object is used in an obligatory and fixed manner in order to attain sexual gratification. The choice of the fetish is a substitute for the absent female phallus that the young boy discovers

is lacking in his mother. Thus the pieces of underclothing, i.e., garters, silk stockings, fur, which are so often chosen as a fetish “crystallize the moment of undressing.” For Freud, in 1910, the object of choice is “merely a substitute symbol of the woman’s penis which was once revered and later missed.”(8) “The child becomes fixated on some safer object, which aids in warding off the feared knowledge of the mother’s castrated state.”(9)

A complementary theory to castration anxiety is separation anxiety which is suffered and defended against in childhood.. Through the creation of illusion, and the symbolic gesture of representing the mother through the fetish object, some state of union, or reunion, with the absent mother is preserved. Louise Kaplan notes in *Female Perversions: The Temptation of Emma Bovary* that “the little boy whose childhood curiosity, fantasies, anxieties and wishes lead him to endow his mother with a substitute penis is constructing only a temporary, elusive fantasy...that the adult fetishist will concretize into a shoe or fur piece... As Freud was the first to insist, the extravagant theories of little boys may be outgrown and forgotten but they are never entirely given up.”(10)

Although Bak, in 1953, states that the “fetish undoes the separation from the mother through clinging to the symbolic substitute.”(11) he understands its fundamental function is still to alleviate castration anxiety. The child caught in the Oedipal triangle fears the father who he fantasizes is the culprit of the misdeed. To maintain his relationship with his mother and dissuade bodily damage he takes the symbolic gesture of the fetish. Chassegunet-Smirgel join these two etiologies with a conception of illusion.(12)

Illusion for Freud is brought about by a defense--that of disavowal of threatened reality. The ego, which Freud described as that part of the psyche that mediates between the intense sexually motivating drives of the id and the socializing function of the superego, is thus split. On one hand, it has a reality function directed to real data and on the other, an illusionary scrim through which reality is filtered and adjusted. Thus the child attempts to maintain the illusion of the phallic mother; a mother that does not require him to fertilize her in order to maintain their social union. The fetish is the symbolic representation of mother as phallus. Mother then can continue her procreative function alone. She thus becomes, in a sense, a parthogenic hermaphrodite.

Parthogenesis being the ability found in certain insects, in which male and female attributes are maintained in one individual, where sexual intercourse is not necessary for procreation. Hermaphrodite describes an individual who maintains the sexual characteristics of both genders, male and female.

It is not a great theoretical jump to formulate a proposition for the “anal sadistic” component that J. Greenacre talks about in her 1979 paper, *Fetishism*. (13) Here the performance of anal intercourse is a later re-enacted form of earlier unaccomplished/ inhibited intercourse.

The fetishist is involved in a self-fulfilling enactment of taking the mother into him physically and psychically. Never having made the concrete distinction between genital types, the fetishist’s illusions of childhood become recontrived as himself-mother. The hermaphrodite tendency thus becomes defined as the stultification of the ontogeny of psychic sexual dimorphism. The fetishist is looped in a virtual memoryscape. We will return to this theme in our discussion of Pierre Molinier, who as a fetish artist is described by Peter Gorson in *The Artists Desiring Gaze on Objects of Fetishism*:

“The transvestite figure of the Shaman, which is one of the themes of Moliniers’ self-portraits, allows the artist to identify with the feminine body image of the woman (after Freud unconsciously that of the mother) with pleasure and without conflict, where in reality he should experience a threat to male, genital narcissism.(14)
Clothes as fetish object

The fetish object, as signifier, has specific characteristics such as smell, touch, color (typically black.) Bornstein, recalling a letter Freud wrote to Abraham, remarks on the centrality of “coprophilic olfactory qualities in shoes and foot fetishes.”(15)

Tough durability of the object is an issue because sometimes they are used harshly. Finally, the object is shaped like a body part, especially those involved in sexual encounters, while often it hides or encloses other parts.

Although many objects function as fetishes; masks, pieces of fur, handcuffs, etc., it is those related to the foot and leg that are most prevalent. Since this discussion centers on Pierre Molinier, and his proclivity for the foot and leg, it’s prudent that we focus on this part of the anatomy. According to Valerie Steele, “shoe fetishism emerged in the eighteenth century.”(16). Quoting Stephen Kern in his book “Anatomy and Destiny,” the high incidence at that time of fetishes involving shoes and stockings “further testifies to the exaggerated eroticism generated by hiding the lower half of the female body.” (17)

The size, and height, of the shoe have erotic bondage-like connotations. A specific kind of shoe, the Chopine, was characterized by an extremely high platform shoe, and was associated with Venetian Courtesans. A quotation from High Heel Magazine will further elucidate the importance of the foot. “The high heel shoe is a symbol of love and also a symbol of aggression. It signifies power, it indicates domination.”(18). A case report of a patient of Havelock Ellis is further elucidative of the role of boots and heels during sexual encounters. “The treading should be inflicted all over the chest, abdomen and groin and lastly the penis which of course is in a violent state of erection--I also enjoy being nearly strangled by a woman’s foot.”(19). Pornographic novels with titles like; Boot Licker, Boot Licking Slave, and Booted Master give a sense of this genre in which boots symbolize a large penis. Finally, as Marilyn Monroe said, “I don’t know who invented the high heel--but all women owe him a lot.”
Pierre Molinier

But what about the fetish objects of Pierre Molinier, cathected as they were with both aesthetic and sexual intent?

We are told, by Peter Gorson, that Molinier paid a great deal of attention to the crafting of, what were referred to as, his “godemiches.” (20) These were made of compressed silk stockings, and then covered with a sheath of homogenous fabric, and a skin of some kind which acted as a preserving agent. They came in many varieties, including one- or two-member sleek art pieces, and were not only employed for anal-masturbation, but also hetero- and homosexual intercourse. Masturbation usually took place in front of a mirror. For this purpose the godemiche was fastened to the heel of a shoe with strings of leather which function both as a kind of hinge, and a foot corset. The dildo was further extended by a hand-made leather-covered wooden high heel, and thus transformed into a real and symbolic phallus (if the high heel substitutes for the penis, then the space between the heel and the sole of the shoe, as well as the shoe’s inside, can be read as vaginal surrogates).

Wayne Baurwaldt in his introductory essay on Pierre Molinier further elaborates upon

the godemiche: “These became essential for his staged acts of transformation to the androgynous hermaphrodite.” (21) Black silk stockings, Dior lipsticks, hundreds of high-heeled shoes, custom-made plaster poupées, and black lace, were used to add precision to the idealized image of the androgynous figure. Molinier was aware of the fetishistic quality of his own photographs, and crafted those as obsessively as his other relics. “Molinier fully endorsed the fetishistic function of photography, that is of allowing people to construct their own image for themselves and finding satisfaction through a fantasized object. Painting as well was not immune to his obsessions and he declared that all his erotic works had been painted for his own stimulation:’ In painting I was able to satisfy my leg and nipple fetishism.” (22)

But this scopie regime, in which a myriad of visually conducive, organized perceptions would become objects of Molinier’s not-so-discreet desire, was not limited to inanimate objects infused with auratic illusionist constructions. For Molinier was interested in the living participants in his dyadic diachronous stagings: “While a doll can function as a substitute for a woman, there is no movement, no life. This has a certain charm if one is before a beautiful corpse. The doll can, but does not have to become the substitute for a woman.” (23)

Molinier was open to heterosexual women and homosexual men. As a leg fetishist (by his own account) he stated that “the primary interest for the sexual engagement with others is the fetishized leg, not the gender of the respective partner.” (24) In a later quote he says “the pure sexuality of a woman or a man does not arouse me in the least; yet a beautiful leg, a calf will arouse me immeasurably....legs of a woman or a man arouse me equally, so long as they are hairless and dressed in black stockings. I detest body hair and, if you will, even its suggestive nakedness.” (25) As if through a misdirection in, or redirection of the formulation, the body is recontorted into an alterity of positional axis (see Schwartz, Hillel. *Torque: The New Kinesthetic of the Twentieth Century*, in *Incorporations*, Zone Books.) (26) The gaze is doubly redirected. First it finds itself in the mirror and constructs a fantasy of the self as other and then it shifts its interest from the locus of the centrally placed genitalia to the marginalized leg or ankle or foot at its periphery. One is reminded of Tina Papoulias (*Fetishism*): “...the fetish disrupts the (phallic) order by fixing sexuality away from its proper focus of attraction--that is the genitals of the opposite sex and ultimately away from the gendered body altogether. It moves sexuality towards a preoccupation with the fragment, the inanimate....and since the fetish is an object out of place, its power erupts, outside the hierarchy of normality.” (27)

Is Molinier’s versional directiveness, away from the genitalia, and on to the smooth silken leg a desire to move himself further to the margin in order to direct his gaze away from foveation where vision is its most acute, into the rhodopsin fields of the peripheral retina where vision is more about pure light and darkened obscuration? Where shapes metamorphose into illusions through which a delusional discourse can easily be superimposed. Is this marginalization and fragmentation, inherent in Molinier’s fetish practice and art practice, revealed in his choice of collage as the best method with which to express his ideas? (Collage as a cutting up and reconstruction of the image into something other.) As we will see later the leg acting as an abstract signifier de-corporalized, a truly floating signifier, can be re-arranged and collaged within a mental representation or within the boundaries of an art product. This hairless leg forms the perfect partial object or signifier as its genderless status and minimalist form allow it to act in a multiplicity of ways in the construction of the imaginary.

The Phantom Limb

Although the first account of a phantom limb was reported by the famous neurologist S. Mitchell in 1866, it is only recently after the landmark work of Melzack et al., who were able to understand the phenomena in the broader context of neural plasticity, that it has attracted a great deal of attention. (28) In Mitchell's "The Case of George Dedlou," the patient lost both his legs as the result of an amputation during the Civil War. Upon awaking the patient felt a severe pain in his left leg, too weak to rub it he hailed an attendant, who explained to him that he had no leg to rub. This story is a fairly common one: pain in a phantom limb is a common complaint among amputees. What is remarkable in these patients is the reality that the phantom limb possesses, especially in the early course of the healing process. Melzack remarks that the patient may try to step off the bed onto a phantom foot, or lift a cup with a phantom hand, a phantom leg bends as it should when a patient attempts to sit. Sometimes however, if the patient had a paralyzed limb before amputation caused by, for instance, a brachial plexus avulsion, or a carcinomatous infiltration (Ramachandran), the patient complains that although he experiences the limb, he cannot voluntarily move it. (29) Sometimes the patient is sure that the limb is stuck in some unusual position and he will even alter his posture or gait so as not to hit the limb when going through a narrow space. Many times patients with phantom limbs experience the pain they suffered in that limb previous to the amputation. A case in point is a patient who had a painful ulcer on his foot prior to amputation.

But the story of the phantom limb does not end there. Until about twenty years ago the scientific community considered the cerebral cortex inert; damage due to stroke, tumor, or trauma, after the age of ten, was considered irreversible. The peripheral nervous system acted somewhat differently: regeneration of traumatized nerves was possible. In 1984 this all changed. Melzack et al. found that two months after amputation of the middle fingers of adult monkeys the area in the cortex corresponding to this particular digit started responding to touch stimuli delivered to adjacent digits.(30) It was as if this area had been taken over by sensory input from the adjacent digits. In 1991 Pons et al. extended the range of this neural plasticity from 1 mm. to 1 cm. when they discovered that the cortical area formerly representing the amputated hand had been taken over by the adjacent cortical region which represents the face. illustrates the homunculus which indeed shows the hand being flanked by the face and arm in the precentral gyrus of the frontal cortex where incoming thalamocortical neurons carrying sensory information synapse.(31) Cells in the hand region now start responding to stimuli applied to the lower face region.

V.S. Ramachandran in his text "Perceptual Plasticity and Freudian Psychology," reports the case of Patient V.Q., a 17 year-old male whose left arm had been amputated 6 cm. above the elbow. The patient described his phantom limb as being "telescoped," in that it felt like it was attached just a few centimeters below his stump and was pronated. Using a cotton swab to touch areas far from the amputation line, with the patient's eyes closed, they found two clusters of points that, when touched, would elicit stimulation in the phantom limb. So specific was this re-representation that a mapping-out of individual digits could be found 7 cm. above the amputation line as well as a remarkably stable field on the face. . Stimulation to other parts of the body, including the neck and the tongue did not elicit those sensations. (32)

As was mentioned in this section's introduction, phantom limbs move voluntarily. Even patients who have congenitally absent limbs can vividly experience phantom limbs. However, if the patient's limbs were paralyzed prior to amputation another story unfolds: in these cases the phantom limb remains paralyzed, and assumes a position

similar to that of the limb's position before amputation. This happens because prior to amputation the paralyzed limb signaled the brain, through visual and proprioceptive cues, that the arm was unable to move. In the case of the sudden amputee when the subjects tried to move the limb there was no feedback, neither confirming or contradicting the command signals.

These findings led Ramachandran to construct an ingenious set of circumstances to determine if the phantom limb could be taught to move. A virtual reality box was constructed to trick the patient into thinking that his phantom limb was moving. A hinged mirror was placed vertically in front of the patient so that when he saw the reflection of his normal hand it appeared in the place of his absent hand: as if he still had two hands. The patient was then asked to move his normal hand so that its reflection was superimposed on the felt position of the phantom hand. When doing mirror-symmetric movements it appeared as if his phantom limb moved. When patient D.S. (a patient with a brachial avulsion) was subjected to this paradigm, he was surprised to find that indeed his phantom limb did move. "Mind boggling," he said "my arm is plugged in again,... I can actually feel my arm moving." (33)

Thus far our attention has been directed to the upper limbs, but is this mislocalization also present as a consequence of lower limb amputation? In 1994 Agliotti et al. were the first to conduct a detailed evaluation of mislocation in the lower limbs. (34) Each of the patients experienced phantom limbs following amputation, sensation varied from pin-pricking to burning. Studies, conducted very much as outlined previously, showed that the mislocation phenomena was prevalent, and a topographic map could be outlined on the upper leg.

An important finding relevant to the discussion of the phantom limb, and foot fetish, is that although direct quantitative evidence from these experiments did not show a re-mapping phenomena in the genital-anal area, qualitative patient verbal accounts did. Agliotti has suggested that the light touch used in this area may not have been substantial enough to elicit a response. Be that as it may, all the patients, based on their oral accounts, confirmed a foundation upon which the re-mapping hypothesis could rest;

Patient 1 reported that both defecation and sexual intercourse elicited tiny, painless, electrical currents sliding down the stump to the phantom limb, which then ran on the lateral side of the foot, and stopped just before reaching the halux.

Patient 2 had evocations of clear sensations on the phantom foot during defecation and sexual intercourse.

Patient 3 experienced sensations during defecation.

In his summary of these findings, and two patients of his own with similar experiences, Ramachandran hypothesizes that this connection between the genitalia as a topographic reference area of re-mapping might have something to do with "the prevalence of foot fetishes and relative scarcity of hand and nose fetishes."

What is re-mapping, and how does it occur?

Before continuing our discussion a slight regression is necessary in order to delineate certain neurobiologic concepts which will be important here as well as in our final discussion of the relation of the to the phantom limb. Many of the ideas described here can be found in "Remembered Present" by Gerald Edelman in which he constructs a model of Neurobiologic development as the product of a process known as Neural Darwinism. (35) In this brief rendition the theory posits that we are born with an

overabundant population of variable neurons which he refers to as the primary repertoire.. The primary repertoire is grossly organized into functional areas such as the visual cortex in which neurons have specific predisposed signal characteristics and stimulus sensitivities some of which are relevant and some of which are not relevant to our species in the specific reality context into which one is born. Through a process of selective amplification of relevant neuronal-synaptic complexes and selective inactivation of unimportant neurons the brains microarchitecture is sculpted. Because objects and the world they “inhabit” are complex they have many synchronous and interactive qualities such as color, shape, motion and form, networks of neurons in the visual cortex are linked together. “ Cells that wire together fire together.” (36) When these networks are confined to one specific area of the cerebral cortex, defined here as the outer mantle of the brain that contains its neurons, they are called local maps. Local maps, such as those found in the visual cortex linking say motion and form and color can link up quite distant neurons together. Spatial and temporal signatures tie these neurons together through altering their specific firing patterns. Neurobiologists have named these temporal signatures as synchronous firing patterns. When these now synchronized neural networks, in this case local maps, are connected to either qualities characteristic of other parts of the brain like smell, or are linked to value control systems in the primitive limbic brain the networks expand beyond their former local formations to create global maps. I might add that these networks are under the same selective pressures as we saw for individual neurons. Only those significant local networks/ maps and global networks/maps will be selected for and the resulting brain now called the secondary repertoire will reflect those positive interactions. Global mapping in its basic form conjoins different areas of the brain in a kind of symphony of activity. But so far global mapping is restricted to the autonomous individual operating upon the environment. I am defining this type of global mapping as “intra-global mapping” in order to distinguish it from another variety of global mapping called “inter-global mapping”. Intraglobal mapping is primarily the result of a personal and subjective experience of the world. As that subjective experience is embedded in a cultural experience intra-global mappings can also reflect the interaction of the individual in relation to the cultural. For instance what is paid attention to may seem to be based on a subjective feeling for hunger when one is looking for something to eat but the actual choice of food and the way the food is acquired is culturally based. Inter-global mapping describes the way that multiple simultaneous stimulated global maps become synched up between individuals during specific learned group practices that have specific rules some of which are linked to specific spatial locations and temporal diachronous relations. These experiences are shared as microsynaptic encodings which have similar neurobiologic architectonic structures and result when groups of individuals grow up in similar spatial, temporal, linguistic, social and cultural environments. As stated before the brain is sculpted by those relevant stimuli it comes in contact with into what Edelman calls the secondary repertoire. (37) Through millions of interactions the resulting brain will be the product of all those significant signifiers that it comes in contact with and what is experienced as the real is the result of a binding of all those stimuli into a seamless whole.

In religious ceremonies respondents react to signifiers in a controlled analogous way. Sacred Christian objects like pagan objects organize group behavior and elicit similar responses through their ability to stimulate similar intra-global networks in the participants simultaneously. The ceremony is a series of linked performances which step by step, link one neural network after another. A construction of synchronous pulsating neural networks results. As members in the audience are privy to the specific signifiers and have been trained to respond to them in a similar fashion the result is a kind of shared neurobiologic response. In other words their brains become synched up together. We will later see how the idea of inter-global mapping becomes significant for our understanding of the fetish.

Re-mapping is that phenomena by which neurons in an adjacent area of cortex (although it can also occur in the sub-cortical area) sprout new connections which take over the function of a

previously injured or inert area. Re-mapping can also be the result of neurons already existing in that denervated area which are now unmasked. Recently the above two theories have been displaced by evidence “that suggests that temporally correlated activity among many neurons is the crucial force behind map (re)organization. Map movement is believed not to involve migrational movement or growth of neurons per se but rather a spatial shift in their collective activity.” (38)

Whatever the mechanism, the effect is the same. The formerly inert-deafferented area is now functional but in a different way. The area to which it responds is different, it now serves areas similar to the areas of the stimulating new nerves which have taken over. The orphaned cortex is adopted into a new family, and it must follow new rules.

The re-mapping seen in patients with the phantom limb is a result of the anatomical construction of the cerebral cortex. The somatosensory cortex, through which all sensory information concerning touch is routed, is located in an area called the post-central cortex. What’s truly fascinating and wonderful about this area, is that it is constructed as an homunculus: a little man. In this homunculus the surface of the body is not represented by square inches of peripheral skin area, but by degree, density, and character of innervation. Thus the face, hand, and foot areas are intensely represented, well beyond what would be expected by physical area alone, but in accordance with their sensitivity to touch, and need for dexterity. As you can see from the diagram the face and the foot are huge in comparison to the back and skin covering the stomach.

Perusal of this map also delineates the possible relationship exposed in the phantom limb. The close and adjacent proximity of the face and the upper arm to the hand, and the relationship of the foot to the genital area, should be noted. The re-mapping hypothesis delineates a conception of re-organization in which adjacent neurons take over deafferented adjacent cortical material. Gilbert et al. have divided this re-mapping model into short- and long-term changes.(39) Possible unmasking of silent synapses within minutes of an injury could explain findings reported by Ramachandran of skin areas eliciting phantom sensations one month after upper limb amputations. Long-term changes, as evidenced by the presence of these areas years after the original amputation, could be further elucidated by a sprouting mechanism. Whatever the reason, this work points to the brain’s large-scale ability in areas of neural re-organization. One important question still lingers which may be helpful later in trying to understand both the phantom limb phenomena and the fetish. Why is that only the hand is re-represented on the face and the foot upon the genitalia rather than on the adjacent structures of the nearby trunk in the case of former and midline structures in the case of the latter. The explanation lies in the way the hand and face/mouth and their associated groups of muscles, joints and nerves are connected as functionally linked coordinated structures during natural activities like feeding and grooming. When normal input is removed one part of the linkage must compensate for the other. (40) Could the same be hypothesized for the foot and genitalia? That the explanation lies in the way the foot and genitalia and their associated muscles, joints and nerves are linked as coordinated systems not so much in the usual physical sense but in the psychic sense. As if over the anatomical material body is an overlay which links these two systems of relations binding them as significantly as real physical relations would. When normal input of one part of the linkage is displaced or absent the other could take over. This work and the previously cited work (using the virtual reality box) in patients with paralyzed phantom limbs justifies another theoretical position as to the etiology of the phantom limb phenomena. The superimposition of the visual antonym upon the formerly absent space of the amputated arm, in which the formerly illusory phantom limb becomes mobilized, speaks to a conceptualization, or body belief system, which is more free-floating, and liquid, than theories of the brain in which hard-circuiting and -wiring are the rule. Through this process of re-mapping the representation of the body is rearranged. The result being a kind of neurobiologic collage. The representation of

the hand coming out of the cheek or the simultaneous stimulation of the heel during defecation and micturation resonates from the annals of surrealist manuscripts like the “exquisite corpse.”

In its basic formation the unmasking and sprouting hypothesis presents the hardware with which higher consciousness can creatively play, based on particular contextual formations. To summarize, re-mapping occurs both as a structural/material property of the brain, characterized by unmasking/sprouting, but it can also occur as immaterial pure energy as defined through a metastable electrophysiologic flux in the syncitium output, which we call consciousness.

The phantom limb and the fetish

The phantom limb and the fetish occupy the opposite ends of a continuum that posits real, physical relations at one end and immaterial, imaginary relations at the other. The phantom limb phenomena is the result of a reconfiguration of the body image which not only the physical body adjusts to but the psychic body as well. The re-mapping of the vacated cerebral space by the adjacent cortical area representing the face or genitals or the unmasking of previously inhibited neurons and their relations is the response of the body to keep that vacated area active. For the amputated leg is inscribed in a plethora of relations beyond its strictly physical role in, for instance, ambulation. This inscription is impressed in the millions of short and long term memories in which that leg is involved. Memory as a continual recategorization of inputs links memory to the act of revisitation inspired by certain relations in the external objective reality which elicit specific neurobiologic excitations, local and global mappings, whose characteristics are analogous but not exactly the shape and nature of the critical synchronized stimulations that defined it in its original formation.. The leg or arm as they are involved in countless actions and reactions play an important role in the internalized psychic revelatory world of the body. A body in the throws of constant performance and reenactment. Such is the body in our dreams or in the re-enactment characteristic of visualization which athletes utilize before performing. Skaters imagine themselves doing their routine prior to the actual fact and it is through this psychic rehearsal that they perform better. The leg has an immaterial life because it is linked with the rest of the immaterial body through immaterial relations which are tied into the millions of local and global maps by which it is defined both temporally and spatially. The re-mapping hypothesis suggests much more than simply the re-adjustment of the body to the physical fact of its own traumatic loss. It also rehabilitates and stabilizes the bodies psychic life.

Earlier in this essay I traced some of the history of the fetish in order to outline ways that it has been folded into the fabric of society. The fetish flickers between two somewhat compatible states: the first physical the second immaterial. An investigation of its ontogeny bears witness to this condition. From its origins as a religious artifact with magical powers it is transformed into a representation of social relations as in the commodity fetish of Marx and as code in the semiologic discourse of Baudrillard. This duality can also be expressed in terms of the body. For the fetish exists outside the body in physical space and through its representation becomes internalized. But as social code it has the potential for organizing variable psychic energy. Earlier in this essay I outlined the concept of inter-global mapping in which the brains of groups of individuals are synched up together by virtue of the fact that they share learned responses to specific objects which occur during learned rituals. Anyone who has participated in a group meditation has witnessed the rigorous and formulaic methodology by and through which the “congregation” was lead through a series of linked rituals. This formulaic discourse is the result of a transhistorical discourse of such rituals which over time has been modified to create the greatest affect in harmonizing the states of consciousness of its participants. The magic of the fetish emanates from its role in highly stylized ritualistic practice. The fetish

objects' presence in these practices link the participants to itself and to the other participants who are experiencing it in a similar way. The phantom limb phenomena recounts the body's attempt to re negotiate its own loss through an internalized re-schematization of its own form. The residual plasticity and lability of the central nervous system allows it to circumvent that loss. The phantom limb is about the representation of the physical body and the role that the psychic body plays in its formation. The fetish is about the absence in the psychic body representation of ,as we saw, the female phallus and the fear that castration engenders. It is about a loss that took place in the ontogeny of the psyche and the bodies desire to make up for the loss. The healing takes place from without. The fetish object cathexis around it a series of actions, a performance, in which the object plays a fundamental role in organizing that performance."In quest to represent and possibly embody the ideal/sensual/doubly gendered body; a vast array of relics and fetish items were employed for the camera. The combination of relics and fetish items are shifting constructs of his ideal form." (41) As the brain is constructed by the environment each part of the performance has its Neurobiologic analog. The performance is therefore about a serial linkage of acts that entrain and route psychic energy along prescribed routes creating a kind of internalized map. A map that constructs a psychic representation which makes up for its lack. In the case of the ontogeny of the evolving individual psyche it is a kind of symbolic re-mapping. "The fact that a neural network can switch flexibly among functional states and can reconfigure itself according to current conditions is likely a result of dynamic instabilities in a system whose functioning is depended on interactions among non-linear processes at cellular synaptic and network levels." (42) This switching which takes place is the result of the fact that different patterns coexist in the same network (multifunctionality). (43) Certainly the perceived trauma of castration could cause a switching of circuits that would circumvent the conscious re-enactment of that trauma and substitute a different pattern in the schemata of ones psychic life. Since the genitalia, the site of the psychic trauma, is adjacent to the area of the foot and as we have seen metastable neural circuits are easily remapped onto it, it is quite reasonable to suggest that the foot would now take over and participate in those multifunctional neural nets which were formerly the domain of the genitalia. The symbolic code of other fetish objects like fur and the inside of the heel are similarly connected through their intrinsic relation, either visual or tactile, as facsimiles of the genitalia which are temporally linked through synchrony as global mappings. The power of the initiating event, such as perceived or real trauma creates the increased gain that links these disparities together in an ensemble firing network. The ritualistic practices in which the religious fetish plays apart is just an extrapolation of this practice. Special meanings are inscribed into the surface of special objects which are given special significance through their role in religious ceremonies. A proscribed set of actions which become encoded as a proscribed set of neurobiologic relations can be initiated under the right circumstances. In the individual's case the development of the neurobiologic correlates were a result of chance and circumstance which embed themselves in the body. In the case of ritual the fetish instigates and initiates a series of changes that have been learned and as such are fairly stable. The patterns are shared both in their perception and in their activation in actions as performance.. Through a series of proscribed and shared acts a mental state is created which is shared by an informed audience. Intra-global mappings become linked up to produce a communal inter-global mapping.

Conclusion

The performance art of Pierre Moinier has opened a door to another kind of investigation. The phantom limb and the fetish are the bodies reaction to physical and psychic trauma and its attempt to heal its affects. Performance plays a fundamental role in creating the neurobiologic context in which this can takes place.

Bibliography

1. Neidich, Warren. "Marcel Duchamp and his Optical Machines," lecture given at School of Visual Arts, New York, 1994, 1995.
2. Apter, Emily and William Pietz. *Fetishism and Cultural Discourse*, Cornell University Press, 1993.
3. Steele, Valerie. *Fetish/Fashion, Sex, Power*, Oxford University Press, 1995.
4. *Ibid.*, Steele, V., 1995.
5. American Psychiatric Association-Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, 1994.
6. Freud, S. *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, Standard Edition, 1905.
7. Freud, S. *Leonardo Da Vinci and Memory of His Childhood*, Standard Edition, 1910.
8. *Ibid.*, Freud, S. 1910.
9. Bronstein. *The Fetish/Transitional Objects and Illusions*, *Psychoanalytic Review* 79(2), Summer 1992.
10. Kaplan, L.J. *The Female Perversions: The Temptation of Emma Bovary*, Doubleday, 1991.
11. Bak. *Fetishism*, *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 1:285-298, 1953.
12. Chasseguet-Smirgel. *Creativity and Perversion*, W.W. Norton, New York, 1984.
13. Greenacre, J. *Fetishism*, in *Sexual Deviations*, edited by Irwin Rosen, Oxford University Press, 1979.
14. Gorson, Peter. *The Artists Desiring Gaze on Objects of Fetishism*, in *Pierre Molinier, Plug in Editions*, 1995.
15. *Ibid.*, Bronstein, 1992.
16. *Ibid.*, Steele, V. 1995.
17. *Ibid.*, Steele, V. 1995.
18. *Ibid.*, Steele, V. 1995.
19. *Ibid.*, Steele, V. 1995.
20. *Ibid.*, Gorson, 1995.
21. Baurwaldt, Wayne. *Introduction, Pierre Molinier (catalogue)*, *Plug in Editions*, 1995.
22. *Ibid.*, Baurwaldt, 1995.
23. *Ibid.*, Gorson, 1995.
24. *Ibid.*, Gorson, 1995.
25. *Ibid.*, Gorson, 1995.
26. Schwartz, Hillel. *Torque: The New Kinesthetic of the Twentieth Century*, in *Incorporations*, editors Kwinter and Crary, Zone Books, 1993.
27. Papoulis, Tina. *Fetishism*, in *The Sexual Imagination from Acker to Zola, A Feminist Companion*, edited by Harriet Gilbert, London, 1993.
28. Melzack, R. *Phantom Limbs*, *Scientific American*, April 1992.
29. Ramachandran, V.S. *Phantom Limbs, Neglect Syndromes, Repressed Memories and Freudian Psychology*, in *Selectionism and the Brain*, edited by Olaf Sporns and Giulio Tononi, Academic Press, 1994.
30. *Ibid.*, Melzack, 1992.
31. Pons, T.P. et al. *Massive Cortical Reorganization After Sensory Deafferentiation in Adult Males*, *Science* 252, 1992.
32. *Ibid.*, Ramachandran, 1994.
33. Ramachandran, V.S. *Touching the Phantom Limb*, *Nature*, Volume 37, 10/12/1995.
34. Agliotti et al. *Phantom Lower Limb as a Perceptual Marker of Neural Plasticity in the Mature Human Brain*, *Proceedings in the Royal Society of London*, 1994, 255, 273-278.
35. Edelman, Gerald, *Neural Darwinism*, Basic Books, 1987.
36. Hebb, D.O., *The Organization of Behavior: A Neuropsychologic Theory*, Wiley, 1949.
37. *Ibid.*, Edelman, 1987.
38. Kelso, J.A. *Scott, Dynamic Patterns*, MIT Press, 1995.
39. Gilbert, C.D. *Rapid Dynamic Changes in Adult Cerebral Cortex*, *Current Opinion in Neurobiology*, 3, 100-103, 1993.
40. *Ibid.*, Kelso, 1995.

41. Ibid., Baurwaldt W., 1995.
42. Ibid., Kelso, 1995.
43. Ibid., Kelso, 1995.
- 44.. Ibid., Baurwaldt W., 1995.