Abstract

The area of “neurotheology” is outlined in this article. In doing so, the author identifies its methodological limits, proposes a thematic classification and analyzes its present scope. Using the scheme proposed initially by Aldous Huxley, three groups of possible objectives are identified: those focused on “practical operationalism”, “transcendental operationalism” and “mystic operationalism”. Examples of ongoing research into each of these groups of possible objectives are provided, with some discussion of the new debates they have sparked. The renewed interest in religion on the part of experimental science is underscored and a better framework for reflecting on the place and weight of such studies in neuroethics is provided, together with a look at the particular obstacles that accompany interdisciplinary projects of this type.

Keywords

Neurotheology, neuroethics, neuroscience, anthropology of religion, mystic experience, cosmetic psychopharmacology, practical operationalism, Aldous Huxley.