

Re: Religion center in the brain

Source: <http://sci.tech--archive.net/Archive/sci.cognitive/2006-09/msg00015.html>

- *From:* Kali <kali@xxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Fri, 8 Sep 2006 21:29:36 -0500
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In <45022058\$0\$29445\$9a6e19ea@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>, Wolf K
El_Lobo_Viejo@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx said:
: Kali wrote:
: > In <1157752504.963352.179650@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>, Matt
: > Menge mspmenge@xxxxxxxxxxx said:
: > :
: > : Glen M. Sizemore wrote:
: > : > <jalegris@xxxxxxxxxxx> wrote in message
: > : > news:1157554167.358836.35350@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
: > : > Glen M. Sizemore wrote:
: > : > > "Francis Burton" <fburton@xxxxxxx> wrote in message
: > : > > news:1156956110.585369@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
: > : > > > In article <4llpltF2eggvU1@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>,
: > : > > > Joachim Pimiskern <JoachimPimiskern@xxxxxxx> wrote:
: > : > > > > A newer article cast doubt on the discovery:
: > : > > > > <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/health/5296728.stm?lsf>
: > : > > > >
: > : > > > > Oh dear, just because more than one spot lights up there isn't
: > : > > > > a "centre"?! Can someone name =any= brain function or activity
: > : > > > > that is localized to a single spot? To my mind, it doesn't make
: > : > > > > sense to talk about centres for this or that function until we
: > : > > > > at least define what we mean by "centre" in this context.
: > : > > > >
: > : > > > > You're right. All this talk about centers is a bunch of horsecrap. It
: > : > > > > fits
: > : > > > > in nicely with animism, though, and mainstream psychology, and the fields
: > : > > > > it
: > : > > > > has corrupted, is just a "modern" form of animism.
: > : > > > >
: > : > > > >
: > : > > > > You're seeing the crap before the horse. Modern neurology got its start
: > : > > > > from the apparent connections between specific brain injuries and
: > : > > > > associated behavioural changes. Some were borne out, others were not.
: > : > > > > So it goes, and now we sharpen the focus.
: > : > > > >
: > : > > > > But in the final analysis, correlations between brain loci and observed
: > : > > > > deficits etc. don't explain how neurophysiology mediates behavioral
: > : > > > > function. But it seems that it does to a number of people. Neuroimaging has,

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:> :> for many, become a sort of endpoint. I suggest that this is because their
:> :> conceptualization is now, and has always been, a thinly-disguised animism.
:> :> They already talk as if indwelling entities – call them homunculi – see
:> :> copies of the world, make decisions on that basis, and pull the levers that
:> :> make behavior occur. And now they think they know where the little men are
:> :> hiding in the brain.
:>
:> This strikes me as woefully out of touch.
:>
:> : Haven't we analyzed the process of visual perception to the point where
:> : even different aspects of it have been localized to certain regions of
:> : the brain, kind of run in a parallel processing fashion?
:> :
:> : Best Regards,
:> :
:> : Matt
:>
:> Yes, although the system is less parallel than dynamic. I wonder
:> who "they" (these referenced animists) are.
:>
:> Kali
:
:
: You're one, it seems.

You base this assumption on what, precisely?

: What we actually observe is that certain neurons or groups of neurons
: activate when certain objects are present in the visual field and/or the
: subject talks about (etc) certain objects present in the visual field
: and/or the subject remembers seeing (etc) certain objects (etc.) What we
: don't observe is any part of the brain perceiving anything. What we
: actually observe is _subjects_ (people, animals) perceiving.

You're serious, aren't you? You're going to ride this assumption
to hell and back, too:

: Consider a driver driving a car. She steps on the accelerator and the
: car speeds up. Various parts of the car respond in characteristic ways –
: the injector pushes more fuel and air into the cylinders, the oil pump
: pushes more oil through the bearings, the transmission rearranges itself
: internally ("shifts gears"), and so on and so forth. By your logic,
: these are all "aspects of acceleration localised within the car."

I reject your incorrect assumptions about 'my logic' entirely.

: You can't ascribe a behaviour of the whole system to some part(s) of the
: system. The best you can do is say that the behaviour of some part(s) of
: the system correlate to the system's behaviour. And sometimes you can
: say some part's behaviour is a link in a causative chain that results in
: the system's behaviour. Then you consider yourself lucky, because you

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: may be able to influence the system's behaviour by controlling the
: part's behaviour. If your luck extends that far.
:
: BTW, systems analysts know this very well. Maybe cognitive scientists
: should study systems analysis.

Kali

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There are in fact two things, science and opinion; the former
begets knowledge, the latter ignorance.

Hippocrates (c460–c.377 BCE) Greek physician. Law

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