ME-ISHNESS
A KANTIAN EXPLANATION OF SUBJECTIVE CHARACTER
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1 ME-ISHNESS
Phenomenal Consciousness
To be phenomenally conscious consists in there being something it’s like to be a certain organism and to experience mental states from a first-person-perspective (Nagel 1974).

- Qualitative Character
Conscious experiences differ in qualitative character, e.g. reddish visual exp., auditory exp. of violin, taste of wine ...

- Subjective Character/Me-ishness
All conscious representations have a “Me-ishness” about them. They are something for me as their subject (Block 1995)

3 KANTIAN ALTERNATIVE
The Basic Idea
- M is something for me, if it belongs to the unity of consciousness, as an element of the subjects one global representation.

The “I think” must be able to accompany each mental representation M, “for the manifold representations that are given in a certain intuition would not all together be my representations if they did not all together belong to our self-consciousness.” (B132)

- Empirical Self-consciousness of myself as identical subject only comes about in view of a combination of representations (B133)

- Representations which are nothing for me are e.g. self-contradictory combinations of representa-tions or subliminal perceptions (e.g. blindsight).

4 HO GLOBAL STATES
The Basic Idea
- M is conscious if being incorporated/ recruited into the globally integrated state that is the momentary neural/functional substrate of the agent’s shifting transient conscious self-awareness.

- No separate HO state M* representing M is needed. (Van Gulick 2004)

Avoiding Objections against HOT/HOP
- Only mental states are candidates for such recruitment
- Error and illusion are not possible
- No conceptual capacities needed
- Global states serve as basis of unified experience

6 CONCLUSION
- This Kantian approach aims to explain Me-ishness of conscious experiences in terms of unity of consciousness and self.
- Mental state M is phenomenally conscious if being integrated into the cluster of states constituting the subjects’ current global representation.
- Analogously, the NCC of each M must be a component of the dynamical cluster of neural processes currently underlying the subject’s total state of self-awareness.

5 NEUROBIOLOGY
- Binding
Processes needed to combine/unify distribut-ed information about perceived objects, e.g. 40Hz-oscillations. (Crick 1994, Koch 2004, Engel et al. 1999)

- NCC
M is conscious only if its NCC is integrated into a cluster of distributed neural processes with a dynamic core. (Edelman/Tononi 2000)

- Proto-Self
Unconscious biological mechanism monitors total state of organism and underlying the Core Self carrying the First-Person Perspective. (Damasio 1999)

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LITERATURE
- Block, Neuronal
- Engle 1996: Conscious and unconscious mind.