Husserl wrote to Cassirer on April 3, 1925: "My own development originally was opposed to Kant [Meine eigene Entwicklung [die] ursprünglich Kant-feindlich war], but gradually I came to recognize the value as well as the limits of Kant." Since when did this change take place? As early as 1908, Husserl wrote to the neo-Kantian Cohn (dated October 15, 1908): "For several years (and since the appearance of my Logical Investigations, with heightened energy) I have been working on a Critique of Reason, to be built up actually from its foundation."2

This idea that Husserl intended to write a Critique of Reason (he does not call it Critique of Pure Reason) provides me with the guiding clue to undertake this enquiry into the relation between Kant and Husserl. I will divide this article into three parts. In the first, I will try to offer a brief sketch of the Critique as Husserl would have written it. In the second, I will likewise present a sketch of the Phenomenology of Pure Consciousness which Kant may be regarded as having given us. In the third part I will single out some central points of difference between the two philosophers—differences which erupt within a common horizon. This shall also show us a path for the future of transcendental philosophy.

1. The Critique of Reason that Husserl did not quite write

That some problem of Reason weighed heavily on Husserl’s mind is evident from his constant reference to 'reason' and 'rationality.' For my present limited purpose at this point, it would be enough to note that for Husserl, the problem of reason is the problem of adequately grounding one’s truth-claims on evidence. It is very different from the Kantian problem of determining what reason can know a priori about the world.

Husserl’s continuing concern, however, with a Kantian-like critique is borne out not only by the reference to a transcendental aesthetic in For-
mal and Transcendental Logic but by the large number of pieces, in the 
Nachlass, devoted to the theme of Transcendental Aesthetic. (His use of
"Transcendental Logic" by contrast is more well known from the major pub-
lished work bearing that title). A manuscript from November 1925 is entitled
"Aus Transcendentale Ästhetik" (A VII 26). Manuscripts right into the
mid-thirties are said by the author to contribute to Transcendental Aesthetic.
Some manuscripts continue to hint at what would constitute a Transcenden-
tal Analytic. We do not, however, find any suggestion of a Transcendental
Dialectic corresponding to Kant's. My present exposition will largely draw
upon the formulations in these manuscripts, but I will also, when necessary,
make use of the published works of Husserl.

First of all, it is important to note that Husserl does not deal with 'geomet-
ry' in his Transcendental Aesthetic as Kant does. While he does consider
the spatiality and temporality of perception, the space and the time of his
Transcendental Aesthetic are not yet the space of Euclidean geometry and
the time of Newtonian physics. Kant's theory of perception is continuous
with physics; Husserl's relates to something prior to and discontinuous with
physics. Husserl's Transcendental Aesthetics is concerned with the consti-
tution of pre-scientific perceptual world, with what he, in the Crisis, calls
the Lebenswelt. In the above-mentioned fragment from 1925, he calls his a
"deepening and extension of Kant's Transcendental Aesthetic through phe-
omenology." Now how does it proceed?

Every perception lets itself be continued in endlessly many series of percep-
tions. Every perception can be continued, interrupted and closed. Different
perceptions of the same object are unified through recollection. Two percep-
tions of the same object are possible only at different times. A perception
has an open horizon – what is given is a "pre-belief in hypothetical possi-
bility" (Vorglauben hypothetischen Möglichkeiten). The open horizon is
continuously filled with new perceptions. We must distinguish between an
open perception, still becoming, and a perception's coming to an end (like a
melody coming to an end). The perception is either an originary beginning
with regard to its object (no past-horizon of the object) or an open begin-
ing, or an ending perception (either ending with an open horizon or ending
because of the end of the object so that there is no future-horizon).

We have also to distinguish between (a) continuous synthesis of perceptions
of the same object, (b) a discrete synthesis e.g. synthesis of a perception with a
recollection, and c) the total systematic form of possible syntheses in general.

From this Husserl derives the idea of a universal system of experience.
The entire concrete experience is inductive. Besides specific inductions, the
very style of universal experience is inductive and provides "a framework
for infinities of inductive presumptions" (ein Rahmen für Unendlichkeiten