

Kant 300 - Bob Clarke, December 2024

Immanuel Kant was born 300 years ago on 22nd April 1724*. His philosophy has made a lasting impact on all of Western thought. Events and conferences commemorating Kant and his philosophy have been held all over the Western World this year – but not, so far, in Teddington! So, it is appropriate for us to amend this omission by rounding off this Kant Year by reviewing his life and important aspects of his philosophy – ‘warts and all’! We will only have time to examine brief samples of his thought on physics, religion, metaphysics, ethics, politics, on universities and on organic life that have proved to have lasting philosophical value – so much else will have to be left out! Kant, in his *Critique of Pure Reason*, invited enlightened followers to contribute to his philosophical enterprise as fellow workers to advance our understanding of the world – so let us be happy to join with other neo-Kantians and take up his invitation to further this aim in the 21st Century.

* He died on 12th February 1804 – a little short of his 80th Birthday. His last words were (said to be): ‘*Es ist gut*’.

‘*For reason has no dictatorial authority; its verdict is always simply the agreement of free citizens, of whom each one must be permitted to express, without let or hindrance, his objection or even his veto*’, CPR A738/B766.

‘*Out of the crooked timber of humanity no straight thing was ever made*’
Immanuel Kant, ‘*Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose*’ (1784).

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