

- John Campbell, *Roy Jenkins: A Biography* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1983)
- Ivor Crewe & Anthony King, *SDP: The Birth, Life and Death of the Social Democratic Party* (Oxford University Press, 1995)
- Giles Radice, *Friends & Rivals: Crosland, Jenkins and Healey* (Little, Brown, 2002)
- Neil Stockley, 'Writing about Roy: Obituaries and Appreciation', *Journal of Liberal History* 38 (spring 2003)

Neil Stockley

Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust Limited

Established in 1904 by the Quaker confectionary manufacturer and social reformer Joseph Rowntree, the Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust promotes political reform, constitutional change and social justice; it has been by far the largest single donor to the Liberal Party and its successor, the Liberal Democrats.

Joseph Rowntree (1836–1925) was born into the family of a Quaker grocer in York. He built his younger brother Henry's small cocoa business into a major manufacturer of sweets, chocolate and cocoa, employing nearly 7,000 people by the time of his death. His Quaker faith motivated him to show a genuine concern for his employees and their welfare; Rowntrees was one of the earliest companies to develop a pension scheme, in 1906, and profit-sharing, in 1923.

Rowntree's Quakerism led him into various forms of social service and contact with York's poor, and his flair for accountancy, which partly lay behind the success of his company, was part of a passion for statistics which led him to collect figures about the wider context of social conditions. Although his son Seebohm's study of poverty in the York slums was to make

him better known as a social researcher, his work drew on Joseph's earlier studies of pauperism, illiteracy and crime. Like many late Victorian Nonconformists, Joseph was a total abstainer from alcohol and a passionate believer that drink was the major cause of poverty and misery.

Rowntree was a committed Liberal and, together with other members of his family and associates, effectively controlled the local association and the Liberal group on York council in the Edwardian era. Unlike many other wealthy Liberal businessmen, however, he did not give large sums to the party's central organisation, probably because he was not interested in securing any honours for himself or his family. Instead, he used his wealth to establish, in 1904, the three trusts that still bear his name, in the firm belief that money should be spent on projects of social use rather than for one man's benefit. The Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust mainly concerned itself with grants to various Quaker activities, while the Joseph Rowntree Village Trust (now the Joseph Rowntree Foundation) was established initially to create a model housing estate, at New Earswick, as an ideal community of all classes.

The third of the trusts, the Joseph Rowntree Social Service Trust Ltd (now the Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust Ltd), was explicitly set up with a view to influencing political debate, and was deliberately not made a charity in order to pursue this goal. Rowntree was determined that the high-minded Liberal press should not be squeezed out by its Tory rivals, and the Trust's most famous acquisition was the weekly the *Nation*, which it owned from 1907 to 1923. Under its editor H. W. Massingham, it promoted not just liberalism, but the New Liberal (q.v.) social reform agenda that Rowntree supported; it effectively became the house journal of New Liberal



intellectuals such as L. T. Hobhouse (q.v.) and J. A. Hobson (q.v.).

The Trust also bought and supported regional Liberal newspapers, such as the *Northern Echo* and *Yorkshire Gazette*, though a foray into Fleet Street was less happy. After heavy losses during the First World War, the Trust's newspapers were merged into the Westminster Group in 1921. After Seebohm became chairman of the Trust in 1938, he scaled down its subsidies to the papers and initiated direct grants to the ailing Liberal Party, starting a tradition that continues to this day and making the Trust the party's largest long-term benefactor in the post-1945 era.

The Trust also, however, continued its focus on social research. After the war, the Acton Society Trust was created to analyse the implications of the burgeoning welfare state for liberty and the individual. Support was also forthcoming for the development of the university in York.

The Trust's links with the Liberal Party were strengthened through some of the directors who were influential in the 1960s and '70s, including Richard Wainwright and Jo Grimond (q.v.), both Liberal MPs, and Pratap Chitnis, former head of the Liberal Party Organisation. In order to improve the quality of parliamentary opposition, in the early 1970s the Trust introduced a scheme for financing assistants for leading frontbenchers in the House of Commons. Known as the 'chocolate soldiers', most of the appointees were later to make significant contributions to public and parliamentary life. The Wilson government formally incorporated the scheme into the workings of the Commons in 1974.

In the 1970s the matter of media ownership and control was a major issue, and a number of pressure groups, concerned to defend the principle and standards of public service broadcasting, were brought

together under the aegis of the Standing Conference on Broadcasting, which played an important part in the subsequent appointment of the (Annan) Royal Commission and its deliberations.

The Trust took on an international dimension when it initiated a series of grants to liberation movements in Africa; the political and welfare wings of such movements were assisted in Rhodesia, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau. Similarly, fledgling democrats behind the Iron Curtain were later to receive grants, including Solidarity in Poland, for whom a printing machine was purchased.

Another successful innovation was the taking on of 9 Poland Street in the West End of London, to provide accommodation for many of the small single-issue pressure groups that were mushrooming at the time. Described in the press as the centre for 'the counter-civil service', 9 Poland Street provided a home for Friends of the Earth, the Low Pay Unit, the Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom, the Tory Reform Group and the 300 Group, among many others.

Since the 1970s one of the main interests of the Trust has been constitutional reform. Progressive elements in most of the political parties in Britain have been assisted and many pressure groups aided in their endeavours – including the Scottish Constitutional Convention, which spearheaded the case for a Scottish Parliament, and Charter 88, the most successful pressure group of the 1990s, according to the *Sunday Telegraph*. A series of 'State of the Nation' surveys was initiated to monitor public opinion on a range of democratic issues.

Collaboration with the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust has extended to the struggle against racism and the re-emergence of extreme right-wing elements in



British politics, and the co-founding and funding of the Power Inquiry in 2004, which continues the efforts to foster and extend the realisation of a modern, inclusive participatory democracy in the UK.

Further reading

- Tony Flower, *Trusting in Change: A Story of Reform* (Joseph Rowntree Trust Ltd, 2004, available from www.jrrt.org.uk)
- Ian Packer, 'Joseph and Seebohm Rowntree', *Journal of Liberal History* 45 (winter 2004–05)

Trevor Smith

Immanuel Kant 1724–1804

Widely recognised as Germany's leading philosopher of the late Enlightenment and one of the most influential thinkers in Europe; some rank him among the greatest philosophers ever.

Key ideas

- Categorical imperative – a rule or command of the kind: 'Act only on that maxim by which you can at the same time will that it would become a universal law.'
- Hypothetical imperative – a practical law that states that something is good as a means to something else, rather than being a good in itself.
- Sapere aude! – the injunction to think for yourself; 'Have courage to use your own reason!'
- Synthetic truths a priori – truths regarding the empirical world that can be known independently of experience.

Biography

Immanuel Kant was born on 22 April 1724, in Königsberg, Prussia (now Kaliningrad in Russia), the fourth of the nine children

of a craftsman and his wife. He became a student at the local Albertina University in 1740 and from his mid-twenties earned his living as a private tutor in and around his home town. After receiving his doctorate in 1755, Kant taught at his alma mater, but it was only in 1770 that he was appointed to the chair of logic and metaphysics. He joined the prestigious Academy of Sciences, but declined calls from other universities, preferring the peace and quiet of his native Königsberg. He suffered under the increasingly oppressive censorship of the Prussian monarchy after the death of Frederick the Great in 1786.

Kant steadily became a renowned local celebrity and an enormously popular lecturer. His famous punctuality and well-organised daily routine (citizens of Königsberg were supposed to have been able to set their clocks by his appearance for his daily walk) left the impression of a typical donnish Prussian, an image supported by his rigorous moral maxims, most notably his famous 'categorical imperative'. Although he spent his entire life in and around Königsberg, he was extremely well read; he corresponded with almost every renowned European thinker of his time and influenced many of them, especially Hegel (q.v.), Fichte and Schelling.

Kant never married, and died at the age of eighty, on 12 February 1804. His funeral was attended by thousands.

Ideas

Influenced by Copernicus and Newton, Kant developed his own cosmology (*Universal Natural History and Theory of Heaven*, 1755), which in turn led him to his so-called 'transcendental idealism' – perhaps a misleading term, because Kant never was an idealist, despite later claims for him as the first representative of German idealism (q.v.). He did not question reality, but used