From the UK

JONAS HANWAY: THE FORGOTTEN SOCIAL ENTREPRENEUR

by Robert Shaw

Jonas Hanway [1712-1786] did not have a Damascus moment, create a body of work to which people can refer or found a new movement. He was a merchant adventurer and a member of the established church. But, arguably, he is the most inspired of the 18th century Christian social entrepreneurs. His inspiration can be seen in many areas - he wrote pamphlets on a wide range of social issues and had passing as well as deeper involvements in a great many social enterprises - but, after introducing him and a few of the highlights of his life, I will focus on his ideas about treatment and punishment.

The Hanways were from a family with connections to the Navy and Jonas' father worked for the Navy for twenty years before moving to Portsmouth in 1711 to become agent victualler - possibly after an inquiry the previous year into abuses in victualling. Unfortunately, he died a few years later and the family moved to a village in Hampshire where Jonas attended the village school.

At the age of seventeen his uncle arranged a job for him in Lisbon where he remained for twelve years and was impressed by the charitable organisations he came across. He returned to England in 1741 and joined the Russia Company in 1743; he was posted to St Petersburg and then Moscow from where he went to investigate the possibility of a land route to China as an alternative to the sea route round the Cape of Good Hope used by the East India Company. He got as far as Persia and met the Shah of Persia before returning and writing a report for the Russia Company in 1746. He remained in St Petersburg until 1750 when he returned to London. His account of his journey to Persia became a best-seller.

In 1756 he was promoted within the Russia Company and became a Governor of the Foundling Hospital, the year in which the government gave the Foundling Hospital a blank cheque and Hanway's administrative skills became clear as he set up a northern base in Ackworth from which to arrange foster placements for the much greater number of foundlings coming into

the care of the Foundling Hospital and created inspectors of foster homes to ensure that the children were well cared for - a idea not taken up elsewhere until over a hundred years later. Though infant mortality was still high among the foundlings, it was lower than in the general population.

That year everal members of the Russia Company, including Hanway, met to establish the Marine Society which arranged placements for people in the Navy; at the time, new recruits had to buy all their kit which discouraged people from applying. The Society covered these expenses and Jonas' brother, a captain, placed a tenth of the new recruits put forward in the first year. The Society was supported by the Bow Street Magistrate, John Fielding, who had created the first diversion from custody scheme by offering delinquents the opportunity to join the Navy as an alternative to being sentenced (Heywood, 1978). John Fielding and Jonas Hanway never saw eye-to-eye because Hanway wanted the scheme to be entirely voluntary and disliked the implication that John Fielding's miscreants were not entirely free in their choice but the Society survived, initially as a result of donations from wealthy merchants including Jonas himself, into the 21st century with John Fielding's focus on young people getting into trouble still at the centre of its work.

The enlightened attitude of Russia Company members carried into the next generation with several of their sons becoming leading lights in the anti-slavery movement. Their next project, this time to care for girls, was developed by Jonas Hanway. As today, it was not uncommon for girls who had run away from abusing families or families too poor to support them to turn to prostitution. John Fielding along with fellow magistrates and Robert Dingley, a member of the Russia company, persuaded the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce to offer a prize for the best plan and the London Chronicle offered to publish the plans free in April 1758. Robert Dingley's plan for a refuge for former prostitutes was the most humane and Hanway quickly developed it. He argued that kindness was to be the key: 'The utmost delicacy and humanity' to be shown to all inmates (Taylor, 1985, p. 77); there should be no reproach for past conduct or questions about their past. They would get treatment for STD in cooperation with the Lock Hospital, any necessary medical treatment and a good diet. They would be expected to work, to make their own clothes, to do spinning, knitting, embroidery, making children's toys, soldiers' and seamen's clothing and possibly carpets. There was a provision in Hanway's plans for boxes into which residents could put complaints about their

treatment. Given what we know today about the vulnerability of residents of care institutions to abuse, this is an astonishing innovation - over two hundred years before complaints procedures became mandatory for care institutions in England and Wales.

In the next decade, Hanway managed to get an Act passed compelling inner London boroughs to foster their children at least three miles outside London because his analysis of births and deaths had convinced him that living in cities was bad for children; the Act resulted in a very significant reduction in the child mortality of children in local authority care.

In the 1770s Hanway moved his attention to criminal justice because he opposed hanging and transportation, the most common ways of disposing of serious offenders, and also torture. He published a series of pamphlets in which, as with the project for abused girls, he argued for rehabilitation rather than punishment (Hanway, 1776); the prisoner should have a large and commodious cell in a well appointed prison where 'the still soft voice of reason and religion, will tell [him] to repent, amend, and sin no more, and that all will go well' (Taylor, 1985, p. 161). His proposals were overshadowed by the work of John Howard (1777) but taken up in a rather less benign form by Bentham (1791) who was aware of Hanway's work.

While Hanway's prohibition on any mention of the girls' past may have been intended to help them to move forward rather than look back, the general principle received support in the 20th century through the work of Prigogine and Stemgers (1984) who showed that the idea that there is a causal chain for every event is based on a misunderstanding of cause. Most events are caused by a coincidence of causes in the present. For example, a fire requires combustible material, oxygen and a source of ignition; the absence of any of these three will prevent a fire taking place. So the latest automated depository at the British Library has a high nitrogen/low oxygen atmosphere which prevents ignition taking place. A decision in the past caused the depository to be built in this way but a fire will only take place if the proportion of oxygen in the depository is allowed to rise to the level where ignition can take place and there is a source of ignition in the present. The cause of any fire will therefore be in the present, not in the past.

Jo Woodiwiss (2009) has explored the array of self-help books for people encountering emotional problems and concluded that they largely explain the current problem through events in the past when in practice the current

problem is - like a fire - caused by a coincidence of factors in the present. Focusing on events in the past does nothing to change the present situation which is the cause of the emotional distress. In the field of child abuse, a number of studies have shown that complete healing from the effects of abuse can be found in changes in the present (Kadushin, 1970; Koluchová, 1976; Tizard, 1977), not in any attempt to address the past in some way.

Thus, in forbidding any mention of the girls' past and focusing in the present on preparing them from the future, Jonas Hanway was over two hundred years ahead of anyone else in his approach to dealing with the after-effects of abuse and victimhood. There are still plenty of professionals who, while not acknowledging any debt to Freud, still work on the basis of Freud's thesis that the present is caused by the past rather than by a coincidence of events in the present. Interestingly, the changes in the 2019 Parole Board Rules made to comply with the GDPR mean that, apart from the judge's comments at the time of conviction, any decision on release must be made on the basis of the prisoner's current circumstances and not on anything in the past. These changes also reflect the fact that the nine desistance factors identified by the Ministry of Justice (2014) as reducing the risk of re-offending are current circumstances, not factors from the prisoner's past.

In Hanway's time most offenders were dealt with through hanging, transportation or flogging. As Howard (1777) found, most long-term prisoners were debtors rather than offenders. Whether hung, transported or flogged, no attempt was made to make offenders better people other than through John Fielding's personal initiative of diverting young offenders from a life of crime to a life in the navy.

Hanway's alternative was to change the situation of the offender by creating an environment in which they could reform themselves. As with the girls who had fallen into prostitution, Hanway saw that kindness was the key to creating the conditions, albeit in a prison, in which the offender might 'repent, amend, and sin no more.' This was a ground-breaking idea. The nearest one gets to the idea of a prison as a place for reform is the idea - around from at least the time of Plato - that punishment might lead to reform (Peters, 1995), though prison was rarely used for this. However, modern psychology tells us that punishment is less successful than positive reinforcement in changing behaviour, not least because punishment only tells you that you have done something wrong - it does not tell you what the right thing to do is - whereas positive reinforcement tells you that you have done something right.

So Hanway was right to think that, if a prison were to lead to reform, it would have to provide positive reinforcement rather than punishment but wrong to think that this reform could take place in 'solitude' because we change because of the relationships we have, whether with other people or with God, and very few people, if any, are able to sustain a meaningful relationship with God without having had the experience of positive relationships with other people. When Jesus speaks of the judgement of the nations (Mt 25) he lists actions that entail relationships to describe what the righteous have done:

[35] I was hungry and you gave me food to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me. [36] I was naked and you gave me clothes to wear. I was sick and you took care of me. I was in prison and you visited me.

Among the nine desistance factors identified by the Ministry of Justice (2014) five entail having relationships:

- family and relationships
- employment
- having something to give to others
- having a place within a social group, and
- being believed in.

Unfortunately, Bentham (1791) and his successors, in England and the USA, took up the idea of 'solitude' in a variety of forms over the next half century (McGowen, 1995) and we have to wait for Churchill's speech in 1910 (reprinted in 2006) for something approaching the humanity expressed by Hanway and for Lionel Wray Fox, Chairman of the Prison Commission from 1942 to 1960, to attempt to put some of this humanity into action (López-Rey and Germain, 1964).

However, since 1990 the introduction of forensic psychology has brought about the nightmare of permanent 'treatment' which C. S. Lewis warned about (Shaw, 2018) and sentence length has escalated with no justification. Until the 1980s, a male lifer in England and Wales was released on licence on average after eleven years and a female lifer after nine years (Gray, 1991); the re-offending rate of lifers was the lowest of any group of offenders. Earlier, Sir Alexander Paterson had argued that a prison sentence should be no longer than ten years (Ruck, 1951) while Lionel Wray Fox had argued

that indeterminate sentences had practical disadvantages which more than outweighed any theoretical advantages. More recently, Hulls (2015) has pointed out that more punitive sentences for sex offenders worldwide has dramatically reduced the number of guilty pleas as sex offenders seek to avoid the new, more punitive, regimes to which they will be subjected. Previously, sex offenders had the highest guilty plea rate and most victims did not have to appear in court; now victims are increasingly being expected to give evidence as sex offenders seek to avoid punitive sentences.

Just as sentence length was beginning to increase Lloyd et al. (1994) pointed out that there was little difference in re-offending between those sent to prison and those given community sentences and pointed to some of the factors in offenders' lives which were later identified as desistance factors by the Ministry of Justice as more significant than the type of sentence.

In Hanway's time, the idea of community sentences was a hundred years away; but the idea that positive reinforcement might be the most effective way of bringing about reform in the offender - which is embodied in Hanway\\\\\\\\\\\\ description of a reforming prison - is as relevant today as it was in 1776. Perhaps the most important aspect of community sentences is that they offer the opportunity to influence the causes of re-offending in the present by strengthening the desistance factors; prison can have less direct impact on the desistance factors though the one which prison could impact - family relationships - by placing prisoners within reasonable distance of their families as recommended by Woolf and Tumin (1991) in their report on the Strangeways riot has been studiously avoided by both the Home Office and the Ministry of Justice.

amily relationships are now identified as the second most powerful desistance factor (after age) (Ministry of Justice, 2014); whether that is deployed as part of a community sentence or as part of a prison sentence, as it is in the APAC prisons in Brazil (Soulou, 2019), it should be central to all interventions with offenders. Of the other desistance factors, sobriety, employment, having a place within a social group and not having a criminal identity are far easier to demonstrate in a community setting than in prison in spite of the fact that there may be temptations not to be sober or to retain a criminal identity as part of a group on a community sentence. Employment, having a place within a social group and not having a criminal identity all depend on relationships which are far better developed within the community where one is going to live for the foreseeable future.

As Lloyd et al. (1994) demonstrated that there is little difference between community sentences and prison sentences in their impact on re-offending, tackling re-offending through community sentences drawing on the desistance factors and using the positive reinforcement advocated by Hanway will always be more cost effective than building new prisons. That said, there will always be a need for some sort of refuge for serious offenders where they can come to terms with the seriousness of the offence and their responsibility for it whether we call that a prison or not. What we can take from Hanway is that all these facilities should be 'well appointed' - there should be nothing missing which would help an offender to 'repent, amend, and sin no more.' But, in contradistinction to Hanway's vision, the offender should have access to relationships which offer positive reinforcement whether in prison or on a community sentence.

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Robert Shaw, a pseudonym, is a retired management consultant who spent four and half years in prison as a result of allegations based on false memories. He has been a Christian for over fifty years and, following his acquittal, he continues to support prisoners, victims and their families and to try and understand the criminal justice system and restorative justice and the causes of abuse and offending and how one can reduce them.