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# (Good) Hope as an Intellectual and Civic Virtue of the Imagination

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**Introduction**

Hopes, wishes, optimism and dreams are ubiquitous in everyday experience, as are despair, resignation and pessimism. But what are they? More specifically, what is hope? What is involved in hoping for something? In this paper, I do not offer a strict and precise definition of hope.[1] Instead, I intend to supply a working characterisation that highlights some of the most significant features of hope and helps to explain its centrality to the flourishing of individuals and their communities. Hope, I argue, is a cluster of cognitive states and processes, affects and behavioural tendencies that, by engaging the use of imagination, expands the range of what is possible. When educated, hope promotes the cultivation of the intellectual virtues of the imagination, and the adoption of a trusting attitude to oneself and to others. Hope can also contribute to building better communities by informing the creation of shared identities, and by enabling moral repair in deeply divided societies. In short, educated or good hope is both an intellectual and a civic virtue (Snow, 2013, 2018).

**What Is Hope?**

The "standard" definition of hope is that it consists of a belief that an outcome is possible, but not certain, together with a desire that the outcome comes to pass (Martin, 2014; Snow, 2013). Hence, for example, hoping for the end of the current pandemic would consist in believing that the pandemic might end, without being certain about it, and at the same time desiring that the pandemic is over. Despite its initial plausibility, this account of hope is

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[1] I also do not clearly demarcate hope from hopefulness. For my purposes here, I limit myself to think of hopefulness as an entrenched disposition to frequently experience various hopes and dreams.

clearly inadequate since it cannot distinguish hope from despair (Martin, 2014; Meirav, 2009). The person who despairs that the current pandemic will ever stop, believes that its end is possible, and desires it to be over. So, the standard account cannot explain how hoping differs from despairing. The most common reaction to this realisation has been to think that a third element must be added to the belief-desire pair that differentiates hope from despair.

One way of understanding the missing ingredient of hope is to think of it as what captures the thought that the person who hopes for something experiences this outcome as a live possibility, while those who despair, believe that the outcome is possible, but do not experience it as a live or genuine possibility.

There have been several attempts to flesh out this thought. Adrienne Martin (2014), for example, has argued that when hoping, as opposed to despairing, one incorporates one's desire for the hoped for outcome within one's rational scheme of ends. When one hopes, the attractiveness of what one hopes for is treated as a reason to pursue it by engaging in hopeful activities. Hence, for example, those who hope for the end of the current pandemic think that the magnetism of the hoped for outcome gives them reasons for taking the right precautions to save lives but also for staying cheerful or entertaining hopeful thoughts. The despairing person would, instead, not take their desire for an end to the pandemic to give them reason to think positive thoughts or take precautions against the spread of the disease. Whilst Martin's account has much to offer, it fails to accommodate the intuition that our hopes contribute to determining our ultimate values rather than being wholly determined by our final ends and goals. Sometimes when we follow our dreams, we discover that what we hoped for is not what we really want. Conversely, at times, the pursuit of our hopes leads us to change our values.

A different approach is adopted by Jack Kwong (2018) who argues that what is required for a mere possibility to be experienced as a live one is that one is able to visualise, perhaps in the imagination, a path that connects the present to the hoped for outcome. Hence, for example, the person who hopes for an end of the pandemic is able to imagine what it takes for the current situation to change so that it evolves into a state of affairs when the pandemic is over. This person is able to visualise the discovery of one or more effective vaccines and their delivery to the population. They might also imagine the discovery of better treatments or of more efficient ways of preventing infection. The person who despairs instead might repeatedly turn to thoughts of failed attempts to find a vaccine; they might visualise the unstopping spread of the disease. Whilst Kwong's account appears to be on the right track, it struggles to explain how people can remain hopeful even when they cannot see a way to make their hopes come true. Yet, it seems possible, and sometimes desirable, to hope patiently even when one cannot see how the hope for outcome could be realised.

Nevertheless, it seems right to think of hope as combining a desire for something, a belief that it is possible without being certain, and an exercise of the imagination that makes vivid what is hoped for. In my view, this exercise of the imagination consists in the construction in the imagination of the hoped for outcome whilst representing oneself as inhabiting or viewing it. This use of the imagination to imagine oneself experiencing or living future episodes has been labelled future mental time travel or episodic foresight. Cognitive scientists think of it as a distinctively human cognitive capacity that enables us to explore in the imagination possible future scenarios by pre-experiencing them (Gilbert & Wilson, 2007; Hudson et al., 2011). In this way, we would be able to simulate how being there would feel, and armed of this information, we would be able to make plans about which course of action to pursue.

Here I propose that we think of hope as a complex mental phenomenon that includes engaging in future directed mental time travel. Hope would differ from despair because it involves the ability to travel to a future in which one's desires are realised. In despair, instead we pre-experience futures where what we desire is not realised or, if we fall prey to depression, we find that our ability to future time travel is significantly impaired (Roepke & Seligman, 2016). Hopes also differ from mere dreams because these dreams only require that one pre-experiences them in the imagination while hope also requires that those simulations become part of more extensive use of the imagination to examine how to bring about the simulated outcome even when we might be unable to find a solution.[2]

The account of hope as involving episodes of future mental time travel can explain why hopes have a distinctive emotional colour or feel. The person who hopes for the end of the pandemic can transport herself to a time where the pandemic has ended. Pre-experiencing this hoped for future involves simulating being in that future situation and experiencing now, perhaps in attenuated form, the same feelings of pleasure that one predicts will characterise the future experience. It is partly because in imagination we anticipatedly experience the same feelings that we anticipate experiencing. That hope contributes to perseverance since it provides an immediate reward to those who are prepared to stay the course in anticipation of a bigger pay-out. Hope is, however, often also coloured with tinges of sadness and fear. Again, this is what we would expect if, when hoping, we combine simulating being in the hoped for situation with imagining how it can come to pass. Imaginings of this sort are bound to highlight other possible continuations of the future that are less desirable whose simulation suffuses the present state with anxiety and sadness.

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[2] Sometimes we hope for outcomes which are unknown to us, but that we know have already been decided. So, we might hope for good news before opening a letter communicating a test result. Hopes of this kind also involve mental time travel since they involve imagining oneself in a future where one has opened the letter and read the good news.

The distinctive phenomenology of hopes, their episodic nature and their recalcitrance to being governed by reason has suggested to some that hope might be a distinctive kind of emotion (Milona & Stockdale, 2018). What I am suggesting here instead is that both hope, and emotions like fear or anger, are experiential states. However, whilst emotions are ways of perceiving one's current situation, hope is one way in which we pre-experience the future by traveling to it in the imagination.

The account of hope as partly the ability to pre-experience the future by simulating it entails that hope makes a distinctive contribution to self-understanding, to one's own sense of agency in the world, and thus promotes both self-trust and self-respect. When we hope and dream we explore in the imagination what it feels like to live in different possible futures. This exercise in projection is, of course, fallible, since our future self might feel very differently from us, especially when the future situation is transformative. Nevertheless, this exercise of imaginative projection is a source of knowledge and understanding about oneself, one's desires and values. In this regard, hopes as opposed to mere dreams might prove especially helpful. Hope, in so far as it involves more extensive simulation of how to bring about future events, can teach one much about what one is prepared to endure, and about whether what one hopes for is worth in one's estimation what it would take to realise it. In pre-experiencing the hoped for outcome one might find oneself discovering that it is not after all something one would enjoy. In this way, one can discover important aspects of one's deepest cares and commitments.

Hope, as both philosophers and psychologists have argued, is self-empowering. It enhances one's sense of agency (Snyder, 2002). Hope contributes to expanding one's sense of one's own efficacy in at least two related ways. First, it helps us to pre-experience getting what we

want, and also, when it is not a mere dream, to plan how to achieve this. Furthermore, it supplies some motivational power because the activity of hoping is intrinsically somewhat pleasurable (Bovens, 1999). Second, because hope involves extensive planning in the imagination, it makes the hoped for outcome more achievable. That is, hoping for something, when that hope is not a mere dream, makes it more likely that the hoped for outcome can be achieved. Hence, hope contributes to making us feel more capable, and also increases our ability to succeed in our goals. Finally, because hope promotes both self-understanding and self-efficacy it contributes to the development of self-trust and self-respect. The person who is optimistic about their own abilities is able to trust themselves, feel confident about their abilities, and display a disposition to rely on these to achieve their hopes and satisfy their desires (Jones, 2012). In addition, self-trust and increased sense of self-efficacy contribute to sustaining a sense of one's own worth as someone who is capable of setting goals for oneself and, at least partly, by relying on one's own abilities, achieving them. In this way, hope promotes self-respect. That said, it is only if one has some appreciation of one's own worth, that they may think of themselves as entitled to hope for something. Hence, hope seems to already require the sense of self-worth it affords to those who hope (Bovens, 1999). I return to this point below when I argue that we learn to hope well partly thanks to others' ability to hope for us.

**Bad Hopes: Magic, Cruel, and Wilful**

Not all hopes are good hopes. In this section I explore some of the ways in which hoping can go sour.[3] I connect this bad hoping to the harms it causes to individual flourishing and the

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[3] The taxonomy offered here is not exhaustive nor mutually exclusive.

potential havoc in communities whose shared dreams have been shattered. Magic or wishful hope is the kind of hope that degenerates into mere wishful thinking (McGeer, 2004). This kind of hope is harmful to individuals and communities because it promotes unrealistic optimism, excessive dependency on the activities of others, and a tendency to passivity. Cruel hopes are those which, unbeknown to one, keep one in a condition of misery (Berlant, 2011). Wilful hopes, instead, are characteristic of those who in the pursuit of their hopes lose sight of what they owe to other people whose hopes and dreams they are prepared to shatter in the pursuit of their own (McGeer, 2004).

Magic hopes are naively unrealistic. The person who magically hopes travels to a pleasant future but fails to engage in the mental and physical work required to figure out how to make one's dreams come true. The person who engages in this form of mental simulation is happy to dwell in the anticipated pleasure of the future without exploring pathways that make it more likely. It is this passivity of the imagination that makes magic hopes bad uses of mental time travel, since the function of this cognitive capacity is to help us plan well for the future. Magic hopes are common. For example, the student who hopes for good grades, and imagines getting them, is engaging in magic wishful hope, if they do nothing that would make it more likely that they perform well academically.

That said, good hope does not always involve immediate activity. Sometimes, hoping well requires knowing how to wait patiently. Patience is essential when one is still trying to figure out how to realise one's hopes. Thus, for instance, one might stop trying so hard to find a solution and let the breakthrough occur in the imagination. Similarly, hope might require expectant waiting and patience, when our hopes are dependent on others' activities for their realisation. In short, even though passive hoping is mere wishful thinking, good hope can at

times be characterised by patience and expectant waiting. This is a characteristic of the imagination and of creativity which are both active and receptive to possibilities.[4]

Utopian dreams, even when objectively unrealistic, need not be examples of magic hopes or mere dreams. The person who dares to dream of a utopian future might not exhibit the passivity characteristic of wishful thinking. Instead, they might engage in rational planning invigorated by their ability to pre-experience a perfect future whilst being fully aware that their activities might only contribute to incremental changes. This kind of hoping is not wishful because it is not delusive, but informed by an accurate assessment that one's hopes are unlikely to be realised.

Some hopes are bad because they are cruel to the person who has them. I have argued so far that hopes drive us to work toward their fulfilment. They therefore have motivational power; they enable people to persist in the face of obstacles. But hopes can be manipulated when people are induced to imagine as wonderful things for which they would otherwise have no desire. This is one of the roles of the advertising industry which is intent in transforming citizens into consumers who are perpetually driven by hopes for the acquisition of further goods. These hopes directed toward the acquisition of goods, and aspirations to achieve a certain life style, lead individuals to toil day and night in the assistance of a system that continually produces for them new goods to hope for. Whilst individuals caught in this dynamic might be able to sustain optimism and experience pleasure, they also live a life of untold struggle, since as soon as one of their hopes is realised, a new one is created so that their current state is represented as less than ideal. In short, hopes are cruel when they are

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[4] It is in this regard that hope is deeply connected to faith since these, together with love, constitute the theological virtues (See Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* Pars secunda secundae). Snow's (2018) notes on the duality of hope as activity and empowerment on the one hand and of receptivity and faith on the other has given rise to distinct theories of hope each primarily emphasising one of the two aspects.

constantly moving goalposts which can never be achieved, but whose magnetism causes one to expend energy primarily to the benefit of others who stand to gain from all that toil.

Hopes can also be cruel in a different way if they are manipulated to induce one to wait for the right moment or to be patient instead of acting now, when the right thing to do would be to take action. Sometimes manipulation is done by raising people's hopes in future solutions to poverty or climate change. These calls for hope can be cynical or misplaced since they can induce people to wait for the future solution rather than protest now. It is for this reason that, for example, Greta Thunberg, a climate change activist, has explicitly rejected calls to hope in favour of inducing present fear (Cf., Blöser et al., 2020).[5]

Finally, hopes can be bad because their pursuit tramples over other people. Victoria McGeer (2004) has defined this kind of hope as wishful. It pertains to individuals who in the single-minded pursuit of their dreams are prepared to treat other people as mere instruments or collateral damage. Wilfulness is an inherent risk to hope as a complex state involving future mental time travel. When we hope, we pre-experience the pleasure we would feel if what we want came to pass. Hence, there is always a certain amount of self-interest in hope. Of course, we often hope for good things to happen to people that we love and care about. As a matter of fact, it is hard to see how we could love someone without hoping the best for them. Yet when we hope in this way, we imagine experiencing seeing them happy or fulfilled because the hoped for outcome is realised. This is a happy experience for us also. In short, in so far as imagining pleasant things is a pleasant experience, there is always a self-directed component to hope. This is why hope is always at risk of becoming wilful. One can reduce

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[5] I shall return to this point in the final section.

the risk in different ways including by learning to care and respect other people's hopes even on some occasions when what they hope for themselves is not what we hope for them.[6]

**Educating Good Hope**

Hope is essential to education. When hope is extinguished, learning becomes impossible. However, education is also essential to guide and direct hope away from magic, cruel or wilful hoping. In this section, I first show how hope enables education by supplying a frame of mind that promotes inquisitiveness and open-mindedness. In addition, hope provides an emotional scaffolding that supports ambitions and perseverance. In this way, hope, when good, is an intellectual virtue of the imagination that is crucial to learning. But hope without guidance risks descending into wishful thinking, false hope or selfishness. Here, there is a role for education to train students' hopeful dispositions so as to habituate them to hope well.

Paulo Freire (2014) famously remarked that hope is a pre-condition of educability, since those who do not hope cannot learn. He held this view because he thought of hope as awareness of one's own limitations. Awareness would supply an incentive to attempt to overcome one's shortcoming through learning (Webb, 2010). I have argued elsewhere that awareness of limitations is a component of the virtue of intellectual humility, but that humility without hope risks becoming a kind of resigned despair (Tanesini, 2021a, 2021b). In my view, hope, as partly constituted by the ability to travel mentally to the future, is essentially involved in enhancing awareness of possibilities rather than of limitations.[7]

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[6] See McGeer (2004) on caring for others' hopes as a way of tempering wishful hope.
[7] However, since hope also involves a belief that something is possible but not certain, it implies that one is neither omnipotent nor omniscient.

So, understood, hope comprises the ability to expand one's imagination about different possible futures for oneself. This expansion includes two dimensions: generative and evaluative. The person who hopes is able to generate multiple future scenarios for themselves. They are also able to evaluate these scenarios and to compare them in order to ascertain what they really want and what courses of action have the best chances of success. Hence, the ability to hope is closely associated with creativity, curiosity, and inquisitiveness because of its role in generating multiple options. Furthermore, since hoping is a process of exploring and evaluating those options that one has been able imaginatively to generate, it is allied to open-mindedness conceived as the ability and willingness to engage seriously with alternative possibilities (Baehr, 2020).[8] In addition, hopes provide an emotional scaffold that enhances motivation and thus promotes both perseverance and ambitiousness. Unless one can imagine oneself in a future in which one's knowledge has been expanded, it is hard to see how one could sustain the motivation to work toward that future. Further, the ability to pre-experience a future in which one's hopes are realised is a central source of enthusiasm. Enthusiasm is an important pre-condition of learning, because it provides the energy and commitment necessary to persevere (cf., Snow, 2013). But, since hope involves imagining different possibilities, it fosters an ability to deal flexibly with any challenges that one is presented with. Hope might thus be part and parcel of what has been called a growth mind-set (Dweck, 2006). In all of these ways, hope is a pre-condition of successful education.

At the same time, hope needs to be educated in order to avoid the traps of magic, false, or wilful hopes. More generally, education can play an important role in fostering in students the

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[8] The matter is complex though, since hoping can also close one's mind to possibilities that one rightly or wrongly pre-experiences as not desirable. In addition, the connections between hope and open-mindedness are bi-directional since an open-mind helps one to improve one's capacity for hope.

cultivation of good hopes. One way in which educators can enhance students' ability to hope well is by nurturing one's hopes for them. Hoping that someone else will live up to our expectations for them can be a self-fulfilling prophecy. This kind of hope supports a form of trust, known as therapeutic. Ordinarily, trusting someone to do something, and thus relying on them to do it, presupposes that we believe that they will do what we trust them to do. Therapeutic trust is, instead, trust based on hope rather than belief (McGeer, 2008).[9]

Hopeful trust enhances the trustworthiness of those who are trusted in two ways. Firstly, the person whose trust is based on hope sets expectations for those whom she trusts. These expectations are not predictions; they are instead ways of generating new responsibilities for those who are trusted in this manner. The existence of these novel demands in turn creates new incentives to meet them so that the trusted person grows to live up to what they have been entrusted to do. For example, a teacher might trust their students to complete an assignment without plagiarising the answers from the internet. Suppose that this teacher is not fully confident that their students won't rely too heavily on the internet, but they hope that they will work independently. Because of their hopes for them, they decides to trust their students and publicly display their trust in them so that they are fully aware that they will be disappointed if they don't make themselves worthy of their trust. The prospect of the teacher's disappointment gives the students a new reason not to cheat. If they care about their teacher, they will not want to cause them pain, and thus will be motivated to work independently. If they do not care about the teacher, they might nevertheless act as they have been trusted to do, because being the cause of the teacher's disappointment might have further negative repercussions for them. Secondly, hopeful trust invites people who have been

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[9] The thought that trust can be based on hope is controversial. See Hieronymi (2008) for the view that trust must be based on belief.

trusted to share what one hopes for them. That is, by trusting them to do something on the basis of our hope that they will, we invite these people to acquire the same hope for themselves. In this manner, the teacher's hope for the students that they study independently can empower the students to form this hope about themselves. The teacher can achieve this by facilitating students' ability to pre-experience the future that the teacher hopes for them. Once the students have made this new hope their own, they are, for the reasons highlighted above, more likely to succeed in realising what they now hope for than they were before they hoped for it. Hope, after all, makes things possible.

In these ways, teachers can shape the hopes of their students and steer them away from the dangers of bad hoping. Educators can scaffold learners' ability to be patient but active in the exploration of their hopes. They can elicit from students a clear formulation of what they hope for, and probe them to develop clear strategies for their achievement. In this way, teachers can also help students to avoid the trap of mere wishful thinking. By helping students to articulate fully the nature of their hopes and asking them to reflect on what it would take to realise them and what makes them worthwhile, teachers can steer students away from cruel dreams and false hopes. Finally, by exhibiting themselves care, respect and concern for their students' dreams for themselves, educators can exemplify the sort of attitude to other people's hope that helps to avoid the trap of wishful hope, and trust their students to adopt the same stance themselves.

**Civic Hopes**

Above I have highlighted how good hope as a virtue of the imagination contributes to the well-being of individuals. Good hope is an important resource because it enables one to articulate for oneself the value of what one desires and to plan its achievement. Hope also offers temporary relief from the pain caused by obstacles, and supplies the energy to persevere. Further, hope expands both one's agency and imagination. Hope can thus make the barely possible more likely to come true. In these ways, hope contributes to self-understanding, self-empowerment, self-trust and self-respect. I have also noted that education can contribute to guide learners so that they learn to hope well. In this contest, I have highlighted the close association of hope with therapeutic trust. It is this association with hopeful trust that is at the core of one of hope's functions as a civic virtue.

A civic virtue in this context is an entrenched disposition of individuals that contributes to the construction and maintenance of successful political communities. Hence, civic virtues are those ethical and intellectual traits of the character of a person who makes a positive contribution to civil society. There is much more to be said about what makes civil society successful and thus about the character traits that make a positive contribution to this success. But, irrespective of how we might wish to flesh out these notions, hope is bound to be a crucial component of any conception of the good member of society.[10]

In the remainder of this essay, I want to highlight two of the functions played by hope in the civic context. If we ask ourselves what binds communities together by constituting the shared identities of their members, the answers will usually focus on shared memories and histories and shared hopes and dreams. Surprisingly, perhaps we can think of these as the outputs of

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[10] I refrain from using the term citizen here since some members of civil society are not citizens of the state in which they reside.

the same cognitive processes. Collective memories can be thought as past mental time travel in the imagination, while shared hopes are examples of future directed imaginative mental time travel. In what follows I substantiate these claims and articulate their consequences before turning to the second civic function of hope.

Recent cognitive science has robustly shown that, perhaps counterintuitively, individual episodic memories are retrieved by means of processes that are constitutive of the imagination.[11] So, memory for past episodes of one's life is actually best thought as mental time travel to the past. That is, when we recollect our personal past, we travel back to it in the imagination (Michaelian, 2016). This ability to relive the past would be an exaptation of a faculty that has evolved to simulate counter-factual possibilities and to enhance our facility with planning. It is this forward looking capacity that I have identified as an essential plank of hope, as a cluster of mental states and cognitive processes. Hence, we can think of recollection as what we do when we look backward and re-live our lives, whilst hoping is what we do when we look forward and pre-experience our future. Both are exercises of the imagination.

I would now like to suggest that we can think of the shared memories of a community and of their collective hopes along similar lines (Michaelian & Sutton, 2019). In the same way in which in the individual case episodic memory and hopes are an important component of an individual's understanding of who they are and what they stand for, memories and hopes are equally defining of communities. If this is right, communities are brought together by imagining a common past and a common future. That is, communities are always to some

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[11] It is important to note that episodic memory which is re-living or re-collecting episodes from one's past is not the sole kind of memory. Other kinds include memory for facts which is sometimes called semantic memory. My comments here only apply to episodic memory.

extent the product of imagination.[12] It is for this reason that learning to hope well together is a fundamental task of civic communities.[13]

The centrality of hope to communal identities highlights the most immediate dangers faced by those identities. These are the risk of falling prey of false, cruel or wilful or wishful hopes. Arguably, the American Dream is in some of its incarnations an example of bad hoping. In so far as it is a dream of individual advancement at all costs, it facilitates wilful hopes in those who adopt it. In addition, the American Dream is also a cruel hope since it promotes the belief that those individuals who belong to social groups whose members regularly fail to see their hopes realised, are the authors of their own failures. Believing in this dream would also encourage the disadvantaged to focus on future rewards, and thus directs efforts away from taking direct action to improve their current living conditions. For this reason, some Afro-American activists describe the American Dream as a nightmare, and seek to convince the Black community to abandon a politics of hope (Warren, 2015). However, if the argument sketched in this article is along the right lines, it would be a mistake to, as some writers recommend, abandon hope as a useful political concept. Hope instead must be educated away from cruelty, wishful thinking and wilfulness.

Finally, the second civic function of hope is to enable moral repair. Wrongdoing, especially when it is extremely grave, destroys moral relationships among individuals or communities. Moral repair is the process of restoring or creating those relations that are constitutive of peaceful communal living (Walker, 2006). For example, societies where members of some social group have been often discriminated, victimised or exploited because of their group

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[12] This point is powerfully made about national communities by Benedict Anderson in his *Imagined Communities* (1991).

[13] Remembering well, and thus avoiding collective amnesia, is however equally important (Tanesini, 2018).

membership are always riven by distrust. The experience of being wronged generates anger and resentment, but it also leads one to distrust those who are willing to inflict harm on us, or who are complacent or complicit with such harms. Societies that are divided by vast economic inequalities and segregated by ethnic groups tend to splinter in this manner. However, when trust is lost, people become less trustworthy, since they are in turn distrustful of those who do not trust them. In these conditions, it would seem, there often is no reason to be reliably helpful to those who do not seem to have our interest at heart. When things have been allowed to degenerate to this level, hope itself is the last hope. Even in this situation, if one still hopes for one's community, one can decide to trust those who have not so far been proven trustworthy in the attempt to make them live up to our expectations. We can try to achieve this by inviting them to share the hopes we have for them and for us. There is, of course, no guarantee of success, but as Walker herself notes, without hope there is no moral world (2006, p. 27).

In conclusion, hope as an exercise of the imagination that allows us to pre-live possible futures is an essential plank of human life. It is crucial to self-knowledge, self-empowerment and self-respect. Hope is an essential pre-condition of education, but hope also needs to be guided in order to avoid the traps of bad hopes. Finally, hope is essential to civic life since the identities of communities are shaped by its shared hopes (and memories). Further, when communities fall apart, only hope, if it can be sustained, can be the engine of moral repair.
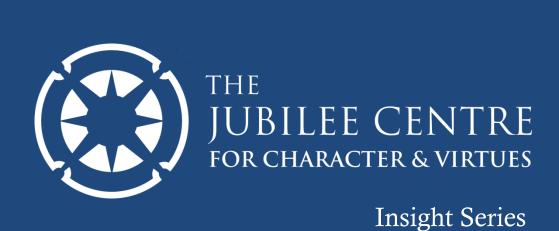
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