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Teachers' professional knowledge and state-funded teacher education: a (hi)story of critiques and silences

> "I can only answer the question 'What am I to do?' if I can answer the prior question 'Of what story or stories do I find myself a part?" (MacIntyre, 1984: 216)

Abstract

This paper traces long-standing philosophical, sociological and political tensions that have been at the core of narratives about state-funded teacher education, since its inception in England. These tensions are still visible today in debates around the professional knowledge of teachers, such as those described in Furlong (2013). Historiographical evidence leads to questioning the new "truce" being forged at the moment around acceptable ways of settling disagreements about teacher professionalism and teacher education, for example through the discursive redeployment of terms such as "common sense", "resilience", and "craft". From "virtuous common sense", in mid-19th century, through "scientific pedagogy" near the turn of the 20th century and "the science of lighting a fire" in the mid of the 20th century, and to the ideological clashes surrounding the turn of the millennium, there have been numerous attempts to construct public accounts of teacher knowledge and attributes, and of teacher education. The absence of teachers as powerful participants in this construction is palpable. Philosophers can contribute to the "untelling" of these stories by carefully picking discursive threads that were not foregrounded in the policy and political filtering of public accounts of teaching, and reconnecting them to traditions of argument about teaching as a practice.

2014 marks a little-known anniversary in England: 175 years since the setting up of the Committee of the Privy Council for Education, the precursor of the Department for Education, to be in charge of the Parliamentary grant for public elementary education, including, for the first time, public funds for teacher training colleges (Arnold, 1877). Looking back over the history of state-funded teacher education in England since 1839, this paper attempts to tell a story of political and discursive shifts through a context that was always more complex than many acknowledged. The paper identifies and questions recurrent themes in public debates, historical and ongoing, around teachers' roles, knowledge, and qualities, and about their relationship with different models of teacher education and with education research.

This story was constructed from historiographical inquiry; a particular interest of the inquiry was in the analysis of critical exchanges, and their documentary trails, about teacher education and education research, since the 1970s (through archival research and personal communication with knowledgeable individuals). Like any text-based research, it is of course one "story" among others possible, and a selective one for that. Nonetheless, a historiography of teacher education of the kind attempted here is at its core a critical project that attempts to "make fragile the seeming causality of the present" (Popkewitz, 2013: 2). In the current context of heated discussion around the nature of teaching and of teachers' professional knowledge, and, by extension, of "unresolved debates" (Furlong, 2013: 2) about the appropriate sites for teacher education, pausing to reflect on meanings and their framing, prior to moving into action – see MacIntyre – may be particularly important.

Using the example of the UK, and in particular of England, I argue that narratives of state-funded teacher education have at their core several long-standing tensions: a *philosophical tension* between ethics and knowledge in the construction of teaching practice; a *political tension* between the role of the state, of universities, of the church, and of schools and colleges in shaping and controlling teacher education and the supply of teachers; and a *sociological tension* between the indicators of high and low occupational status for teachers. Teachers' qualities and occupational knowledge have been a key element of the institutional, political and cultural construction of teaching as a practice and as a profession throughout the history of state- funded teacher education.

In addition, I argue that a public "truce" was reached successively in different periods of time around acceptable ways of settling these matters, and that there is a trail of public debate and policy texts (some of which are explored in this paper) that documents the shifting nature of this "truce" over the past 175 years. The ongoing, unresolved tensions highlighted in this paper are still visible today, and feed into recurrent controversies around teachers and their professional knowledge. This line of argument leads me to problematize the premises of current debates about teacher knowledge, teacher professionalism, and teacher education.

Teachers' knowledge in the 19th century: Virtuous common-sense

> "118. (…) The greatest care is taken to investigate thoroughly their histories and previous mode of life. No master is received when there is any thing like a flaw in his moral or religious character; we have therefore now a kind of security that the parties admitted are equal to what we require of them, as well in regard to character and religious knowledge, as in reading, writing and cyphering, and a knowledge of the English language (…)
>
> 121. Do you then draw a distinction between the knowledge of writing and arithmetic, and the knowledge of tuition? – Yes, certainly.
>
> 122. If a man were sufficiently well skilled in writing, reading and arithmetic, he could learn in five months, the difficult art of teaching? – Yes, decidedly; and it may be learnt in three months, if he has tact." (Revd W Johnson, 2 June 1834).

> "1038. … education is still only an art, and has not yet attained the dignity of a science" (Rev R.J. Bryce, 25 July 1835)

> "279. Do you find that the character of the schoolmaster in society has risen within these last few years? – I think that it has decidedly risen within these last few years; …one great difficulty in the way of obtaining good schoolmasters has arisen from his office having generally been looked upon with a good deal of contempt."
>
> (Mr Henry Dunn, 16 June 1834)

The excerpts above, taken from the minutes of evidence to the Select Committee on the State of Education (House of Commons/ HC, 1834), illustrate the way in which the philosophical, sociological and political tensions noted above were manifest in the speakers' conceptions of teaching and of teachers' knowledge.

First, the speakers distinguish among teachers' *moral (and spiritual) qualities*, their *functional skills*, and their *knowledge of "tuition*" (or "instruction", "pedagogy", or "didactics"). There is also an implicit hierarchy of these qualities. Moral qualities, religious knowledge and functional skills are seen as pre-requisites for teaching, as well as entry requirements for teacher training; general and subject knowledge is developed through individual study and/or higher education; while instructional and pedagogical knowledge is to be developed through short, intensive training, followed by immediate application once the candidate obtains a

"situation" in a school. (Note that in independent, or 'public', schools a love of learning and subject knowledge gained through a degree from a well regarded university were generally seen as sufficient qualifications for being able to teach).

Second, there is a tension between the description of teaching as an "*art*" and as a *science*. As an "art", teaching was commonly described as a simplified form of craft that combined the application of classroom management techniques with emotional, moral and religious discipline (virtuous common sense). As a science, it would denote rigour of evidence and argument, as well as enjoying status and legitimacy, generally associated with a university education. As John Furlong has described in his recent monograph, different models of teacher training that existed at the time played out this tension in their own way: pupil-teacher models were based on notions of practical apprenticeship; intensive training models concentrated on selection on denominational and moral criteria, followed by minimum instruction in trade recipes; while the Ecoles Normales, in France, and Pestalozzi-influenced training institutes, in Switzerland and Prussia, while still driven by moral principles and aspirations, attempted more of a balance between formal training in didactics and pedagogy, and application in practice prior to employment (Furlong, 2013).

Third, a tension can be sensed between the relatively high social expectations and responsibilities placed on teachers and their lower *status* in society. Teachers tended to be selected from among middle-class young men of good character but who "may not have succeeded in life" (HC, 1834, Para 18, Revd W Johnson), after attempting other professional or trade activities. Women could also be trained to teach girls, although the documents, by an all-male cast, hasten to note the lesser "vigour of mind" of trainee schoolmistresses compared to their male counterparts (HC, 1834, Para 332, Mr H. Dunn). Socio-economic status, gender and age shaped the occupational status of teaching and its desirability as a field of employment, which was often seen as a last-resort attempt at holding onto social respectability. Ecclesiastical language of "calling", "mission", and "dedication" sometimes was used to legitimise these choices.

Following the approval by Parliament of funding for training colleges and the establishment of the Committee of the Privy Council for Education (1839) and of the inspection system, by

1850 about 30 such colleges were in place, largely denominational. The dominant narrative in these early days of teacher training was, therefore, religion-oriented. As a religious project, education involved teachers' exercising of (moral and spiritual, denominationally-defined) influence on the "whole child" (Rogers-Berner, 2008). As such, the first proposals to establish a Normal School were met with apprehension about the likely mixing of denominations (Arnold, 1877).

Unsurprisingly, the period that followed was one of secularisation and universitisation of teacher training, running in parallel with growing massification of elementary and (particularly after the 1902 Education Act) secondary education. In the second half of the 19th century, Parliament concentrated again on teacher education, following inquiries into elementary working-class education (the Newcastle Commission, 1858-61, succeeded much later by the Elementary Education Act, 1870), the public schools (the Clarendon Commission, 1864, leading to the Public Schools Act, 1868), and the other endowed schools, boys' and girls' (the Taunton Commission, 1868, prior to the Endowed Schools Act, 1869) (Rogers-Berner, 2008; Gillard, 2011). The focus was, increasingly firmly, on exploring models of training that involved some form of university affiliation, as well as models for the certification of teachers. The Cross Commission on elementary education (1888-89) and the Bryce Commission on secondary education (1894-5) reviewed progress since the 1860-70s Acts. They were specifically preoccupied with teacher training and recommended stronger connections with universities via the establishment of Day Draining Colleges (Cross) and via more "systematic" organisation and control by the state (Bryce). The latter recommendation was picked up with more force around the time of the Board of Education Act (1899) and the (Balfour) Education Act (1902), which enabled Local Education Authorities to support teacher training colleges and created a register of teachers (Morton, 1997).

Following the Cross report, however, the mid-1880s saw the founding of Day Training Colleges affiliated to universities; sixteen such colleges were in place by 1900, including one in Oxford around the corner from New College, and more were created in the early 1900s, with a chair in education at Newcastle in 1895 and a new undergraduate degree in education established in Scotland after the first world war (Lawn et al, 2010). As John Furlong has noted, these structural changes formalised another tension, in addition to that between religious and

liberal models for teacher education: that between academic and administrative priorities, purposes, and conceptions of professional knowledge (Furlong, 2013) - with each party claiming its own unique value and relevance for classroom practice.

The work of the Bryce commission illustrates the difficult truce that had to be negotiated between the Cross and Bryce recommendations (Phillips, 2010; Pring, 1991). Influential views put to the commission assumed:

a) That teaching was not a "profession", inasmuch as no lengthy training nor *specialised knowledge* were required to practise it well, as long as *subject knowledge* and *practical guidance* were in place: "almost any honours man will make a good teacher, if he is conscientious, and if he has the luck to fall into the hands of a good headteacher" [Mr Raleigh, v.221 – in Bryce, 1894].
b) That studies of education were an *unaccomplished art*, rather than a science: [Revd Mr Pope] "had the misfortune to hear one or two lectures on the art of teaching" and "they consisted of a mass of commonsense expressed in a very elaborate language" (v.208, id.).
c) That the function of the university was exclusively *liberal learning* and academic excellence, and not preparation for practical activities or professional education: "the business of the university [was] to give instruction in the theory only. The practice, once the theory is understood, should be acquired elsewhere" [Mr Raleigh, v.193, id.]. Newman's exhortations to make the university "a place for the teaching of universal knowledge", rather than one of professional education, religious training or scientific discovery, only predated this inquiry by a few decades (Newman, 1852).

The Journal of Education (1880) and *The Practical Teacher* (1881-1911), both founded during this period, had different intended readership (academic versus practice-based - Rogers-Berner, 2008) and further illustrate the difficulties of negotiating between state, university and church control. Papers in these journals are also indicative of the growing tension between affirming education as an academic discipline (whereby grounding was sought in other areas of scientific inquiry, such as psychology and biology), and practising education in classrooms, with its immediate and pressing concerns for local contexts, effectiveness, working conditions, and

occupational status. The attraction that Herbart's pedagogical thinking (filtered through English-language popularisation literature and emphasising both character education and clear protocols for instruction) exercised on teacher training during this period may be explained by its fit with the difficult transition being realised from education as a moral and theological project to education as an intellectual and scientific project (Rogers-Berner, 2008), with the added complexities of negotiations around the status of teaching between academia, administration and classroom.

Turn of century: The science of lighting a fire

Until 1926, Day Training College courses were validated, and certification issued, by the Board of Education, but following the Board's Circular 1372 (1926) these responsibilities were devolved to universities under the "Joint Boards Scheme", while the assessment of teaching practice itself remained the prerogative of Her Majesty's Inspectorate. Progressive aspirations for education, and the politics surrounding them, shifted the interest in teacher education away from instrumentalist readings of Herbart and towards popularisations of Dewey, of developmental psychology and psychometrics (with particular interest in intelligence measurement), of practical experiments in "new education" (with Summerhill, for example, founded in 1921), and of the kindergarten movement (particularly Froebel and, later, Montessori's emphasis on clinical observations, as a basis for "scientific pedagogy"). Montessori's teacher training, for example, emphasised the importance of extensive observation of children in structured learning environments: *"didactic" knowledge* of the learning materials, *observational knowledge* of the individual children, and the ability to assess each child's readiness for learning were key to this task.

The tension between "academia-based" and "practice-based" conceptions of teacher education becomes clearer over this period, as efforts to legitimise education within academia intensified and generated internal contestation. Points of contention included:

- the aims of education (from moral education and community stability, through intellectual instruction, to psychological health and development),

- the role of teachers (as exemplars of behaviour and values, as imparters of information, or as observers of the child and enablers of development), and
- the nature and status of professional knowledge (*personal and classroom experience*; *content knowledge and functional and pedagogical skills*; and *theoretical and scientific knowledge*, with a strong psychological orientation).

With psychology still the dominant frame for studies in education, though running in parallel with pedagogy (seen as arising from practical "inventiveness and sympathetic concrete observation" - James, 1899), the project for teacher education moved away from instruction and information, towards more child- and practice-centred principles. 'Character' remained important, but with signs of a less universalist sense of moral values and principles, and with efforts to compromise between individual and community flourishing, and between humanistic and instrumental notions of that flourishing. In Katz's (1965: 299) view, "the challenge to morality" was the major provocation arising in education after the Second World War.

The comprehensive 1959 Crowther report (MoE, 1959) on secondary education and the 1963 Newsom report on the secondary education of "pupils of average and below-average ability" testify to these shifting assumptions about education and teaching. "The process of education", states the Crowther report, "is not to be compared with that of filling up an empty pot, but rather with that of lighting a fire". As *factual knowledge* fades in significance for school instruction, knowledge of *subject-specific modes of reasoning and inquiry* and *developmental research* grow in importance for education as an academic subject (Katz, 1965). The Plowden report, in 1967, went further in its endorsement of elements of "child-centred" approaches to education, leading to intense controversy in the 1960s-70s.

After the 1944 Education Act and the McNair (1944) report on teacher training, Institutes of Education had emerged that clustered local authority and denominational colleges from the area around local universities. The loose relationships between colleges and universities remained the norm until the 1960s, when the Robbins Report (1963) recommended that academic and administrative management of teacher education should be brought together, "in the orbit" of universities, in the form of "a degree gained in a distinctive way, and characteristically based on the study of Education" [B.Ed.] (341). Separate recommendations

were made for the distinctive circumstances of the autonomous colleges of education in Scotland. The report's understanding of the criteria in use at the time for selecting teacher trainees largely revolved around a combination of a minimum level of academic achievement with vocational motivation, such as "genuine interest in children" and "a strongly felt professional purpose" (paragraphs 310 and 320). The new three-year degree was to add to this a course "of a balanced, concurrent nature, liberal in content and approach, although directed towards the professional work that lies ahead" (363).

The question of the knowledge and attributes required by teaching practice and of the best combination of activities that could contribute to their development was left open in the report: "We do not think that anyone can yet claim a monopoly of wisdom about the most constructive intermixture of theory and practice in the education and training of a teacher" (para 335). Firmer, and rather traditionalist, views were given, however, on teachers' *subject knowledge*; school teaching was offered as the most evident example of one of the 'walks of life in which some knowledge of a number of subjects is more desirable than a deep knowledge of one" (para 260). The study of *education as an academic subject* was also seen as a prerequisite of professional teaching. The report acknowledged both the internal tensions around the status of teacher education in universities, and the tensions between academic, administrative, religious and professional interests in teaching. Some of these tensions are visible in the Committee's own workings; the "Note of Reservation" added to the report by one of the members of the committee anticipates that the proposed expansion of university-affiliated teacher education would bring to the fore these tensions, the resolution of which was political, relying on "give-and-take, co-operation and goodwill in the fullest measure between the universities and the local education authorities" (Robbins, 1963, p. 294).

Soon after the publication of the Robbins report, a seminar in Hull (organised by R.S. Peters and C.J. Gill in 1964 under the aegis of the Department of Education and Science and of the Association of Teachers in Colleges and Departments of Education) marked the so-called "academic turn" in undergraduate and postgraduate teaching and research in education. The "turn" consisted of a model of teacher preparation based on "*foundation disciplines*" (philosophy, history, psychology, sociology) (see Peters, 1963; Tibble, 1966; Hirst, 1983; the "disciplines" debate was revisited recently by the contributors to Furlong and Lawn, 2011; see

also the discussion in Furlong, 2013). The "*educational theory*" project behind this model of teacher knowledge and teacher education was developed in opposition to what was seen as lower-order traditional "pedagogy" (Peters, 1963; see Richardson, 2002, p.29) and was undercut by the tension between the revival of liberal education in analytical philosophy of education, and the continued attraction and popularity in practice and policy of progressivist ideas.

The 1972 report of the Committee of Inquiry on Teacher Education and Training appointed by the Secretary of State for education, Margaret Thatcher, in 1970 (the James Report) attempted the difficult task of forging another "truce" between the state, universities, schools and colleges, and unions. The report recognised that "for too long, the colleges of education have been treated as junior partners in the system of higher education" (paragraph 1.2) and that post-Robbins arrangements for teacher education, such as the BEd, were confronted with serious conflicts between education and training in their aims, between concurrent and consecutive courses in their design, between theory and practice in their focus, and between general and subject knowledge and professional knowledge in their content (3.5-9). It proposed to address this problem by creating a system of three cycles of teacher education: personal education; pre-service training and induction (2 years); and in-service training and education, which was particularly targeted as an area for considerable expansion. In-service education was to cover: updated *knowledge of teaching methods* and of *educational theory*, refreshed knowledge of special interests and command of the *content* taught, new knowledge of subsidiary *subject specialisms*, *additional knowledge and skills* (such as librarianship, disability, career advice, multicultural education), and basic familiarisation with *research skills and techniques*. Pre-service training was to be strongly professionally-oriented, with emphasis on teaching techniques and guided *practical experience* (in partnership with LEA Teachers' Centres), while the theoretical grounding of techniques and more widely knowledge from the "*disciplines of education*" would play a supporting role. Personal education was defined as "a good standard in higher education" (4.1), through the provision of *general education* "in the main areas of human thought and activity", as to "make good some of the cultural deficiencies of those who propose to be teachers of others" (4.10), coupled with *specialist subjects* and with developmental psychology and other teaching-related subjects. A particular concern clearly

noted in the report was to develop teachers' "*cultural awareness*" and their ability to respond to social transformation.

Late-20th century: Ideological clashes

Given this concern, the turbulent context of economic recession and crisis of the late 1960s-70s, and the sharp drop in demand for new teachers in the 1970s (Taylor, 2008; Aldrich, Dean and Gordon, 1991), it wasn't long before both the Robbins and the James proposals and the work of the Colleges of Education became the target of political criticism and strife. The shifting grounds were clearly signalled in 1969 by the publication of the first of a series of Right-wing pamphlets against progressive education, the so-called "Black Papers" (Chitty, 2004, p.30; Marquand, 1998, p.3). Coincidentally, 1969 was also the year in which the Department of Education and Science (DES, Circular 18/69) introduced a training requirement for graduates going into teaching, to apply to primary and special education teachers by 1970, and secondary teachers by 1974 (Godwin, 2002). On this background, the five Black Papers (of which the first was Cox & Dyson, 1969, and the last, Cox & Boyson, 1977) placed schools at the root of wider economic and social problems in the society and thus fuelled an offensive by the New Right against "progressivism" and "comprehensivism" in education and for a "return to pre-comprehensive, pre-progressive forms and methods" (Ball, 1995: 24).

In Ball's (1995: 24) interpretation, the Black Papers set out "an imagery of crisis and chaos" that legitimised a general "consensus of concern" about education (Whitty and Menter, 1988) and a more acute sense of needing urgent solutions. A series of key events with "special discursive significance" (Ball, 1990, p.22), such as press reports of incidents involving schools (William Tyndale being the best known – Davis, 2002), provided further "material" to the critics and ensured their wide impact. The media were crucial in creating the atmosphere of crisis. For example, in January 1976, a *TES* article by the managing director of the General Electric Company (Sir Arnold Weinstock), titled "I blame the teachers", openly accused teachers of propagating an anti-industrialist ethos among pupils that was directly responsible for the shortage of skilled and adaptable workers in the industry (Chitty, 2004, p.35).

In a, by now, state-regulated, feminised, and largely secular occupation, the establishment of its professional preparation within the higher education sector became thus somewhat of a pyrrhic victory. Teachers – as collective as well as individual agents - were blamed for the decline in academic standards (particularly literacy and numeracy) and in standards of behaviour (ill-discipline, vandalism, juvenile crime). Teacher knowledge was key to the critique. The growth of sociology as a contender for the new educational project, challenging traditional psychology and wrestling for influence with philosophy, had shifted debates about teacher knowledge from conceptual analysis and technical/ scientific application, to issues of power and control. As a consequence, teachers and teacher educators were accused, concomitantly, of having insufficient non-ideological *content knowledge*, and of having an excess of (ideological) *sociological and pedagogical knowledge*. Warnings were issued about the dangers presented by a "corps" of

> politically motivated teachers preaching revolution, socialism, egalitarianism, feminism and sexual deviation (Ball, 1990, p.25).

A key speech given at Ruskin College, Oxford by the, then, Prime Minister James Callaghan legitimised the discursive space for further expressions of political concern about education and "cleared the ground" for New Right's move "from critical deconstruction to radical reconstruction" of the field (Ball, 1990, p.31-32). The door to the so-called "Great Debate" about education was thus wide open (Callaghan, 1976). As argued by Whitty (1985: 104), the speech, and the Great Debate as a whole, were "more of an opinion-forming exercise than a direct government intervention" in schooling. The "major discursive significance" (Ball, 1990: 24) of Callaghan's speech arose from the fact that, through appearing to take their criticisms on board, it legitimised the "discourses of derision" of the Black Papers. Such a change in the premises of discourse, allowing for and recognizing radical critique, made problematic any future public attempt to defend progressive education. In 1996 the context of the speech was re-staged in the same location, with Tony Blair joining in to speak on education; on that occasion, Callaghan recognised the discursive impact of his 1976 intervention, and attributed it to the sociological and political tensions surrounding education:

> Today, we have become accustomed to continuous public discussion in the media and elsewhere about the curriculum, about resources, about standards, and how schools should be run. But at that moment the speech touched a chord

> of concern that lay just beneath the surface of education, waiting to be articulated (Callaghan, 1996).

Throughout the 1980s the New Right produced further influential pamphlets critiquing teacher education, the LEAs, the teaching profession in general, and education theory (e.g. the pamphlets by the Hillgate Group, 1986, 1987, and, in particular, 1989) (Richardson, 2002; Furlong, 1994; Ball, 1990). Around the time of the 1988 education reforms, teachers and schools were, again, commonly blamed for "low standards" in English and maths and for the lack of enthusiasm and work preparation of students (deemed partly responsible for the poor economic performance of the country). They were again accused of anti-industrial prejudices and of an obsession with the academic aspects of education and training (see Clare, 1986; Mathieson and Bernbaum, 1988).

The critiques returned to teacher knowledge as defined through BEd and PGCE curricula. According to the Hillgate Group's 1989 pamphlet, PGCE and BEd programmes since 1973

> ha[d] usually involved subjects of doubtful value such as the theory and sociology of education and some teaching practice (p.iv).

Such courses, the pamphlet insisted, were a waste of public money and, as PGCE graduates were reported to have declared, had been

> intellectually undemanding compared with their degree courses. It is difficult to think of a single department of education in a British university or polytechnic which has genuine intellectual distinction; nor is it clear what intellectual distinction in this area would really amount to (p.3-4).

According to the critics, the curriculum of PGCE and BEd courses provided little more than "a smattering of history, psychology, sociology or philosophy", well below degree level (p.4) and of "little or no help in the classroom" (p.4). In addition, "in too many courses, …, these topics [we]re presented in ways which [we]re either intellectually feeble or biased" (Hillgate Group, 1989, p.4). The critiques had clear political targets, as PGCE and BEd courses were accused of paying exaggerated attention to "*preoccupations*" (sometimes embracing "extreme views" – Hillgate Group, 1989, p.6) with the politics of race, sex, class, and imperialism. "Marxist bias", epitomised in the eyes of the critics by Young (1971) and Bowles and Gintis (1976), was said

to have "afflicted" all the social sciences, and in particular *sociology*: teacher education colleges were staffed by "Marxists who peddle[d] an irrelevant, damaging and outdated ideology of anti-elitism" (*The Spectator*, 27 February, 1993, p.5) – a theme that has been picked up again, with different protagonists, in today's climate.

Finally, according to the critics, not only did these courses fail in terms of the knowledge they imparted, but they also "fail[ed] to give enough time or attention to classroom practice" beyond individual lessons (ibid. p.7). At the same time, it was claimed, information about the content of the courses, and, implicitly, about the extent to which "the politicisation of education theory penetrated the teacher training establishment as a whole", was "being deliberately withheld" (ibid. p.6).

The establishment of the Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (CATE), in 1984, was presented as a response to widespread "discontent" about teacher training courses among HMI, students, and others. CATE required all BEd courses to include a degree-level specialist knowledge component of 2 years, a requirement hailed by pamphleteers as "a belated but welcome official recognition" of the importance of *content knowledge* (Hillgate Group, 1989, p.8). The way forward proposed by the group was to allow schools to bypass PGCE and BEd accreditation in favour of a licensed teacher route into employment, consisting of a two-year apprenticeship within the profession, free of LEA control, and having as principal criterion "the effectiveness of those teachers in the classroom" (p.14). Several schemes introduced in the 1980s made steps towards this proposal (e.g. the Articled Teacher Scheme and the Licensed Teacher Scheme, both "non-conventional" routes to qualified teacher status – DES, 1991- and "which have, today, evolved into the Graduate Teacher Programme and Teach First" – Furlong, 2013, p. 36). The additional requirement that teacher trainers themselves had relevant classroom experience further emphasised the value of *pedagogical knowledge based on professional experience* in schools (Furlong, 2013); insights from *practically-oriented and politically-neutral research* may support, but not supply, this knowledge.

In the two years between the abolition of the binary divide between universities and polytechnics (1992) and 1994, the government announced major reforms of teacher training. The reforms included the establishment of the Teacher Training Agency, soon to become a

major player in public definitions of the value of different forms of teacher knowledge and competences in teacher training. A central aspect of these reforms was the introduction of a "school-based" approach to teacher training, including partnership in delivery with HEIs, but also the "power of schools to provide courses of initial teacher training" (*Education Act*, 1994; also, DFE, 1992, 1993; OFSTED, 1993). This initiative was welcomed by some training providers but seen as a threat by others (see Hagger and McIntyre, 2006; Barton *et al*, 1994). It stimulated numerous expressions of concern from higher education providers of teacher training, including concerns about education faculty closures and amalgamations, about excessive teacher workload in training schools, and about detrimental effects on the teacher training workforce and, in consequence, on research in the field (see Whitehead *et al*, 1996; Barton *et al*, 1994; and, for renewed debate, see Whitty et al, 2012):

> Will teaching be able to maintain its professional status and hence attract high-quality students if its research base and its capacity to generate new knowledge become eroded? How deep must that erosion be before one of the central purposes of faculties of education ceases to exist and some faculties of education close? (Whitehead *et al*, 1996, p.320).

These concerns are familiar today and echo the tensions underpinning state-funded teacher education from its inception: the erosion of the research-based component of teacher knowledge, the occupational status of teaching, and the precarious balance between different actors in controlling teacher education.

These reforms in teacher training coincided with Chris Woodhead's appointment as Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools (HMCIS), in 1992. One of Woodhead's intentions when he took up the position was, by his own admission, "to challenge the irrelevance of much teacher training" (2001, p.29). Woodhead's views of teacher training also framed the publication of the Tooley and Darby report and were adopted by the media as the rationale for commissioning the report (*The Guardian*, 23 July 1998, p.10). In his *Foreword* to Tooley and Darby (1998) he insisted that education research, mediated through teacher training, had had "profound influence" on teachers' beliefs and, thus, on their effectiveness. *Classroom experience* and *research knowledge* are pitched against each other, with the explicit intention "to expose the emptiness of education theorising that obfuscates the classroom realities that really matter" (OFSTED, 2000, p.21).

A report to the Dearing review of higher education (National Commission, 1997) recommended a framework for teacher education that supported the development of *"reflective practitioners"* and the development of a "fast track" into the profession (Sutherland, 1997). The Green Paper on teachers, published in December 1998, claimed that "much existing training [wa]s unsystematic and unfocused" (para 122). It proposed strengthening the "employment-based" route into teaching, a national fast-track scheme for new teachers, and the creation of the National College for School Leadership. "After decades of drift, decisive action is required to raise teaching to the front", stated the New Labour Prime Minister, Tony Blair, in the introduction (dated September 1998) to the Green Paper, thus linking it to the disputes of the 1980s and 1970s; the same rhetorical effect had the statement by David Blunkett (then, Secretary of State for Education and Employment), in his separate introduction, that the measures proposed intended to "improve the image, morale and status of the profession". The paper announced the intention to move away from the BEd model, towards a combination of "modular" postgraduate and "school-led" teacher training (para 112). In addition, the paper announced consultation on "the case for funding the higher education/school partnership directly rather than channelling funding for partner schools through higher education institutions" (para 111), and, as part of the increased support for employer-based access to teaching, on "the possibility of funding students directly, rather than the course providers" (para 115).

The tensions explored in this paper also underpinned the *Guardian* debate between Richard Pring and Chris Woodhead over the role of universities in teacher training, in 1998. Woodhead's construction of the problem was based on claiming strong dissatisfaction among teachers about the university-based component of their training. Unlike their practice in schools, their studies were seen as "irrelevant". The problem stemmed from the weakness of *education studies* as a quasi-discipline, the "stock in trade" of which was "the intellectualisation and mystification of education", with damaging effects on teacher morale and beliefs, and thus, on educational practice. Pring's response re-constructed the problem in terms of a "sustained attack" on universities by governmental agencies trying to centralise control over standards, teacher training, and research.

Turn of the millennium: Arcane theoretical knowledge and the new value of common-sense

By the late 1990s, the limelight – as the main target of criticism- had been stolen by education researchers.

Critics of education research saw a direct connection between the quality of research, that of educational practice, and the state and outcomes of the education system. Some argued that, in the 1980s, pressures towards de-professionalisation of teachers had been a step towards a re-professionalisation that was closer to governmental values and priorities (Barton *et al*, 1994). The heated exchange about education research in the late 1990s, copiously covered in the national media, has been interpreted in a similar way. In this exchange, education researchers were cast as "experts", or "professionals", whose "control over meaning" was being "displaced", "subordinated", or "co-opted" through criticisms from OFSTED, HMCIS, and DfEE. The Black Papers, Hillgate Group pamphlets, media commentaries, and successive governments' responses to them, worked as a "self-generating, self-reinforcing", "complex, interrelated discourse of critique" (Ball, 1990, p.25). Like in the 1970-80s, when critiques of the "education establishment" had enabled discursively the ascension in education of values such as market competition, efficiency, and management, many argued that in the 1990s the critiques of research smoothed the way for values such as performative accountability, "what works", and "value for money". The critiques provided public consciousness with a set of images that entered common opinion and, thus, changed profoundly the terms of the debate. Criticisms of research, criticisms of teachers, of teacher training, and of the education system were linked through several such sets of images; I finish with a brief description of three, which are enjoying renewed vigour in current debates.

First is the image of the ***gap between education research and teaching practice***, manifested as the alleged teachers' indifference to research evidence and researchers' indifference to practical challenges. For Hargreaves (1996, 1998), the „gap" between researchers and practitioners betrayed „the fatal flaw in educational research", i.e. it being only „a private, esoteric activity, seen as irrelevant by most practitioners" (1996, p.3). The issue pertained not only to *academic research*, which ostensibly was not „serving" well the profession (and was,

instead, generating knowledge that was irrelevant to practice and inaccessible to practitioners), but to some extent also to teaching, which failed to establish itself as an "evidence-based" profession:

> [teachers] see no need to keep abreast of research developments […] Teachers rely heavily on what they learn from their own experience, private trial and error (p.4).

In a summary of his review of educational research for the Leverhulme Trust (in 1994/1995), Hargreaves gave what he described as a "candid" quote of a headteacher's opinion, taken as illustrative of wider-spread attitudes:

> One headteacher of my acquaintance summed up the prevailing attitude in schools by saying: 'If research is any good it confirms what I already know and therefore don't need to be told again. If it doesn't confirm what I already know it is probably no good' (respondent cited in Hargreaves, 1998: 122).

Other practitioners, rather than researchers, Hargreaves concluded, were the reference group that "mattered" to teachers (1998: 123). The medical analogies used by Hargreaves are familiar in current debates, some of which reconstruct the gap between teachers and research as an opportunity for future professional affirmation through direct ownership of professional knowledge (see Goldacre, 2013).

At the same time, perceived failures of the education system and practice in the 1990s were reflected back, via teachers and teacher training, onto education research. One example is the final image of the Tooley and Darby (1998) report: that of a "university porter" (representing the mass of taxpayers) who, "reflecting on the dreadful educational experiences endured by many around him", wondered "whether the work of some educational researchers [wa]s akin to Nero fiddling while Rome burns" (p.79). The *Daily Mail* (23 July 1998, p.13) reinterpreted this image as that of "a layman concerned by poor standards in schools"; public perceptions were thus conflated with governmental priorities. The commissioning itself of the report was linked with the "standards" discourse: "OFSTED ha[d] sponsored this study because we want[ed] above else to help raise standards in the classroom" (Woodhead, 1998, p.1). Education research was held partly accountable for the perceived failure of the system to achieve government's priorities and targets in raising "flagging" standards, because it "failed to help teachers

improve standards" (*Daily Mail*, 23 July 1998, p. 13; *The Guardian*, 26 May 1998, p.2, 23 July 1998, p. 10; *The Evening Standard*, 22 July 1998, p. 14; *The Independent*, 23 July 1998, p. 10).

In Desforges' (2000: 3-4) account, teachers (legitimately) wanted from research "standard and stable *models of learning*", "coherent, organised, well established findings", "vibrant working models of success", and "research results converted as far as possible into the *technologies of education*" (my emphasis). Professionals were described as "comfortable (…) within established traditions" and *consensual knowledge*; if it were to have any direct influence, research needed to "reach… into this sense of confidence" (Silver, 1999, p.21). Barriers to such engagement included the inaccessibility of research language, the style of research publications, and the difficulties in accessing relevant research (St Clair *et al*, 2003); the "lack of relevance and practicality in published research" and the tentativeness of research findings were further hurdles (Wilson *et al*, 2003, 11-12). Rickinson (2005) sets such complaints against a background of research highlighting the so-called low "responsiveness" of practitioners to research and their lack of confidence and "literacy" in relation to research.

A second theme in public debates around teaching and education research was ***the opposition between practical "common-sense" and "arcane" academic knowledge***. This opposition conflated "common-sense", "street-wisdom", and practical experience (sometimes articulated in their "direct and personal expression of [non-specialised] experience imaginatively realised"- Elvin, 1977: 153), into teachers' "*craft*"; while researchers' academic interests, scholarly traditions and ideologies were part of "*academic expertise*". Critiques of research "asserted the primacy of common-sense knowledge over specialist, expert knowledge and assigned it (forever?) to the sidelines" (Gipps 1993: 3). Teachers' "craft knowledge" is seen as competence – it is neither Sennett's (2009) "dialogue between concrete practices and thinking", nor Heidegger's (2011) "craft of thinking". As such, teachers' craft knowledge and the formalised knowledge embedded in university-based training were not seen as part of the same professional identity (Burn, 2007; Brown and McIntyre, 1993; contra, e.g., Hargreaves, 1999). This tension is visible today in the debates around the English and Scottish policies on teacher education, particularly in terms of the contrast between an emphasis on practice-based pedagogy and "moral purpose" in the English policy discourse (Gove, 2011), and the concern

for a balance between classroom experience and research-based knowledge, in the Scottish context (Donaldson, 2010).

The introduction of the national curriculum for initial teacher education and statutory standards for Qualified Teacher Status, by the DfEE/TTA in 1997 (with several subsequent revisions, most recently in 2011), and the creation of the General Teaching Council for England, in 1998 (after failed attempts in the 1970s – Godwin, 2002), were two interventions aimed at construing consensus around teachers' professional knowledge, values, and abilities, leading to consistency of teacher education provision and teacher assessment. According to Heilbronn (2008), however, the normative, relational and individual nature of teaching – all features of practical judgment (and of a richer sense of "craft") - remained outside their grasp. For Green (2011: 174), the standards remained a "managerialist demand to make explicit what is implicit in a person's practical know-how", in the name of "accountability".

The goals and principles of the government were also invested with the virtues of "common-sense", such as down-to-earth realism, achievability, representativeness, and "plain speaking" (e.g. *The Guardian*, 16 February 2000; Woodhead, 1998). In contrast, expert academic knowledge was "esoteric" and "arcane", dominated by "fashion" and "social-scientific" pretensions, "exclusive" and "elitist", and full of "jargon" (e.g. Hargreaves, 1996; *TES*, 12 September 1997; *The Guardian*, 26 May 1998; Blunkett, 2000; The *Times*, 3 February 2000). The argument was that common-sense questions are down-to-earth and require equally down-to-earth answers from researchers; thus research that fails to show direct relevance to such concerns and to offer evidence of practical effectiveness is little more than "blatant elitism dressed up as well-intentioned liberalism" (Blunkett, cited in *The Guardian*, 16 February 2000). This rather crude opposition fed on professional commitment to evidence-based practice, while reinforcing its narrower, "what works"-only, version.

As noted above, the appeal to craft knowledge so constructed drew its strength from a conflation of common-sense and practical wisdom. In this way, trial and error on the basis of hunches and stereotypes become indistinguishable from the exercise of practical wisdom involving deeply engaging deliberation about the value of one's aims and action. The same rhetorical strategy had been used in the past by academic proponents of university-based

teacher education and scientifically-grounded teacher knowledge ("What we need are deeply structured theories in education that drastically reduce if not eliminate the need for wisdom.- Suppes, 1974, 9).

Common-sense of the type described above may be another name for prejudice and half-processed theory, justifying the unquestioning following of customary paths and peer-endorsed routines, rather than Gramscian "good sense" that supports well-judged decision-making in a professional situation (Winch, Oancea and Orchard, 2013; Gramsci, 1975). Reliance on an impoverished notion of common-sense may be a step towards an efficient system, but not necessarily an equitable one (Gipps, 1993), or one in which resourceful, critical individuals could thrive. To many, the mere fact that common-sense did not seem to dictate attention to rigorous research evidence was ultimate proof of its fallibility (Harlen, 1994; Hegarty, in Woodhead/Hegarty, 1998).

Finally, ***the image of the "resilient" teacher*** made teacher resistance to irrelevant research into a virtue of resilience. Unlike in the critiques of the 1970-80s, in the 1990s teachers were no longer placed on the same side of the divide as researchers, as part of the establishment. If the critiques of the education profession had in the past dismissed teachers as enemies of relevance and holders of "outmoded", politically-laden conceptions and values; now the critiques of research placed them on the moral high ground, as "defenders" of relevance (MacLure, 2003: 1). The problem is re-framed as one of supply of research, not of use. Practitioner research itself was described as a form of teacher resistance to academic research, as well as of engagement in relevant inquiry. References to the tradition of teacher research, such as the Humanities Curriculum Project (Stenhouse, 1971) or the Ford project (Elliott, 1998), were "co-opted" discursively in the argument about teachers' frustration with research; they were re-described as modes of resistance of practitioners against "arcane" university-based research.

Teachers were cast as victims of their training, the influence of which they had to resist in order to act professionally. By the late 1990s, some argued, teachers had begun to understand and resist the deficiencies of their university-based training, including "the promotion of failed progressive theories in teacher training colleges" (Woodhead, reported in *Daily Mail*, 23 July

1998). Resistance to bad research was as much part of the "new" professional standards of teachers (and governmental CPD strategies) as was openness towards relevant evidence.

The voices of teachers were thus filtered and reconstructed so that the discursive divide no longer fell between the state and teachers, but between teachers and academics. Responses to such discursive moves attempted to shift the boundaries again, for example by dissociating both education researchers, as "critical intellectuals", and teachers, as "reflective professionals", from the concept of "expert" underpinning public discourses of the "new professionalism" (Bassey, 1992, drawing on Schon, 1983; Harlen, 1994; Ball, 1995; Goodson, 1999). Action research was used again, this time as a powerful example of how these boundaries were actually blurred and genuine collaborations could evolve (e.g. Furlong *et al*, 2000; Hillage *et al*, 1998; Bassey, 1996; Rudduck, 1995; Elliott, 1990).

I will stop at the point at which the report of the BERA/ RSA inquiry chaired by John Furlong (BERA/RSA, 2014) and of the BERA/UCET 2012 working group chaired by Geoff Whitty (Whitty et al, 2012), as well as the PESGB Philosophical Perspectives on Teacher Education initiative (Oancea and Orchard, 2012) pick up, which is the current decade. The themes identified above can be traced through recent and current debates, including the valuing of "common sense" supported by observation and situational understanding, of "craft", and (depending on the story-maker) of "theory". Each of these themes has played its role in creating, breaking and/or recreating public mystiques of teaching practice – even if that only happened by denying it some defining attributes (pace MacIntyre).

Untelling the story

> *"Is there another point to which you would wish to draw my attention?*
> *"To the curious incident of the dog in the night-time."*
> *"The dog did nothing in the night-time."*
> *"That was the curious incident," remarked Sherlock Holmes.* [1]

[1] Conan-Doyle, *Silver Blaze*, 2003 edition, p.303.

Conan Doyle's *Silver Blaze* is an excellent illustration of the potential importance of the absence of action. In the story, the "incident" was important because the dog ought to have acted when a horse was stolen from under its guard. Yet it remained silent, and so provided Sherlock with a crucial clue in understanding the case.

This paper followed key points at which teachers' professional knowledge became a matter of public and political interest. Philosophy, sociology, and other academic communities played some, though by no means central, role in the unfolding of this story and in defining its terms. But the story is essentially one of selective filtering of such influences through the treacly sieves of policy and politics. Once told, it needs untelling, through the careful picking out of threads that were not part of the official story. Was the mid-19th century emphasis on teachers' "tact" simply shorthand for diplomacy in interpersonal relations, or did it hold echoes of discussions about virtuous conduct in classical philosophy and literature? Did the emphasis on freedom in the early 20th century simply mean child-centred, "negative" education of a romanticised Rousseau- ist flavour, or was it also a symptom of societal existentialist anxieties, heightened by the experience of the two world wars and stoked by continental literatures and philosophies? Were remarks on the "resilience" of the teacher in the more recent times a form of professional affirmation, or the renewed recognition of the role of emotions, embodiment, subjectivity and transformative encounters not just in knowing how to be, but in being a teacher?

There are many ways to follow these, and other, discursive threads and recent examples by philosophers of education are plentiful. Winch, Oancea and Orchard (2013) emphasise the synergies between theoretical, technical and practical aspects of knowledge. Higgins (2011) speaks of "learning how to learn through teaching" and of the value of "vocational conversations" and self-cultivation. Biesta (2012) argues for practical wisdom. Heilbronn (2008) concentrates on practical judgement as "the bedrock of successful teaching ability" (p. 180), underpinned by propositional knowledge, practical skills, general capacities and dispositions, and pedagogical articulation of practice. Hogan (2014) suggests an exploration of the capabilities that are distinctive to teaching as a practice, and a (re)turn to the value of the examined practice; while Aldridge (2014, forthcoming) draws attention to ontology and to teacher education as a space for transformative dialogue.

Meanwhile the apparent silence of teachers, as powerful participants in constructing the publicly visible accounts of their professional knowledge, its nature and importance, and the best ways to cultivate it, is palpable. Teacher unions notwithstanding, the exceptions are occasional interventions by higher education-based teacher educators and by teacher researchers. On many occasions, over the 175 years history of state-funded teacher education in England, critics and defenders of the teaching profession attempted to perform discursive acts on behalf of the teachers. Although they were often cast as arbiters of these exchanges, teachers remain largely silent in the records we have of public debates around their professional knowledge. Why this may have happened is a matter for further inquiry; but, for me, it was a "curious incident", the interrogation of which may well be a good starting point for un-telling this story.

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