

THE UNCONVENTIONAL TEACHER AND HIS PEERS

Analyzing the educational ideologies of the teachers in Tohru

Fujisawa's Great Teacher Onizuka manga

Master's Thesis

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Tiivistelmä – Abstract <p>Tutkielmani tavoitteena on selvittää Tohru Fujisawan <i>Great Teacher Onizuka (GTO)</i>-mangan opettajahahmojen kasvatusideologioita ja vertailla opettajia. Tarinallisesti sarja liittyy pitkään jatkumoon inspiroivista ja epätavallisista opettajista tehtyjä fiktiivisiä kertomuksia, mutta tarjoaa pinnallisen vauhdikkuuden ja huumorin ohella myös syvempää pohdiskelua koulun ja opettajuuden merkityksestä. Etenkin opettajanuralle aikovien tai vastavalmistuneiden näkökulmasta sarjasta löytyy niin inspiroivaa kuin helposti samaistuttavaa opettaja-ainesta. Analyysini on luonteeltaan laadullinen, keskittyen pääosin sarjan tekstuaaliseen puoleen.</p> <p>Sen lisäksi, että tutkielmassa jaoteltiin opettajahahmoja konservatiivisiin ja liberaaleihin kasvatusideologioihin, selvisi myös kiinnostavia vastakkainasetteluja eri ideologioiden pohjalta toimivien opettajien välille. Hahmoista nousivat eteen etenkin kaksi nuorta ja hiljattain työnsä aloittanutta, mutta kasvatusideologiselta taustaltaan ja pedagogisilta menetelmiltään tyystin erilaista opettajaa, joista ensin mainittu tarjosi ennakkoluulottoman ja itsevarman opettajan mallia, kun taas jälkimmäinen onnistui epävarmuudellaan ja jo varhaisessa vaiheessa tapahtuneen urautumisen sekä perinteisiin metodeihin turvautumisen kautta luomaan aidon ja helposti samaistuttavan opettajahahmon.</p> <p>Mangaa ja sarjakuvaa yleensä on tutkittu Suomessa akateemisella tasolla varsin niukasti, ja tulevia tutkimuskysymyksiä pohtiessa ilmeni myös <i>GTO:n</i> soveltuvuus esimerkiksi psykologisen tai sosiologisen tutkimuksen aineistoksi.</p>	
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1. Introduction

The story of troubled and out-of-control children or pupils and their unconventional and inspirational teacher has been told so very many times. American feature films frequently use the scenario where pupils, students, or children are brought back in line and also shown how to have faith in themselves. According to Brimmicombe-Wood (2000: 12), these so-called “inspirational teacher” tales date back to the postwar era, all the way from the 1939 film adaptation of *Goodbye, Mr. Chips*, to such films as *Blackboard Jungle* released in 1955, and *To Sir, with Love* in 1967. Then there are the more recent and action-oriented stories, such as *The Substitute* series, the four films released from 1996 to 2001, and the 1995 film *Dangerous Minds*, where the challenging group of students can also pose a physical threat, but the teacher is equally tough, in these cases having a military background, and gets their attention by making them respect his/her physical strength, skills (*The Substitute*) and attitude (*Dangerous Minds*). In all of these films, the unlikely teacher ultimately manages to connect with the troubled class in a way that their previous teachers have failed to.

The appeal of such stories might be found in the way they place unlikely teacher characters in the more likely situations at school. In other words, since the fictional teacher stories often take place in fairly realistic settings, the viewers or readers can find it easier to relate to the story. The unlikely teachers are also usually portrayed as a breath of fresh air in a stagnated school environment, where they challenge time-tested educational traditions and are usually met with initial resistance from the more seasoned staff, giving the audience a chance to support and cheer for the newcomer in his/her struggle against jaded attitudes. In addition, it is safe to assume that most of the people who consume these stories have also been at school themselves, which gives them plenty of personal

experience about various kinds of teachers. Thus, the audience can also reflect on their own school days when watching or reading stories about unlikely fictional teachers. It can also be a satisfying experience to see some fresh approaches to such things as classroom maintenance and discipline.

In addition to the universally appreciated, and academically studied, mediums of literature, such as novels, and cinema, the stories of inspirational teachers can also be found in the form of comic books, a medium often overlooked by the academic world. In order to raise the awareness of its applicability as research data, this thesis will focus on *Great Teacher Onizuka*, or simply *GTO*, a 25-volume *manga*, a Japanese comic book, by Tohru Fujisawa. As a story of an inspirational teacher, *GTO* stands somewhere between the two aforementioned extreme ends of the genre, by mixing the no-nonsense and action-oriented approach with some deeper and thoughtful insights into teaching. This time around, though, as the *manga* spans thousands of pages and allows for greater detail than a single film could do, its focus is not entirely on its titular character Eikichi Onizuka, but several other teachers, as well as students, are given plenty of background detail and personality. Although a work of fiction, *GTO* does bring up several issues that exist in the present-time Japanese society and its education system, such as the problems the students and teachers face at the educational institutions and at home. While frequently dealing with serious social issues and problems, *GTO* manages to get its point across without getting overly serious, often choosing a humorous approach even with the most controversial topics.

It can be argued that reading *GTO* does shed light into some of the educational issues that are not covered in great detail during the pedagogical studies and training, such as the issues concerning the role of a teacher as both an educator and a private person, and the often complicated backgrounds of problem

students. The portrayal of various teachers and students also gives the reader a glimpse into what it is like to be an educator nowadays, despite of the exaggerated nature of some of the plot elements found in the series. Students who are either considering a career in education, or are already in pedagogical training, or have graduated but do not yet possess much teaching experience, could benefit from reading *GTO* as well, as the series does a notably successful job in portraying the challenging but at the same time rewarding job of an educator, where the delicate balance between the unwritten school rules, bureaucracy and personal teacher identity is often hard to find. In addition, besides introducing an educator whose approach on teaching is fresh and fairly unique, the series also does an impressive job by portraying a more average, notably less outstanding, but at the same time very realistic example of a young and inexperienced teacher, to whom many novice educators can easily relate.

While being a commercial hit, with more than 37 million copies sold worldwide, as pointed out by Gravett (2005: 100), and an entertaining read, intended for boys in Japan, as noted by Kodanclub (2010), and for teenagers in the US, since the analysis of the series is based on the English translation by Tokyopop, *GTO* also manages to cover several issues that concern school education in Japan, where the story takes place, although its observations are fairly universal and can be applied to many other countries and societies as well. As pointed out by Hahn (2006), in addition to having successful sales figures, *GTO* also did well in the annual Kodansha Manga Awards in 1998, winning the Boys' category award.

As the story of *GTO* takes place both in and out of the school setting, which in this case is a Japanese private high school, called the Holy Forest Academy and its surroundings near modern-day Tokyo, the *manga* has several major characters who develop and grow. On the one hand, there is the troubled class of students,

many of whom have very serious issues in their lives, and on the other hand, there are the teachers and staff, who can be divided into senior educators, many of them having become jaded a long time ago and given up all hope with “problem class”, and the younger, fresh ones who are just starting their career as educators and still have faith in their students. As a nice touch, the situation at school is not quite as black and white as it initially looks, and it soon becomes clear that the ranks of the students and teachers are far from unified and many teachers’ private lives seem to be every bit as troubled as their students’. In addition to those, the appeal of *GTO* is closely connected to its titular character Onizuka, and, as Brimmicombe-Wood (2000: 18) nicely summarizes it:

“the sheer élan of the series’ in-your-face attitude is irresistible. Like the best chalk-face sagas, *GTO* possesses an enormous amount of heart and, for once, has a genuinely unconventional hero driving the drama.”

Besides being commercial entertainment for teenagers, *GTO* does have its deeper level of storytelling, as it shows a variety of different teacher types with varying concepts of what school education should be like. Although *GTO* is mainly a story about an unusual and inspirational teacher Eikichi Onizuka, who openly challenges the existing educational traditions with his unorthodox teaching methods and is subsequently met with resistance by many of his peers, it felt that some of the other teachers in the series deserved a closer look as well. In order to find a way to categorize the teachers, one of the most practical ways of doing it was to inspect their attitudes towards school, teachers, students and education, which helped to narrow the focus on level of ideology. In order to be able to compare and categorize the teachers, the initial setting of *GTO*, which depicts a clash of ideologies between a young teacher and his somewhat jaded colleagues, provided a suitable starting point, thus drawing a line between the conservative and the liberal ideologies. Thus, my analysis will focus on the educational

ideologies of five of the teachers appearing in the series: Sociology teacher Eikichi Onizuka, Japanese teacher Azusa Fuyutsuki, Mathematics teacher Suguru Teshigawara, Chairwoman Ryoko Sakurai and principal Hiroshi Uchiyamada.

At first, I will introduce the concept of educational ideology as presented by O'Neill (1981: 58), which is an integral part of the analysis. Secondly, I will give some background information about *manga* and its popularity, while also referring to the previous studies about topics similar to my own. Thirdly, I will cover my research data and research methods, along with my research questions and methods of analysis. After that, I will present my findings, in this case the teachers in *GTO* and their educational ideology categories. After discussing the findings, I will arrive at the conclusions about the research and also present some options for future research.

2. Educational ideologies

With their roots in philosophy, educational ideologies are closely connected to moral theories, which in this case aim to explain the ways of leading a good life. According to O'Neill, (1981: 56) there are six fundamental points of view about what living a good life means in contemporary Western culture. The six systems of social ethics emphasize the following values:

1. Adherence to intuitive and/or revealed standards of belief and behavior
2. Philosophical and/or religious enlightenment based on speculative reason and metaphysical wisdom
3. Adherence to established (conventional) standards of belief and behavior
4. Practical intelligence, effective problem solving
5. The development of new and more humanistic social institutions
6. The elimination of institutional restraints, as a way of advancing the fullest realization of personal freedom

The aforementioned systems can then be divided into conservative and liberal ideologies, with the first three being conservative and the remaining ones liberal. The main difference between the two is that the conservative ideologies tend to emphasize the importance of the status quo and adherence to the natural and/or divine law, while also appreciating the established institutions, whereas the liberal ideologies give more emphasis to personal thinking and problem solving, and are more welcoming in terms of social change. Both ideologies also have something in common, which is in this case the individual self-realization, although the means of attaining it are somewhat different, as illustrated above.

Furthermore, the six basic educational ideologies used as a basis of the analysis in this thesis are derived from the aforementioned six basic systems. The conservative educational ideologies are called fundamentalism, intellectualism and conservatism, while the liberal educational ideologies are liberalism, liberationism and anarchism. Among the conservative educational ideologies, the first one (fundamentalism) is the most conservative, with the third one (conservatism) being the less conservative. Similarly, with liberal educational ideologies, anarchism is the most liberal and liberalism the least liberal.

Even though the concept of educational ideology has existed for a fairly long time, and O'Neill's categorization was published several decades ago, there are also some more recent and modern applications of the said theory. For example, Kiraz & Ozdemir (2006: 154) emphasize the political roots of the liberal and conservative ideologies and use them as a basis when seeking answer to the acceptance of teaching technology among present-day pre-service teachers. In other words, the researchers wanted to find out how much the educational ideologies of the pre-service teachers determine their attitudes in terms of using new technology in teaching. The results showed some interesting correlations, such as the reluctance among the fundamentalists to accept the new technology at schools, assumedly because it would be awkward to step outside the traditional approaches in order to learn to use the new technologies, but also because they feared that the use of new technology might lessen the authority of the teacher because students would have access to several new sources. Interestingly enough, although the liberals were accustomed to the new technology, one of their concerns about it was not the degrading importance or authority of a teacher but the lessening of face-to-face interaction, as pointed out by Kiraz & Ozdemir (2006: 163).

According to Gingell (1999: 41), the advocates of conservative educational ideologies are usually questioning the necessity of proposed education reforms, and, should the reforms proceed to the implementation stage, implicitly resisting them through half-hearted implementation, or even passing old practices as reformative by renaming them as if they were recently discovered. In contrast, Gary (2006: 121) describes that those in favor of liberal education ideologies emphasize the critical thinking and autonomy that enable people to meet the demands of a constantly changing world. Furthermore, although it is fairly easy to label the conservative ideologies as old-fashioned and the liberal ones as progressive and up-to-date, Kiraz & Ozdemir (2006: 164) have a somewhat more moderate point of view on the matter, as they point out that none of the ideologies are superior to each other and that they all have their well-grounded reasons to accept or decline the reforms, such as the implementation of new education technology.

As for the liberal education ideologies, Gary (2006: 121) presents an alternative point of view by pointing out that despite the now prominent and popular concept of autonomy and critical thinking, liberalism in a traditional sense was rather associated with the pursuit of leisure, where contemplation was especially valued. The emphasis on self-examination does indeed create a sharp contrast to conservative ideologies and, as Gary (2006: 122) points out, seems very much out of place in the hectic living conditions of today and contradicts the modern values of life that many people share. Actually such leisure-related interpretation does represent an interesting connection to anarchism, the more extreme form of liberalism that will be covered in the following section.

Keeping the aforementioned observations in mind, my theoretical framework is based on the theory about six categories of education ideology, as presented by

O'Neill (1981: 297). Despite their age, the six categories are described in such detail that they are still applicable to analyze a modern-day work of fiction, in this case a manga. O'Neill makes a distinction between conservative and liberal educational ideologies, and divides them into six categories: fundamentalism, intellectualism, conservatism, liberalism, liberationism and anarchism.

2.1. Fundamentalism

As the term "fundamentalism" suggests, this ideology is very strict in terms of adhering to its ideas and principles. According to O'Neill (1981: 114), the respect and trust for authority are also notable characteristics of this ideology, as the fundamentalists believe that there are always authoritative answers to every possible problem encountered in life. Not only are these answers founded on external authority, but they are also unambiguous and thus do not require any interpretation or explanation by specialists, as they are in fact the literal truth. Philosophical speculation and humanistic intellectualism are seen as unnecessary and even dangerous, because they misrepresent the ultimately simple things of life by making them look ambiguous and complicated. Such intellectual activity can even be seen as a form of manipulation, making it dangerous for the society. Instead of overly profound thinking, people should rely on intuition and/or faith in order to have a good life, which in this case refers to a life in a closed system of belief.

As pointed out by O'Neill (1981: 146), fundamentalist sees the contemporary society as hanging on the brink of imminent moral collapse. In order to avoid a complete degeneration of society, it is necessary to turn back the clock in order to seek the answers and solutions from the morally superior living conditions of the past. Whether the aforementioned living conditions were actually superior or a

major improvement in comparison to the present situation is not a factor as such, as the idealization of the past is not uncommon to this ideology. Thus, school education is seen as an invaluable tool in terms of restoring the glory days of the past and at the same time reconstructing the existing social order.

Fundamentalism is an anti-intellectual ideology in terms of avoiding and opposing the critical examination of the preferred patterns of (past) belief and behavior. Instead, as mentioned earlier, the past is seen in an idealized light, setting a moral example regardless of the actual moral conditions that existed during the era. Moral regeneration is seen as the ultimate goal of education and traditionalism is subsequently valued, while attempting to correct the currently prevailing “overemphasis” on the present and future. The emphasis on the time-tested ways and traditions is a further sign of an ideology that is looking back instead of focusing on the present or making plans for the future. Along with its traditionalism, narrow cultural nationalism and ethnocentrism are emphasized, which fits well into the aforementioned closed system of belief, where outside and foreign influence should be avoided in order to maintain ideological conformity.

As for the students in educational institutions, as pointed out by O’Neill (1981: 150), children are seen as predisposed towards error and evil, thus requiring firm guidance and sound instruction. In addition to the need for guidance, the individual differences among children are also to be downplayed in favor of emphasizing their similarities. Although children are morally equal, the world where they live in is full of unequal opportunities and a limited number of rewards, which results in fierce competition for personal success. Children are also seen as being self-determining and having a free will in a traditional sense, while always remaining as participative members of a group.

In fundamentalism, the authority of the teachers is based on their superior level of moral, thus exemplifying their virtue. Rather than being intellectuals or professional educators, teachers are seen as academic managers. While the object of the school is seen to be the moral education, the teaching methods and classroom procedures also reflect the traditionalist approach to school education, as the heavily prescribed course of study is seen as an ideal and ideological conformity is strongly emphasized. The lessons tend to be traditionally structured, with the emphasis on teacher-determined and teacher-directed course of study, because the students are seen incapable of self-directed learning and thus require guidance of a morally and academically superior teacher. As the school exists to create good citizens and at the same time effective members of (fundamentalist) society, moral education, or character training as it is referred to by O'Neill (1981: 151), is seen as the overriding purpose of schooling. This makes sense in terms of striving towards ideological conformity, which is an essential ingredient when creating and maintaining fundamentalism.

2.2. Intellectualism

Unlike fundamentalism, which does not encourage intellectual or philosophical thinking, intellectualism is based on the concepts of truth and reason, and, as pointed out by O'Neill (1981: 168), emphasizes the existence of certain eternal, universal, absolute and enduring truths. The said eternal truths manifest themselves as the masterful creations of world's greatest minds, conveyed through the cultural heritage of mankind. Thus, intellectualism also looks back to the past, emphasizing stability over change, while the schools exist to transmit the enduring wisdom of the past and to teach students how to reason, which refers to clear and coherent thinking here.

Knowledge is seen as an end-in-itself, with the emphasis on traditional intellectualism, while the education acts as an orientation to life in general. In addition to cultivation of reason and transmission of philosophical wisdom, classicism is also a defining characteristic of this ideology, with the emphasis on the dominant intellectual tradition, based on a closed ideological system of philosophical absolutes. Closely connected to the closed ideological system, cultural assimilationism is also an important part of intellectualism, which, as in fundamentalism, helps to strengthen the conformity among citizens.

According to O'Neill (1981: 172), children are seen predisposed towards wisdom and virtue, and also rational and social by nature but are again seen as similar to, rather than different from, each other, and the emphasis on similarity is then reflected on the planning of appropriate education programs. Children are also seen as morally equal and self-determining, although not everyone is equally capable of attaining intellectual excellence, and they also have a free will in the traditional sense. The teachers of these children, on the other hand, should be part of the highly educated intellectual elite and thus have authority because of their superior wisdom. Subsequently, the emphasis of education should be based on abstract ideas and theory.

With the emphasis on almost completely prescribed study, the classroom procedures are also traditional and very much teacher-centered. However, instead of expecting blind obedience of indoctrination procedures, the teachers should, when possible, attempt to cooperate with children, who are, after all, rational by nature. Similarly, although they should not be permissive in order to maintain control in the classroom, the authority of the teachers should always be justified by reason. The students should be able to meet certain absolute moral

standards and to be good citizens, while being held morally accountable for their behavior. As O'Neill (1981: 173) points out, moral education is necessary and unavoidable, but students should also be taught about the intellectual basis of fundamental moral principles.

2.3. Conservatism

The least conservative of the three conservative educational ideologies, conservatism adheres to time-tested cultural institutions and processes, while having a deep respect for law and order. As O'Neill (1981: 177) points out, this ideology does neither distrust nor exalt reason, but rather seeks a reasonable combination of change and conformity. Utopian visions, pure theory and intellectual speculation are not very highly appreciated, as the emphasis is on ideas that are connected to concrete and everyday life. Although trained intelligence and democratic procedures are also favored, "the best of the past", as O'Neill (1981: 177) describes it, is not to be easily abandoned. Conservatism also believes in individual self-determination in a sense that personal initiatives are the main means of overcoming the social injustice and inequality.

According to O'Neill (1981: 199), the central goal of education in this ideology is seen to be the preservation and transmission of established social patterns and traditions, while subsequently having a deep respect for the past. However, the ideology is still present-oriented, as the usefulness of education is related to its appliance to the present-time social context. The aforementioned striving for conformity, or in this case reasoned conformity, is similarly connected to finding the answers from the past and then utilizing them in order to solve problems encountered in the present time. It should be noted that, as O'Neill (1981: 203) points out, the present time is actually viewed in a relatively shallow and

ethnocentric historical perspective, emphasizing cultural stability over the need for reform, while accepting changes only if they fit into the existing social order. Similar to fundamentalism and intellectualism, this ideology is also based on a closed cultural system, making it very much ethnocentric in terms of stressing the dominant social traditions.

The reliance on the past is also reflected in the way children are seen in conservatism, as the use of firm guidance and sound instruction is still an important part of school education, aiming at the creation of effectively socialized, responsible citizens. The same goes to the familiar emphasis on individual similarities rather than differences, and children are seen as having equal opportunities to compete for the limited number of available rewards. As pointed out by O'Neill (1981: 202), the success of an individual depends on his or her personal merit and the children also have their own free will in the traditional sense. The teachers of these children, on the other hand, should be mature and responsible professionals, whose social role and status form the basis of their teacher authority.

According to O'Neill (1981: 202), school teaching should focus on political socialization, helping children to acquire conventional cultural values. Although the course of study should be heavily prescribed, the academic aspects are emphasized over the practical and the intellectual, while attempting to find a practical compromise between the traditional and progressive classroom procedures. Although teachers are free to choose their teaching methods according to their effectiveness, the use of traditional methods, modified if necessary, is still encouraged. Teachers are seen as expert disseminators of specific knowledge and skills, with the emphasis on teacher-centered and teacher-directed learning, although student participation can be encouraged

when dealing with secondary aspects of educational planning, while the competition between students is seen as a way of bringing out the best of their abilities. Moral education (character training) and intellectual discipline are still important, but the main focus of education is to ensure the respect for and the appreciation of existing social institutions and traditions.

2.4. Liberalism

As O'Neill (1981: 247) points out, this ideology sees education as a way of preserving and improving the existing social order by teaching people how to effectively deal with their personal problems. The emphasis on practical, individual or group-oriented, problem-solving skills are all aiming towards the creation of citizens who are capable of effective self-learning and problem solving. Unlike the conservative educational ideologies, which emphasize the collective nature of culture, society and education, liberalism is less eager to see learning as a collective experience, instead pointing out that learning is personal by nature, thus implying a more individualistic approach on education. Furthermore, schools are encouraged to promote objective and critical thinking, while reconstructing society from an individual level. As an ideology, liberalism is an open system of inquiry based on scientific and rational verification procedures, emphasizing the present and the immediate future by focusing on creating individuals, whose effective and practical thinking will enable the necessary small-scale changes in a generally stable society. O'Neill (1981: 271) also points out that the aforementioned changes are often indirect and based on the development of the effective behavior among individuals.

Children are predisposed towards good, and, as noted earlier, the emphasis is on the individual difference rather than similarity. As pointed out by O'Neill (1981:

272), in addition to being morally equal, children have an equal opportunity to access the equitably distributed social rewards. Such a point of view is rather different from the one presented by the conservative educational ideologies, where the competition of individuals was seen both inevitable and useful. The individual personality, that each child has, is a result of social conditioning, making children self-determining and free in terms of overriding social and psychological determinism.

Teachers should be highly trained educators, who are also able to make some educational changes when the emergence of relevant new information calls for it, with their teacher authority resulting from their pedagogical skills. When teaching at school, teachers should emphasize the personal effectiveness of students, while focusing on practical problem solving. According to O'Neill (1981: 272), intellectual and practical should be emphasized over academic, making school teaching relevant for students themselves, while also encouraging open, experimental, activity-based, interdisciplinary and group-oriented problem solving approaches. Rather than being a driving force of the lessons, the teacher should be more like an organizer and expeditor of learning activities, while making the actual learning a side product of meaningful activity, where students also take part in educational planning (such as lesson topics etc.). Student-directed learning is also seen superior to the teacher-directed or teacher-centered learning. Instead of relying on traditional, exam-based evaluation, classroom simulations of life-like and practical situations are preferred, and the competition between students should be minimized in order to encourage personal learning motivation. Furthermore, as O'Neill (1981: 273) points out, teachers should be democratic and objective, while taking student advice and consent into consideration.

2.5. Liberationism

Unlike the previous educational ideologies, which settled for nonexistent or somewhat moderate social changes, liberationism takes a step further by seeing education as a means of social reconstruction to enable the emergence of a truly humanistic society, where citizens can fully develop their unique potentials as human beings. According to O'Neill (1981:278), such society can only be achieved through the maximum expression of individual civil liberties, which fit into a stable and equitable democratic process. Thus, school education should teach students how to solve problems individually or as a part of a group, by using rational-scientific methods and enabling students to respond to the needs of a continuously reforming society.

As pointed out by O'Neill (1981: 281), in addition to seeing education as a means of social reform and the fulfillment of personal potential, liberationism also encourages the citizens to objectively analyze and evaluate the existing social policies and practices, while also realizing the existence of social conditions that prevent the fulfillment of the said personal potential. In this open system of experimental inquiry, which has its roots in Marxism or Neo-Marxism, immediate large-scale social changes are seen as a necessity. In this ideology, as O'Neill (1981: 282) points out, children, although predisposed towards good, are also in need of rational and humanistic guidance. Similar to liberalism, children are morally equal and have equal opportunities, while also being a result of social conditioning in terms of their personalities.

According to O'Neill (1981: 282), the teachers should be responsible members of the enlightened intellectual minority, who realize the need for and are capable of implementing the necessary constructive social changes through schools. The

authority of teachers is based on their intellectual acuity and social consciousness. As the schools exist to emphasize socioeconomic reforms, teaching should focus on self-understanding and social action, thus making students aware of the need for intelligent action in pursuit of social justice. The focus should be on the practical application of the intellectual rather than on practical or academic, while emphasizing social problems and issues, encouraging students to identify and analyze them. Interdisciplinary and problem-centered approaches are again emphasized, while implementing student-directed learning methods, where the teacher is viewed as a model of intellectual commitment and social involvement. Furthermore, any competition among students is avoided, as it may result in poor social attitudes and decreased self-motivation. As O'Neill (1981: 283) points out, teachers should be democratic and objective when determining standards of conduct and also consider the opinions of their students.

2.6. Anarchism

Unlike the previous five ideologies, anarchism does not require the existence of social institutions, but instead seeks to eliminate compulsory schooling via large-scale humanistic reforms. According to O'Neill (1981: 287), getting rid of such restraints would allow people to achieve the fullest expression of liberated human potential, which means that this ideology is in favor of individualism in an extreme sense. Existing society is seen inferior to an individual, while also limiting their self-expression by having taken their autonomy and turned them passive, less rational and more obedient. As pointed out by O'Neill (1981: 288), anarchism sees education as an individual process of learning through one's own natural experience, while schooling is seen as more limited and authoritative. By getting rid of educational institutions, people would live in a society where they

had considerable less needs, more vitality and true morality based on enlightened personal responsibility.

Although formal schooling would no longer be necessary, learning would still exist in a voluntary and self-directed form, with the free and universal access to educational materials and opportunities provided to everyone. According to O'Neill (1981: 291), by having free choice and self-determination, knowledge would become a natural by-product of everyday life, with education as its natural function. By developing an "educational society", people would be able to regulate themselves as moral beings, while living in a constantly changing society and renewing themselves. As O'Neill (1981: 291) points out, such society would be based on an open system of experimental inquiry, grounded on anarchistic or quasi-anarchistic assumptions about how the optimal (anarchistic) social conditions would create morally perfect people.

Children are seen as predisposed towards good when educated in a rational humanistic society, although individual differences make it impossible to have similar, institutionalized, education for everyone. Not only are children equal in terms of moral, but they should also have an opportunity to study what, and how, they want, according to their personal preferences. As pointed out by O'Neill (1981: 292), children are seen as socially conditioned, but this ideology makes a distinction between society and state, the latter of which prevents the fullest realization of the former. Thus, everyone should have equal educational authority, and there would be very little need for teachers anymore, with the emphasis on the personally relevant over academic, intellectual and practical. Still, although the traditional roles of a teacher and a student would no longer exist, in case some learners preferred more directive or authoritarian learning methods, they could individually request them. In addition, in the absence of

formal institutions, examinations and evaluation, students would instead evaluate themselves, and also cooperate with each other, creating situational rules of conduct.

2.7. Summary

The characteristics of the aforementioned six educational ideologies are summarized below:

Conservative Educational Ideologies

Fundamentalism	Intellectualism	Conservatism
Return to the (often idealized) past	Emphasis on truth and reason	Understanding and appreciation of time-tested traditions
Regeneration and preservation of the time-tested moral system	Transmitting the wisdom of the past	Deep respect for law and order
Anti-intellectualism	Traditional intellectualism	Strengthening and preservation of the system
Traditionalism	Classicism, focus on the intellectual history	Reasoned conformity
Narrow cultural nationalism	Philosophical stability over change	Conventionalism, focus on present
Ethnocentrism	Cultural assimilation	Cultural stability over change
Firm guidance and sound instruction of students	Individual similarity over difference	Social assimilationism
Individual similarity over difference	Individuals as rationally self-determining agents	Firm guidance and sound instruction of students
Individuals as participants and members of the group	Highly educated intelligent elite as an educational authority	Individual similarity over difference
Teachers exemplifying virtue	Teacher's authority based on superior wisdom and virtue	Individuals as part-functions of the system
Traditional and teacher-directed classroom procedures	Traditional classroom procedures	Teacher's authority based on ascribed social role and status
Nationalism	Moral education as a necessary and unavoidable aspect of schooling	Practical compromise between traditional and progressive classroom procedures
Ideological conformity		Moral education as one of the necessary aspects of schooling
Moral education as the basic purpose of schooling		

Liberal Educational Ideologies

Liberalism

Effective personal behavior and practical problem-solving skills
 Individual and group-based problem-solving procedures
 Emphasis on the present and the immediate future
 Indirect cultural change, continuous small-scale changes
 Rational and scientific procedures
 Social and psychological pluralism
 Individual difference over similarity
 Psychological individualism
 Teacher's authority based on pedagogical skills
 Stresses the exploration of problems and issues significant for the students themselves
 Open and experimental classroom procedures
 Learning as a side product of meaningful activity
 Modification of existing educational practices and principles
 Democratic and objective standards of conduct

Liberationism

Encourages large-scale socioeconomic reforms
 Individual and group-based problem-solving procedures
 Objective analyzing and evaluation of the current social policies and practices
 Emphasis on the future
 Marxist or Neo-Marxist assumptions in terms of socioeconomic factors
 Ideological assimilationism, psychological and social pluralism
 Individual difference over similarity
 Individuals as members of society
 Teacher's authority based on intellectual acuity and social involvement
 Self-understanding and social action
 Learning as a side product of meaningful activity
 Democratic and objective standards of conduct

Anarchism

Aims at the elimination of compulsory schooling and other institutions
 Self-directed learning, no compulsory system of instruction
 Free choice and self-determination in a humanistic social setting
 Posthistorical future
 People as self-regulating moral beings
 Continuous change and self-renewal
 Anarchistic or quasi-anarchistic assumptions in terms of optimal moral conditions
 Individual differences prevent the use of institutionalized education
 No specific teacher authority
 Personally relevant over academic, intelligent and practical
 Elimination or radical minimization of student and teacher roles
 Self-evaluation
 Situational rules of conduct, established in cooperation with other participants

3. Manga and teachers

In order to get more familiar with *manga* and its popularity in Finland and Japan, and to learn more about the author Tohru Fujisawa, the real-life teachers in Japan, the connections between fact and fiction and the previous study on similar topics, this section provides the necessary information before moving on to the analytical tools and actual analysis.

3.1. About manga

Considering its worldwide success and translations to dozens of languages, *manga*, or Japanese comic books, has become a well-known medium outside Japan as well. Even in Finland, it is possible to find a large number of various *manga* titles from a local book store or a supermarket, and according to Valaskivi (2009: 40), the number of published Finnish-language paperbacks is now more than 150 copies every year. What was once a somewhat underground, non-mainstream hobby here, relying almost completely on expensive English-language imports from overseas, has now become more like an everyday product anyone can enjoy, somewhat closer to the way *manga* are consumed in Japan. The modern-day manga releases in Finland and the US also helped the Western audience to adapt to the Japanese way of reading texts, which, as pointed out by Schodt (1997: 12), goes from right to left, as opposed to the left-right direction most Westerners use. As Valaskivi (2009: 14) points out, in an internet usage survey conducted in 2007, 30% of the 15-29-year-old participants were very or somewhat interested in Japanese popular culture. Although specific figures are yet to be obtained, Valaskivi (2009: 30) estimates that there are several tens of thousands of active fans, with the number of casual readers of *manga* and viewers of *anime* (Japanese animation) around 100 000 or more.

In Japan, as pointed out by Schodt (1996: 22-23), *manga* are very affordable, published in large numbers (millions of copies per book for a successful series) and used like any other daily commodity. According to Valaskivi (2009: 41), although the *manga* magazine sales have been declining steadily since the mid-90s, Shonen Jump, the most popular one, was still selling 2,8 million copies per weekly issue in 2008. Printed on cheap paper, the famous phonebook-thick *manga* magazines are usually published on weekly, biweekly or monthly basis and include dozens of ongoing *manga* serials (Schodt 1996: 22). If popular enough, many *manga* series are later collected into paperbacks for re-release.

Equally as diverse as its readers, *manga* cannot be categorized as a certain style or genre, as it covers a wide range of drawing and storytelling methods. As Schodt (1996: 28) puts it:

“There are manga that rival the best in literature. There are soft-core and hard-core porn tales for both men and women. There are stories about the problems of hierarchical relationships in boring office jobs or about the spiritual rewards of selling discount cameras in Tokyo’s Shinjuku district. A true mass medium, manga provide something for both genders, for nearly every age group, and nearly for any taste ”

Because of such diversity, a variety of topics covered in the stories, and a growing popularity in Finland, *manga*, and in this case *GTO*, does deserve closer look in terms of its content. Despite its commercial rather than artistic origins, there is more to *GTO* than a mere teenage school drama, which allows even the grown-up readers to notice something interesting there, especially in terms of teachers and their profession.

As for choosing this particular *manga* to analyze, the reason I found *GTO* such an eye-opening experience when first reading it as a Japanese bilingual edition about ten years ago was the fact that it was the first time I encountered a *manga*

that was actually dealing with some present-day and real-life issues in fairly realistic settings. This was also due to the fact that the American *manga* market (the most common channel to *manga* fandom in Finland at the time) in the late 90s was mostly dominated by stories taking place in fantasy or science-fiction settings, emphasizing action and humor over mundane. As pointed out by Brenner (2007: 12), this situation changed over the next few years, with the emergence of the “girl *manga*” boom that finally introduced the American (and Finnish) readers to some more realistic and less supernatural style of *manga* stories.

3.2. About the author Tohru Fujisawa

Trying to find out information about the inspiration behind *GTO* and about its author proved to be very difficult, as English-language interviews with Tohru Fujisawa are almost nonexistent. The only one available is from 2002, apparently conducted briefly during San Diego Comic-Con. In the interview, according to Noda and Kunimoto (2002), Fujisawa says that he used no real-life characters as a basis for Onizuka or any other characters, but admits that he did not always like his teachers and did not follow all the school rules when he was a student. Fujisawa does point out that some parts of the stories were based on his personal experiences, but does not elaborate any further, instead telling that he felt that neither the students and the teachers liked each other very much then, although he admits that some of the teachers he encountered were so great that he occasionally wanted to become a teacher himself. In addition to that, he emphasizes that *GTO* is written from a teacher’s perspective, to give the students a glimpse at how the teachers feel.

Considering Fujisawa's thoughts about the story and its characters, it is interesting to notice that, on the one hand, he admits that he has not that many fond memories of his teachers at school, but on the other hand, he wanted to shed some light on how the teachers feel. Even as Onizuka represents the most unlikely teacher in the series, based on his own personal and educational background, and that pretty much everyone else working in the Holy Forest Academy is academically more competent, as far as their academic credentials are concerned, he still represents, in addition to Azusa Fuyutsuki and the academy Chairwoman Ryoko Sakurai, the most positive teacher character there.

3.3. Teachers in Japan

Besides looking into the personal background of the author and analyzing the fictional characters whose fictional story is taking place in *GTO*, it is useful to point out some facts about the real-life state of Japanese education, and about Japanese teachers in particular. After all, *GTO* does take place in present-time Japan and often, indirectly or directly, refers to the existing traditions, cultural phenomena and current trends, which makes it relevant to have a closer look into the real-life teaching profession in Japan.

Although Onizuka becomes a teacher mostly by accident and certainly not because of his educational qualifications, getting a permanent teaching position in Japan is not an easy task. According to Ishikida (2005: 177), the numbers of elementary, middle school and high school teachers have declined because the national birthrate has done the same, but at the same time the popularity of teaching has been on the rise because of the current economical situation (2005: 180) and because of the life-long employment and social status the teachers enjoy. Because of the competition for jobs, the academic teaching qualifications

are mandatory, so the teachers who pass the examinations are very qualified in terms of their job.

According to White (1987: 83), teachers in Japan often come from middle or lower-middle classes and that the career in teaching also presents an alternative to the traditional white-collar work by being somewhat more autonomous. Besides carrying an aura of prestige, as teachers are quite respected in Japanese society, the salary of a teacher is fairly good, exceeding the average pay of an average public sector worker. Interestingly enough, Ishikida (2005: 181) also points out that, according to a survey conducted in 1994, the reasons for choosing a career in education are affected by the students' experiences with their own teachers, the influence of the students' parents and also the books and television series about teachers. As White (1987: 86) points out, Japanese schools also have much pride in their education, so hiring competent and skilled teachers in order to provide decent teaching and education to students is very important, as children cannot select their teachers.

As pointed out by White (1987: 86), the quality of the teachers' performance is evaluated and monitored carefully, so that teachers can continuously improve their skills. Weekly grade level meetings and daily contact with their colleagues helps the teachers to share information and solve problems together. During their first years on the job, it is common for teachers to change schools often, and thus showing their willingness to learn, but also to prove that they are dedicated and serious about their job. It is also necessary to be willing to relocate when needed if a teacher has some ambitions about becoming a school administrator, or eventually even a principal. As White (1987:87) puts it, personal ability, self-sacrifice and dedicated patience are the road to success. The image of a Japanese teacher, with their pre-WWII role being an embodiment of virtue, who was

admired and imitated by the students, has, according to White (1987: 83), since changed to the conveyor of information, who will inspire students in their pursuit of knowledge.

3.4. Leaps from fiction to fact

Although the story of *GTO* is fiction, it takes place in present-day (late 1990s and early 21st century) Japan, and also acknowledges this by making constant references to pop culture and local celebrities of the era. Besides referring to such mainstream phenomena as *anime*, *manga*, Japanese music and video games, *GTO* also covers some of the controversial and much less accepted sides of Japan. In fact, bringing up topics that are considered somewhat of a taboo in Japan (or in Finland, too), is seen as one of reasons why *manga* is so popular outside Japan, as, according to Allison (2006) and Napier (2007), the real world is much more complicated than the traditional, Disney-like (nuclear) family-centered storytelling implies, which makes *manga* interesting for young and teenage readers (Valaskivi 2009: 15).

One of the controversial topics is about Japanese schoolgirls getting paid by adults to commit a variety of sexual favors, and is called *enjo kōsai* in Japanese (translates as “compensated dating”). According to the Japanese Dawn Center website (2010) and Chung (2008), the real-life phenomenon exists mostly because teenage girls and young women, despite the obvious health and safety risks involved in the activity, are willing to sell their bodies in order to be able to purchase expensive brand-name and luxury products. As Andressen (2003: 204) points out, the phenomenon is fairly widespread in Japan, with the estimated 4 % of high school and junior high school girls being somehow involved in it. Compensated dating has also been a popular topic among several tabloid and

newspaper headlines every now and then, and has also inspired Japanese entertainment industry to create *manga*, *anime* and films about it. Although some of the fictional stories present compensated dating in a romanticized light, *GTO*'s point of view is at the same time realistic and exaggeratedly comical.

Besides the reference to teenage prostitution, another real-life problem that gets addressed, on several occasions, is the not-so-rare occurrence of teenage suicides and suicide attempts, which, according to Curtin (2004), have been on the rise in Japan. Although a serious topic as such, the suicide attempts in *GTO* are portrayed both as a kind of a recurring and occasionally humorous storytelling element, but are always taken seriously, despite the varying reasons why people are driven into taking their own lives. One of such suicide attempt situations is described in more detail in section 5.1.1. (see Extract 3 below).

3.5. Earlier studies on similar topics

Although comic books as a form of expression and art have managed to gain some credibility and are no longer viewed as merely children's entertainment, the academic study of the said medium in Finland is still quite rare, with the main focus on the most popular and mainstream works such as *Aku Ankka* (*Donald Duck*). This may be due to the popular belief that comic books are a form of entertainment that is meant for children and teenagers, and something that the grown-ups, or the academics, may not take as seriously as films or literature, or, as Gravett (2007: 11) puts it, comic books can even be seen to act like a gateway through which the young readers can find real literature, but which is seen as having no real value as such.

In terms of Master's theses, there have been some studies on superhero comic books, such as the study of Alan Moore's and Dave Gibbons' critically acclaimed

Watchmen by Miettinen (2006), and the same author's another Master's thesis for a different major, about Frank Miller's *The Dark Knight Returns* (Miettinen 2008). Both of the aforementioned studies have focused on the narrative aspects of comic books. As for fictional teacher characters, there have been studies that touch the topic, such as Kyrölahti's (2001) study of ideology, education and moral in J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* novels.

It is notable that despite the popularity of Japanese popular culture in Finland, there are not that many studies about *manga*. Although *manga* are mentioned in some studies, such as Tanttu's (2010) Master's Thesis on the reading habits and creative writing skills of fourth-graders in Finland, actual research on some particular *manga* series are still very hard to find. Thus, since *manga* is becoming more and more popular as a medium in Finland, and when the generation that has consumed Japanese popular culture since childhood will enter the universities, the academic studies on the subject will most likely become more common in near future. Thus, choosing *manga* as data for this study may be useful in order to encourage further academic research into the said form of expression in Finland, especially because Japanese popular culture seems to be more than a faze and is further establishing its popularity here.

The situation outside Finland is somewhat different, since various *manga* have been used as topics for numerous academic studies, such as in Taiwan, where, as pointed out by Iwabuchi (2001), Japanese popular culture and Japanese TV dramas in particular have been very popular for decades. The popularity of *GTO* was reflected in a number of Bachelor's and Master's theses, such as the one written by Hou (2001), where the author used *GTO* as a basis for defining ideal characteristics for a teacher among selected middle-school students, all of whom were very much familiar with and enjoyed reading the *GTO manga*. The

popularity of *GTO* and its acceptance as a serious research topic does imply that the Taiwanese audience is already very familiar with manga as a medium, thus allowing its use in the academic world alongside the more established forms of art, such as literature and cinema. As noted earlier, such widespread acceptance of *manga* as a medium is still yet to happen in Finland.

4. Research questions, data and methods

The research questions of this thesis are related to the educational ideologies of the five selected teachers found in *GTO*. Firstly, are the teacher characters conservative or liberal in terms of their ideologies and how does it affect their view on education? Secondly, how do the characters compare to each other as educators? As the focus is on a printed text, in this case a *manga*, the form of this thesis is a qualitative study. According to Eskola et al. (2005: 15), a qualitative data is, when stripped to its barest essentials, in the form of text, which has been created independently of or by the influence of the researcher. The data can be pretty much any text, regardless of whether it is in a written, oral, or visual form, ranging from such texts as reader letters to a newspaper, films, advertisements and so on, meaning that the use *manga* as data is equally possible. Also, as Eskola et al. (2005: 14) point out, qualitative analysis has generally been commonly associated with such properties as subjectivity and understanding, making it a convenient form of research for analysing art, which in this case refers to *manga*.

The research data used for this thesis consists of the English-language and now out-of-print Tokyopop publication of the entire 25-volume *manga* series *GTO* by Tohru Fujisawa, consisting of more than 4000 pages in total. For some reason, there are no page numbers in the majority of Tokyopop edition volumes of *GTO*, although the index page of each volume does show the chapters (which are called “lessons” here) with their page numbers. Thus, as each chapter is around 20-30 pages, the sources for quotations from the *manga* are presented as follows: Volume x, Lesson x. The quoted text is mostly found in the speech bubbles or, in case of someone’s inner, silent thoughts, separated as its own section among the pictures, and although the quotes are presented as plain text, the text belonging

to the same speech bubble or thought is written without row changes. On the other hand, the change to a new row and the beginning of a new sentence means that the text is taken from a following speech bubble or thought. In addition, because of the visual nature of *manga*, and in order to keep the quote length readable, it has occasionally not been worthwhile to include every single speech bubble found in the quotation, as there are often some sound effects and dialogue from other characters at the background. Thus, in case something is left out from the quote, it is mentioned along the source reference about the specific volume and lesson.

Although the storyline of *GTO* is divided into 200 chapters and the story is continuous from start to finish, it is clear that there exist several smaller story arcs, each consisting of 2-4 volumes. The story arcs are mostly “cases” which focus on particular students and their problems, but also shed some light on the lives of the teachers. While the tone of the story arcs gets somewhat darker and more serious as the series progresses, their structures are similar to each other. Each story arc introduces new characters, often a troubled student who is bullying or being bullied. In addition to the troubled students, towards the end, a couple of teachers also start acting in a similar way. The typical scenario follows either of the two patterns: the one being the emergence of a troubled student, who is a bully, and the helplessness of the others, teachers and students, involved in the situation, the initial defeat of Onizuka in front of the troubled student, the following intervention/lesson by Onizuka to get the troubled student to see the error of his/her ways and, finally, the bully becoming a student who does not cause trouble anymore. The other scenario is a reverse version of the first one, focusing on the person being bullied and, thanks to Onizuka’s intervention, the bully stopping his/her damaging actions and bullied regaining his/her confidence and the motivation to stay in school.

There are more than a dozen teacher characters in *GTO*, but since some of them only make very brief appearances or simply do not offer enough analyzable content in terms of educational ideologies, the focus will be on five of those characters. The characters are the social studies teacher Eikichi Onizuka, Japanese language teacher Azusa Fuyutsuki, principal Hiroshi Uchiyamada, chairwoman Ryoko Sakurai and mathematics teacher Suguru Teshigawara.

(Volume 2, Lesson 12)



Eikichi Onizuka is the titular character of *GTO*, a 22-year-old former motorcycle gang leader, who lacks the formal credentials required from a teacher. As a teacher, his educational methods are fairly unorthodox and are often met with criticism from his more conservative colleagues. Despite his lack of knowledge of actual, curriculum-based school teaching, Onizuka does have an eye for troubled students who have problems that cannot be solved by mere meetings and

contacting the parents. A former problem student himself, Onizuka is able to meet the students on the level that most ordinary teachers cannot.

(Volume 2, Lesson 11)



Although her age is not specified, Ryoko Sakurai, the chairwoman of the school, belongs to the same generation with principal Uchiyamada. However, Sakurai is much more welcoming in terms of fresh ideas and teaching methods, as it was her idea to hire Onizuka as a teacher, despite his formal academic and pedagogical limitations. She has a very clear picture about the situation at her school, and elsewhere in the Japanese educational institutions as well, and she is not afraid of making drastic changes if they actually benefit the students.

(Volume 5, Lesson 36)



Principal Hiroshi Uchiyamada, 51 years old, is a seasoned educator, whose current duties are administrative rather than teaching-centered, although he still remembers the good old days when things were much better. Uchiyamada is a member of the so-called baby boom generation, referring to the generation born after the Second World War, making it difficult for him to relate to the modern youth and trends. He has also a very traditional point of view in terms of social hierarchy, believing that people's social background pretty much pre-determines their future.

(Volume 2, Lesson 8)



Azusa Fuyutsuki, 22 years old, is almost the opposite of Onizuka. She has a degree from a highly respected Waseda university and is formally qualified as a teacher, although her life has been somewhat easy so far, making it often difficult for her to relate to the problem students whose backgrounds are less stable than her own. Fuyutsuki's well-mannered appearance also reflects her insecurity about herself and her career choice. Despite her young age and the lack of experience as an educator, she tends to follow the tried-and-true ways rather than finding her own way of teaching.

(Volume 5, Lesson 39)

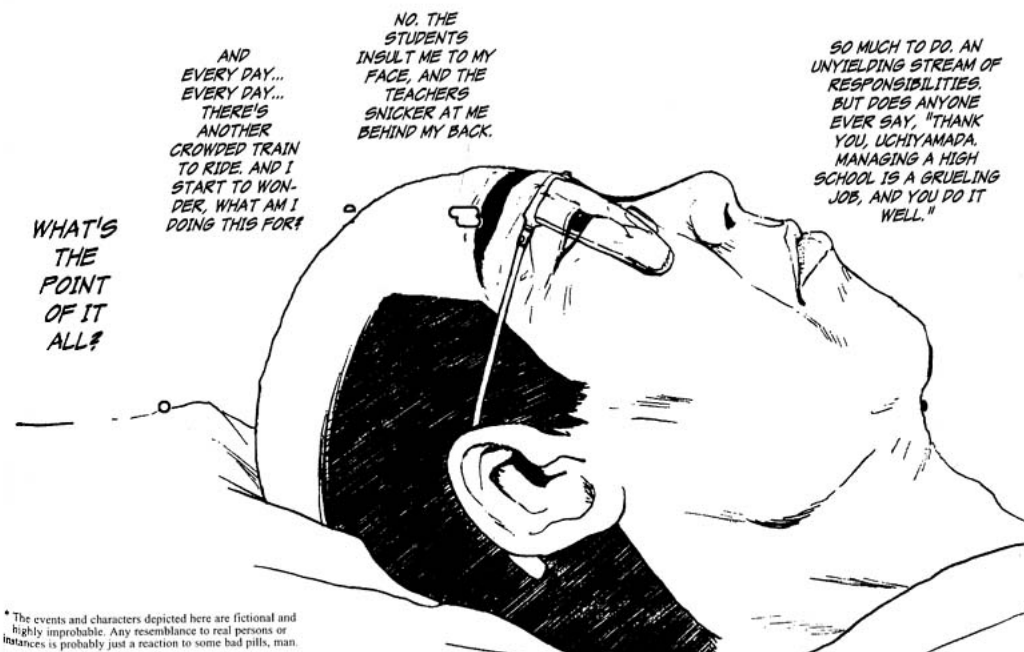
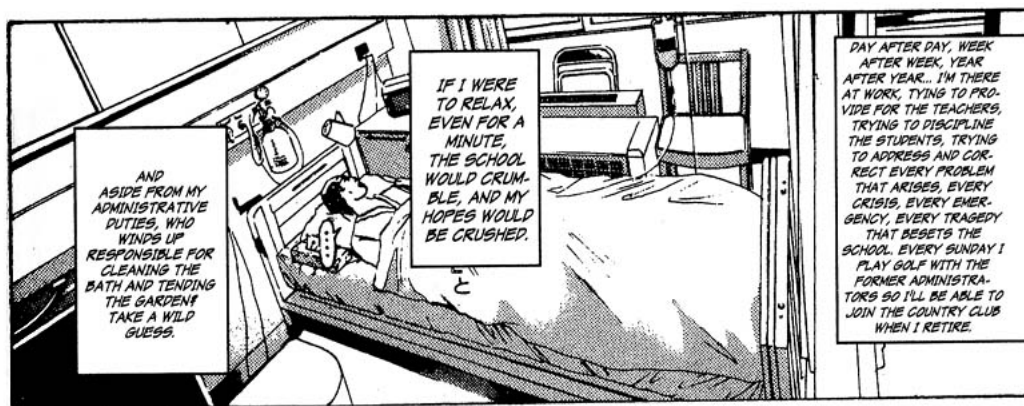


Suguru Teshigawara, 24 years old and teaching mathematics, is, besides Onizuka and Fuyutsuki, one of few younger teachers at the Holy Forest Academy. Teshigawara is a graduate from a prestigious Tokyo University and, similar to Uchiyamada, believes in the importance of social hierarchy and education as one of its most important nominators. It is not surprising that Teshigawara does not appreciate Onizuka, whose academic career and pedagogical skills are on a somewhat different level. Although intelligent and calculating, Teshigawara does have some tender emotions for Fuyutsuki, although his infatuation is one-sided and stalker-like.

In *GTO*, the characters are constructed mostly through their dialogue with others and through their internal monologue (personal thoughts etc.), presented through captions as illustrated by Piekos (2010), which are the main focus when analyzing them, the five teachers in this case, for the thesis. The use of internal

monologue is very dominant and actually gives most of the teachers' characters more depth than their dialogue with others. One typical example of this can be seen with principal Uchiyamada, when he is lying in a hospital after accident and, after waking up and being told by the nurse to have some rest, begins a very personal introspective inner monologue that spans dozens of pages:

(Volume 14, Lesson 1, read from right to left)



* The events and characters depicted here are fictional and highly improbable. Any resemblance to real persons or instances is probably just a reaction to some bad pills, man.

Besides the clearly divided story, the other device the author uses is to play with the readers' expectations by giving them hints of things to come and then presenting them with something quite different. This method is often used for comic and/or even shocking effect, making the reader to expect something quite risqué but instead being made fun of for expecting anything like that. For example, it is implied (and also believed by some of the characters) that Onizuka goes on a date with his male student's mother to get intimate with her, but instead the two spend an all-nighter out together just to discuss the problems the student is having with his studying and degrading grades. Such occurrences often shake up the readers a bit, making them to pay extra attention to what is going to happen next. The aforementioned effect works effectively in the early volumes of *GTO*, when the reader is not yet so familiar with the repeated structure of the story arcs, the style of humor used in the series and the character of Onizuka.

As for the methods of analysis, the approach used for *GTO* is content analysis. Aptly described by Krippendorff (2004: 3), "content analysis entails a systematic reading of a body of texts, images and symbolic matter, not necessarily from an author's or user's perspective". Krippendorff (2004: 18) also defines it as "a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use". Although its roots can be traced back to the 17th century, the modern form of content analysis emerged in the early 20th century, was initially used for printed media, such as newspapers, but ended up in being applied to other mass media as well, including film, radio, television, etc. According to Krippendorff (2004: 11), content analysis is, among other applications, used when tracing various trends or when studying how a certain group of people is portrayed in the media. The aforementioned point

justifies the use of content analysis to study *GTO*, in this case regarding how teachers are portrayed in terms of their educational ideologies.

5. The findings: Teachers and their educational ideologies

Despite its visual nature, the 25-volume *manga* used as a source material will be analyzed on textual basis, focusing on the dialogue and monologue uttered by the teachers. As the five teachers do represent fairly different ideologies, attitudes and motives in terms of teaching, it is important to categorize them, even if there will be some overlapping between ideologies. After the categorization, it will be easier to compare the teachers and to make conclusions about the most dominant categories, i.e. whether several teachers fall into the same educational ideology category or not.

5.1. The liberals

There are two teachers who fit in the liberal educational ideology categories: Eikichi Onizuka and chairwoman Ryoko Sakurai.

5.1.1 Eikichi Onizuka

Educational ideology: Mostly liberalism, although some anarchism is found as well.

As a teacher, Onizuka is fairly challenging to categorize, as he stands out so clearly in comparison to the others and cannot exactly be fitted into just one ideology. As mentioned before, Onizuka is by no means a conventional or typical teacher, and his teaching methods do not follow the typical school practices and guidelines. For example, mostly because of his lack of academic achievement and having not really studied sociology, the subject he is teaching, Onizuka feels lost when having to teach his students by using textbooks. In his case, having to base

his lesson on a textbook is a not very educational, as he is stuck with the source material, which he is most of time not very familiar with, and cannot expand the topic outside the book to make it more interesting to his students. He is certainly not used to see his students as a large homogenous group, which can be taught through lectures and exams. Such tendencies suggest that Onizuka's ideological basis can be found in liberalism, where the differences of the individual students are emphasized.

In addition to not fitting into the typical teacher frame, such as basing his teachings on textbooks, Onizuka is also clearly not at his best when inside the classroom. It seems as if the formal classroom environment limits him much more than one would expect from a teacher. In addition, his teaching sessions at the classroom are not shown very often, but when they do appear, Onizuka is shown to be struggling with the lesson topics and being less confident than usual. For example, in the first volume, during his first lessons as a temporary teacher, Onizuka tries to teach philosophy to an out-of-control middle school class, only to find himself repeating exactly what is written in a textbook and still making mistakes that his students easily notice (see Appendix 1):

Extract 1 (Volume 1, Lesson 2).

Onizuka: "Okay, so Plato says from "Socrates dialogue" that what I don't know, I don't know, know what I mean?"

(Loud student noises and discussion in the background)

Onizuka: "Knowing is the only thing we can really know, I think. Plato goes on to say... Wait, what does he say? Shut the hell up!"

A group of three boys sitting near Onizuka: "Yo, dummy, Socrates said that, didn't he?"

Yeah, what kind of *fake teacher* are you?

He's not even a teacher. He's a student. From a fifth-rate school, I bet."

Onizuka: "Yes, well, what I mean is, or what Plato meant was..."

Onizuka's inner speech: "Creeps, they're not even listening. But they notice when I screw up.

Oh, I really want to kill that creep."

Onizuka: "Does, uh, anybody know the point of this passage?"

Another example is seen later on, when Onizuka is teaching social studies and one of his students is the highly intelligent Urumi Kanzaki, a female student who likes to cause trouble and to question her teachers' professional qualifications. The topic of the lesson seems to be the concept of democracy and Onizuka is again shown to be lost with it, repeating the text from the book and even wondering what he is talking about at the moment (see Appendix 2):

Extract 2 (Volume 7, Lesson 55).

Onizuka: "Okay, so... A democracy, needless to say, is a system of government wherein the citizens both desire and realize a free and abundant life style... Whatever that means."

"It is the duty of a democratic [sic] government to yield, at least on occasion, to the wishes of its citizenry through such means as political parties and elections... What the hell is this..."

"Hmm?" (gazes over his shoulder at Kanzaki)

"Okay, so I guess this means the democrats"

It is clear that Onizuka is in trouble when he is required to give an actual lesson that follows the regular school curriculum, involves the use of textbooks and is what most people would consider to be a normal or average lesson. Although his official subject is sociology, Onizuka seems to know very little about it, and is not feeling comfortable when teaching it in front of his class. It appears that Onizuka is neither very comfortable with the traditional teaching procedures, but tends to favor more open and experimental approaches, which is a common feature in liberalism. In fact, getting out of classroom seems to be a necessity for Onizuka, since it is usually in a less formal and more relaxed setting, often while smoking a cigarette, when his greatest strengths as an educator are displayed, as he is able to reach his students as equals, while also showing that he is the adult with more life experience and perspective.

During the final volumes of the story, a female student called Miyabi Aizawa, who hates Onizuka and teachers in general because of being supposedly sexually assaulted by her former teacher who she also had a crush on, is about to commit suicide by jumping from the roof after revealing that the story she told about her teacher was not true, only to be stopped by Onizuka. Since Aizawa keeps on saying that she must jump, Onizuka grabs her hand and holds her over the ledge of the roof, scaring her and everyone else at the roof. While supporting the terrified Aizawa with only one hand, Onizuka starts his monologue about the consequences of her suicide (see Appendix 3), pointing out how her death would not only affect her, but her friends, classmates and family as well, and ultimately convinces her to give up the idea of killing herself:

Extract 3 (Volume 23, Lesson 188).

Students in the background: "Mr. Onizuka! What are you doing? Are you trying to kill her?"

Teach?!"

Onizuka: "She said she wanted to do it. I'm just helping her out. Right, Miyabi, you want to, don't you?"

Miyabi: "No! Stop!"

Onizuka: "Of course this doesn't clear up anything.

It's taking the easy way out. You really want to wuss out like this?"

Spill your guts, and then just go splat before anyone can respond? Best thing in that situations is scooping you up and selling you as shady slabs of meat to low grade ramen shack."

Principal Uchiyamada at the parking lot: "What are you saying, Onizuka?! Hey!"

Miyabi:" S-stop it!"

Onizuka: "Reality check, sister. You **are** a kid. Probably got your first pubes yesterday. And you think you know when to end it all?

And talk about a selfish little bitch. Think about what you're doing here?

You're sorry for what you did to your friends... But you choose to kill yourself right in front of them. Seeing your pussy glob of flesh down there is going to scar them for life.

And what about your parents? They've just turned their lives around for you, and you're going to thank them like this?

They fed you, clothed you, paid your tuition. They must have poured a good ten million yen into you so far. And now they got to pay an undertaker on top of that?

Thirty thousand yen to get your body to the hospital in an ambulance. 2.5 million to get your body in the ground. Maybe another million for your funeral.

And then, of course, they have to live with no daughter.

And this is how you have decided to clear things up?"

The aforementioned scene is very typical of Onizuka, as he may be lacking in terms of academic knowledge but, thanks to his own past as a troubled student, is very much aware of the difficulties of teenage life. Onizuka's actions also show that he does care about his students and is interested in helping them when it comes to their personal troubles, which indicates his ideological basis in liberalism, where teachers are expected explore the problems and issues that are relevant to the students themselves.

As illustrated earlier, most of the actual teaching and education Onizuka gives to his students normally takes place outside classroom and in the everyday premises where his students spend their off-school hours. Ideology-wise, as pointed out in Fuyutsuki's section (see extract 16 below), Onizuka thinks that teachers should treat students like they there were all on the same level, which is basically what an anarchist would think as well. However, the typical roles of students and teachers would not be needed in anarchism, where all people would be on the same level, and anarchy would also require almost completely institution-free society, where everyone could decide what is best for them and study according to their own goals and needs, by methods they would see fit, which is not quite what Onizuka has in mind when interacting with his students. Instead, he seems to be an avid supporter of real-life based education and practical lessons, where the learning is a side product of a meaningful activity rather than the main reason for having those lessons, which is something that a liberalist would think.

It should be noted that the concept of liberalism as a pursuit of freedom and leisure, as exemplified by Gary (2006: 121), does actually fit Onizuka's educational ideology very well. As most of his actual teaching takes place outside school, and the students actually learn something from Onizuka's

“lessons” while most of the time not even realizing that they are been taught, it can be argued that Onizuka does clearly not care about doing his work just for the sake of work itself, but to let his students observe and to most likely remember and think about the situations encountered during lessons by themselves later on. In addition, Onizuka’s approach to school education as something that can be fun, or his comments about the years students spend at school being too important to spend merely on studying, do suggest a rather leisure-driven approach to life in general, as shown when Onizuka is defending his teaching methods to Ippachi Maruyama, the school dean:

Extract 4 (Volume 6, Lesson 42).

Maruyama: “You sound simply ridiculous!

Three years of jr. high and three years of high school add up to the six years that can set a tone for a person’s whole life!!

Where they’ll work, how far they’ll move up the ladder, the size of the pensions they’ll have when they retire, that’s all our responsibility!

These are the most important six years of their lives!! and what do you do...?”

Onizuka: “I agree with you

These six years are way more important than the decades they spend as working stiffs.

These six years are very important times.

Too important to waste...right?”

Maruyama: “What?”

Onizuka: “Right. But instead of worrying of degrees and work...

Kids’ll do better in life if they’ve had a good, healthy, fun childhood.

That will be the tone of their lives. Happy memories. That’s my philosophy.”

Maruyama: “Why you...cock-sure son of a...

You spend everyday [sic] acting like a clown and then presume to lecture me on educating children. Well!?

You’re a **temporary** teacher from a fifth-rate college!”

As the aforementioned dialogue shows, Onizuka does see school education fairly differently from many of the seasoned educators, who emphasize the importance of school performance as a life-determining factor and also seem to disregard the fact that, from the teenagers’ point of view, there is actually more to life than studying, passing exams and getting good grades in order to secure themselves a satisfying retirement somewhere in the distant future. In addition to disagreeing

in terms of the meaning of education, it appears that Onizuka caused Maruyama to lose his temper also by not respecting him as someone who is higher on the social ladder and also a senior educator with more experience.

Despite not representing the majority when it comes to his teaching methods, Onizuka's status as an outsider or a lone wolf among many other teachers (with the exception of Fuyutsuki and chairwoman Sakurai) stems from the fact that he rarely cooperates with anyone inside school. As mentioned earlier, Japanese teachers who are just starting their work are expected to keep close contact with their peers and colleagues in order to gain valuable information that will be helpful when dealing with different learners and situations. However, Onizuka's self-reliance might be due to his fairly unique approach to education as, according to Isosomppi et al. (2003: 122), it is common for a new teacher, who uses teaching methods and approaches that are not commonly supported at his/her new workplace, to become kind of lonely with his/her enthusiasm, meaning that the other, more seasoned teachers and/or the administrative staff of the school begin to wait for the imminent failure of the new teacher, which would force him/her to return to the use of more common methods and practices.

On some occasions, Onizuka does ask for outside help from his old pals since his gang leader days, but he does not seem to rely much on his colleagues at school. The said refusal to ask help from other teachers might also come from the fact that he does not have that much common ground with them anyway, mostly because of his personal background. Because he never took any teaching courses and did not pay much attention to studying while at the college, Onizuka's self-reliance is not that surprising anymore, considering that his peers have, because

of the effort put in their studies, more in common academically with each other, rather than with him.

Thus, even though it is probably not a result of conscious planning and personal ambition, Onizuka is actually challenging the typical role and expectations concerning a high school teacher, but also the whole educational purpose of the school system. He is clearly liberal in terms of his point of view about education, although not a typical teacher by any means, because his nonexistent academic educational background is combined with a personal street-smart life experience, which is a fairly strange mixture, at least when thinking of the possible qualifications for a teacher.

Another supporting factor for a liberalist teaching style is Onizuka's preference to avoid using traditional grading or setting up examination situations where the student would feel like they are competing against each other (in terms of grades, etc). Onizuka also avoids judging people based on their level of educational or social standing, an aspect also found in liberalism, where everyone is seen morally equal in terms of their personal value. In addition, Onizuka's focus is very much on the present time, as pointed out by another incident he has with the highly intelligent student Urumi Kanzaki. Kanzaki was once betrayed by her teacher, who, after getting frustrated with her constant questions during a lesson, made a mistake by crediting Kanzaki's intelligence merely to her origins as a test tube baby (whose sperm donor was highly intelligent), a secret that was not known by her classmates until then. After getting tired of her constant practical jokes and hearing her talk about not caring whether she is alive or not, Onizuka gives Kanzaki a shocking near-death-experience by getting on a motorcycle with her, riding his bike down a bridge with her onboard (only to be rescued by a safety net a couple of seconds later). Following the motorcycle incident, Onizuka takes her to meet some of his

friends, gang members who have experienced something much worse than she ever did. After being shocked by hearing stories about suicides, domestic violence and prostitution, Kanzaki is surprised to see how the gang members can still enjoy life:

Extract 5 (Volume 8, Lesson 66).

Onizuka: "...So, yeah, I heard about your big secret.
That elementary teacher chick told me the whole thing.
It's tough for a high school kid to lug that kind of weight. And for your own teacher to tell all your friends...Damn. That would make anyone lose faith in people.
But it's still...
...So freakin' insignificant.
Look at all these dudes.
These guys have all been through shit, but see how they're enjoying life?
Even these jokers get it.
You can't spend all your time bitching and moaning about the past...
...Cuz you cheat yourself out of the present.
So, why don't you just give it a shot? Be happy for a little while. It's not that hard.
Slap a smile and say, "Fuck it."
All you got to do is smile!
You know, Kanzaki?"

In addition to helping Kanzaki to put her own situation into perspective, Onizuka's comments on having a rough, even traumatized childhood and youth, but still being able to live an enjoyable life can also be seen to support liberalism, which focuses on the present time. After all, Onizuka is encouraging Kanzaki to be happy now, instead of getting dragged down by the traumatizing experience she had in the past.

On several occasions, Onizuka's students get into trouble outside the school area and the official teaching hours, meaning that he is formally off-duty as a teacher at the moment. At the point where the students would really need his help, Onizuka usually assumes a neutral standing and occasionally pretends to join forces with the bullies or assailants. Prior to the situation, the students have caused lots of trouble to Onizuka and tried to get him fired, so it initially makes

sense that he is reluctant to save them. However, taking sides with the party that is going to hurt his students is always an act that allows Onizuka to let his problematic students (most of whom were acting very arrogant, fearless or mature just a moment ago) feel what it is like to be in a situation where even their lives might be in danger. At the last minute, just as the situation is going to get potentially dangerous and out of hand, Onizuka steps in and protects his students by any means necessary (usually by using his martial arts skills to defeat the bullies/assailants). As the threatening situation has passed, the students are still recovering from the shock and thus not resisting when Onizuka starts an insightful monologue that sums up their situation perfectly.

It should be noted that Onizuka prefers to have his educational monologues outside the classroom and one-on-one, which further implies his ideological connection to liberalism. In the said ideology, the importance of individual difference is stressed over the similarity, which is taken into account by Onizuka, as he prefers to approach his students as individuals rather than as a group. One of the clearest examples of Onizuka's support for individuality can be seen during his intense dialogue with principal Uchiyamada, as they argue about the importance of students and teachers, and Onizuka refuses to support Uchiyamada's point of view about seeing the students as mere numbers (see extracts 10 and 11 below). The focus on practical problem solving is also one of his strongest points, despite the use of occasionally unorthodox methods.

Because of his past as a gang leader, Onizuka is very much in touch with the reality where many of his students are living at the moment. Although he often claims that teaching is just a day job to him, and after the working hours are completed for the day, he is no longer a teacher but like any other civilian, it is obvious that crossing the boundaries between work and off-duty is not a

problem for Onizuka. After all, he is pretty much the same person all the time, whether it is the classroom, the streets, or at his home. Although he occasionally assumes different kinds of roles when the situation calls for it, Onizuka is genuinely interested in what is going on with his students' lives and does not care whether his work interferes with his personal life or vice versa.

Being a fresh face in terms of teaching, but already a veteran in terms of the reality on the streets and the school of hard knocks, Onizuka can be seen as a hybrid of sorts. On the one hand, at the age of 22, he does not have a major age difference in comparison to his students, who are around 14-16 years old. Still, at his age, he is nevertheless an adult, unlike his students who are still teenagers. Because of this, it is easy for him to descend on the same level with the students, almost like he was one of them, not an adult, an educator, or a teacher but their peer and friend.

Although his past as a motorcycle gang leader and a problem student implies a tendency towards anarchist and anti-establishment-like ways of thinking, anarchism is not the most defining ideology for Onizuka. His comments about treating students as if they were on the same level with teachers does have implications of an anarchistic world-view, but it can be also due to his own lack of formal pedagogical qualifications, which makes it easier for him to relate to his students as equals. Liberalism, however, seems to be the ideology where most of Onizuka's educational methods can be found, as he focuses on the issues that are relevant to his students, treats his students as individuals rather than as a group, does not encourage an evaluation system that is based on competition, and tends to modify the existing educational practices and principles. Thus, liberalism is the educational ideology that suits Onizuka the best, although he is also somewhat influenced by anarchism.

5.1.2. Chairwoman Ryoko Sakurai

Ideology: Liberationism, with some characteristics pointing at liberalism

Although she apparently belongs to the same generation as Uchiyamada, Sakurai is, along with Onizuka, perhaps the most radical educator in the series. She does not look for small-time or minor changes but wants to change the educational situation in Japan fairly drastically. While she does not take part in the classroom level school activities personally, Sakurai is the one who accepted Onizuka to the Holy Forest Academy, despite the major resistance from other veteran educators. However, unlike the other senior workers at school, who also think that the situation has gotten worse, she actually decides to do something about it. After seeing what Onizuka is capable of physically and hearing how he feels about teachers who look down on their students, she believes that he is the right man for the job. Seeing how Onizuka is nothing but a typical teacher, who has some very unusual working methods, it is apparent that while hiring him as a temporary teacher, Sakurai does have an idea of the effect that Onizuka is going to have on the school, which implies that she does accept his educational ideology. Because of her continuous support for Onizuka, it can be argued that Sakurai is also in favor of liberalism.

It is also made clear that Sakurai has not hired Onizuka merely to solve the problems at her school, as the Holy Forest Academy is most likely not the only school where things are heading into the wrong direction, but she is already seeing things in a larger, nation-wide perspective. After finding out that Uchiyamada, with some help from Teshigawara, has put together a plot to fire Onizuka because of the anonymous letter sent to the PTA (Parent-Teacher Association), she decides that if someone is going to get fired, it is going to be

Uchiyamada, because it is partly because of educators like him that the system is not working as it should:

Extract 6 (Volume 17, Lesson 136).

“Well, I guess this is it. Time to finally treat this festering wound.
A wound that plagues not just us, but the entire Japanese school system.
A crippling solipsism embedded in charlatan educators whose sole purpose is to climb the hierarchical ladder, evading blame, deflecting criticism.
It’s the parents too, accusing the school of the damage their own behavior has caused. And who loses in the end? The children.
The education system isn’t collapsing, it’s rotting from the inside. And it is symptomatic of a larger disintegration that threatens the very fiber of the entire nation.”

After the situation gets solved, Uchiyamada realizes that his actions have been wrong and that he has hated Onizuka mostly because he is so unlike any educator he has seen and, from Uchiyamada’s point of view, can hardly be considered a teacher in the traditional sense. When Uchiyamada begs PTA not to fire Onizuka, and is already preparing for his own resignation, Sakurai suddenly steps on his side, explaining the PTA about the reality of the situation:

Extract 7 (Volume 18, Lesson 142).

Sakurai: “Mr. Onizuka is certainly an anomaly among the staff of Japan’s education system.
We can all understand Mr. Uchiyamada’s apprehension.
But a shock to the system is just what he needed.
Allow me to clear the air.
My job is to manage students.
Now, ever since Mr. Onizuka came to our school, we’ve witnessed a reformation of some of our worst classes.
For common educators such as us, the changes have been nothing short of miraculous.
Mr. Onizuka does stir up tempers...but he also works miracles.
And I’d like to see him continue...for it is by challenging the system that these miracles occur.”

From her point of view, teachers who are only worried about getting promoted are as serious a threat as the parents who do refuse to take responsibility and blame school for their children’s problems. Even though she does not seem to

have any clearly expressed political, such as Marxist, undertones, liberationism is a fitting educational ideology for her. The way she is metaphorically talking about treating a festering wound, and then about challenging the system, indicates that Sakurai is a strong supporter of educational reform. In addition to wanting to implement large-scale changes, she does not promote her cause in a more traditional and bureaucratic way, such as trying to get her suggestions approved in formal meetings, but decides to take action immediately by hiring Onizuka despite the resistance of many other educators. Liberationism also suits her in a sense that she sees children as the actual victims of the current system, and is determined to change the situation.

5.2. The conservatives

Most of the teachers in *GTO* can be placed into the conservative educational ideology categories, with three out of five selected ones fitting into them.

5.2.1. Principal Hiroshi Uchiyamada

Ideology: Fundamentalism

According to O'Neill (1981: 382):

“the educational fundamentalist holds that contemporary society is faced with imminent moral collapse, and that the highest imperative is consequently to reform conventional standards of belief and behavior by returning to the morally superior virtues characteristic of an earlier time.”

Such description does fit Uchiyamada especially well, as he does not have much appreciation for the current society and its citizens. Because of his resentment

with the present-day youth and the present-day Japanese society in general, Uchiyamada thinks that things have changed for the worse since he was young, and misses the good old days. From his point of view, people should not “thwart the system”, but to be respectable and conforming citizens who do not question the existing social order. Furthermore, he sees that the decline and metaphorical downhill of the present-time Japanese society is not solely caused by the rebellious youth, but also by the media, which puts the blame on educators, and the entertainment industry which has forgotten the “classic”, older stories. In other words, Uchiyamada feels that his profession is not appreciated and feels that the similar situation would not have been possible in the past, when people, including students, were more conformist and respected the existing social order. Uchiyamada’s opinion of the current society is aptly illustrated during the monologue he has when lying down in a hospital bed after an accident during the field trip:

Extract 8 (Volume 14, Lesson 107).

Uchiyamada: “Plus, I can’t open the paper without reading about the decline of the nation’s educational system and how fault falls squarely on the shoulders of the educators. I guess everything’s our fault now! What a trend! Why don’t they blame us for global warming too?

Does the mass media make no attempt to provide thoughtful analysis of the world in which they live?! All those mind-numbing prime-time shows can suck the will to learn out of even the most studious child. They’re the ones shoveling stupidity into today’s youth.

Those enriching historical dramas are on the verge of extinction by a cavalcade of variety show garbage. It’s the television producers that have dragged the country into the abyss of catatonic inaction. Don’t you see that?! Kill all of them!!!

And comic books. That hastily scribbled semi-pornographic trite the publishing industry churns out like sausage in a meat grinder. In my time we had titles that made you think, that stimulated your mind. Like *Norakudo* and *The Adventures of Dan Kichi*.

The stuff today is poison. It’s killing the wholesome values of yesteryear and replacing them with horrible role models thwart the system and are glorified for it!

When did it all get so messed up?!?!

(squeezes a disposable coffee cup in his hand)

This...this...Japan!!!!!!! When I was young, things were different...a whole lot different...”

Uchiyamada is perhaps the best-developed teacher character in the series, starting off as a tragically comical middle-aged man and ultimately regaining some of the passion he had in teaching during the early years of his career. Based on the frequent glimpses into his thoughts about education and the society surrounding him, it can be argued that Uchiyamada's character is a fairly realistic representation of an aged educator whose world-view is very different from his students'.

In fact, besides being a principal and an experienced educator, Uchiyamada can be seen to represent an entire generation of post-WWII Japanese men, who went through a strict childhood and ended up studying a particular field mostly because of the wishes and expectations of their parents. Like his father, Uchiyamada has a very clear concept of what it is to be a man, who, in his world-view, is respected both by his family as well as his colleagues at work. However, in order to earn the said respect, while at the same time working hard to provide a living for the entire family and to save money for his child's education, Uchiyamada has drifted away from the life of his own family, a situation so very common to many career-oriented and hard-working men of the baby-boomer generation in Japan. It is also obvious that he thinks that things were better in the past, which is one of the defining concepts of fundamentalism. In addition to supporting the reviving and reaffirming the older and better ways, Uchiyamada also seems to treat the student as a group rather than individuals, emphasizing their similarities rather than differences, as illustrated in the following monologue when he threatens to take control of Onizuka's class (see Extract 9 below)

Extract 9 (Volume 6, Lesson 49).

Uchiyamada: "Ah, yes. It will be refreshing to return to the classroom. It's been so many years.

And I've had some troublemakers in my day, too. Like the class of '57. Boy, were they some rascals.

I shall transform you into the same model students!

At the break of dawn, as the streets are still rich with dew, I will lead you on a 2K run! and once a week we'll clean up around the station.

And the boys will sport the clean, sophisticated crew cut! And the girls will all wear tight braids! Wonderful!!! Wa ha ha ha ha"

Such plans about the male students getting identical haircuts and the female students wearing tight braids is certainly an indicator about the fact that, from Uchiyamada's perspective, the current education system is not on par with the one he used to have as a student and an aspiring educator. Thus, it is absolutely necessary to emphasize conformity over individualism, and to turn the students into good citizens, while enforcing the ideal of a morally regenerated society. Uchiyamada's plans about regular running sessions and weekly cleaning duties also show his preference to repeated drills as important methods of instruction and the fact that he is going to lead the students shows his preference to teacher-determined and teacher-centered learning, making him to be viewed as a role model in terms of moral and academic excellence. His plans of having the students under tight control are also similar to the "firm guidance and sound instruction" that is seen as a necessity to maintain order in fundamentalism.

Uchiyamada's fundamentalist approach is also reflected in the way he sees the students attending his school. At one point, when he is at risk to be forced to resign in the aftermath following the possible death of one of Onizuka's students, Uchiyamada tries to get Onizuka, who is desperately trying to locate the student before it is too late, back to school to explain the situation. It is clear, at this point,

that Uchiyamada really puts his own career first, letting Onizuka know how he sees the students:

Extract 10 (Volume 17, Lesson 140).

Uchiyamada: "Understand? That's why we need to get back to the school. Think about it. Over a ten-year period, the average teacher will influence the lives of 400 students. That means a teacher is 400 times as important as a student. A student is worth only one-four-hundredth of the worry."

Onizuka's response to such outburst goes as follows:

Extract 11 (Volume 17, Lesson 140, Lesson 141).

Onizuka: "Just don't you dare call yourself a teacher.

Not in front of me. Not ever again!!

Four hundred students in ten years so each one's worth one four-hundredth?! Listen to yourself!

Is that why your mother made you work so hard?! So you could spout off crap like that?!?!

For you maybe they **were** all just one in four hundred...just another slab of flesh in the long line at the registration table.

But to them **you** were their homeroom teacher. The only one they had!"

It is clear that Uchiyamada sees himself as superior to his students, as expressed by his statistical and rather inhumane way of looking into students as mere numbers rather than individuals. From Uchiyamada's point of view, individual students are not notably important or special, but instead form a large, faceless group of people who just pass through the compulsory educational system. Such way of thinking does give some evidence about Uchiyamada's ideological links to fundamentalism.

However, towards the end of the series, Uchiyamada's strictly fundamentalist approach begins to shift into a somewhat more liberal direction. Although his initial motivation to become an educator may be based on his parents' expectations, it is shown in one of his many reflective and retrospective monologues that he was once passionate about his job, genuinely believing that

he had something to give to his students. Over the years, Uchiyamada became older and somewhat jaded, climbed up the ladder by moving on to administrative duties and subsequently losing touch and interest in students and their personal lives:

Extract 12 (Volume 14, Lesson 107).

Uchiyamada: "There's nothing wrong with my students.

There's something wrong with me.

It's been 29 long years since I started this journey and I've wandered so far from where I intended to be.

In the beginning, I was teeming with dreams and ideals.

And because of that, I saw the potential in every student.

Perhaps I can turn back the clock.

Start thinking again like I did in those days.

If only I could regain that beautiful optimism that I lost so long ago...

I'd be...a better educator."

Because of his lack of involvement in actual teaching and education, while focusing more on increasing the student enrollment and the profitability of the private school where he is working, Uchiyamada's attitude towards teachers and students has changed from inspiring and encouraging to the self-righteous feeling of superiority. In fact, most of his hatred towards Onizuka stems from the fact that, unlike Uchiyamada, Onizuka was not particularly ambitious with his academic career and graduated from what Uchiyamada calls a third-grade college.

After the missing student has been found and everything is returning to normal, Uchiyamada sees the error of his ways and takes Onizuka's side in explaining the situation to angry parents (see Extract 13 below).

Extract 13 (Volume 18, Lesson 142).

Uchiyamada: "You see, I hated Onizuka.

Ever since he started here...no, before. Ever since the interview, in fact... I mean, look at him. Bleached hair, pierced ears...and his credentials? Yikes.

I didn't think a man of his breeding was qualified for work at a school of this caliber.

He puts on costumes, one time even dressing like an elephant in front of his class. I had an issue with him from the start. Who wouldn't?

I was convinced that, given half the chance, he'd run Holy Forest into the ground. Cause discord, mass hysteria, violence...

And I feared this **cancer** would spread.

But I was blind to the truth.

There is something in the way he is that heals broken youths.

Students who gave up school entirely began coming back...and enjoying it.

What I had been trying to do for nearly thirty years in education...he was able to accomplish in three short months."

The monologue clearly shows the conflict between Uchiyamada's and Onizuka's educational ideologies, but this time, instead of his usual refusal to see anything positive in Onizuka's choices, Uchiyamada actually admits that maybe his own perspective should be changed. His own sense of superiority and his position as a role model is also starting to crumble, as if admitting that perhaps he could change for the better instead of constantly trying to find the flaws in other people's actions and lamenting the decline of the current society. Later on, Uchiyamada also shares his changed opinion about education with his colleague:

Extract 14 (Volume 18, Lesson 142. Lesson 143).

Uchiyamada: "My entire outlook on being an educator has changed.

And part of it is opening my eyes to new ideas.

I've wasted so much time attempting to drive conformity into my students and staff.

Well, that's over.

I'm not just going to lecture my students, I'm going to learn from them. Listen to their ideas.

Mr. Onizuka taught me that.

You see?"

It is through the numerous conflicts with or involving Onizuka that Uchiyamada finally realizes that he has drifted too far from the ideals he so cherished as an aspiring, fresh young teacher. Although he is not the only teacher who

experiences personal growth through Onizuka's actions, Uchiyamada's lengthy road to redemption and self-discovery is the most developed and convincing of them all. Still, although he does change his point of view and approach on education towards the end of the series, fundamentalism is still the most defining educational ideology for Uchiyamada.

5.2.2. Azusa Fuyutsuki

Ideology: Conservatism

In terms of academic achievement and teaching qualifications, Fuyutsuki is the opposite of Onizuka. She also starts her work at the Holy Forest Academy at the same time as Onizuka, making her a yet another fresh newcomer among the teaching staff there. In comparison to Onizuka, Fuyutsuki seems more enthusiastic about starting her new job, and also adapts more easily into the requirements, practices and expectations at her workplace. Actually, in Fuyutsuki's case, her young age does not equal creativity and passion to challenge the existing teaching practices, making her age and lack of teaching experience the only major difference between her and her senior colleagues. Despite admiring and fully respecting Onizuka's adamant and non-compromising nature, Fuyutsuki is not particularly rebellious or liberal in terms of her own educational ideology. Instead, she is more like a conformist, who has succeeded in her life by playing by the rules set by the established order. In other words, Fuyutsuki is neither particularly worried about the current state of society nor has any urge to change the status quo, and, as a strictly law-abiding citizen, she also sees no reason to challenge the current political and/or educational system, which indicates that her educational ideology is based on conservatism.

As the story progresses, Fuyutsuki begins to question her choice of career and asks herself why she wants to be a teacher and what she can teach to her students. Unlike Onizuka, she is not a flashy and impulsive, but rather ordinary, soft-spoken character who encounters little resistance from her students. Fuyutsuki's teaching methods are fairly traditional as well, relying mostly on textbooks and other teacher-friendly materials, making her a supporter of traditional classroom procedures. Among the not so many conflicts she gets into with her students, one is about a group of female students, led by a transfer student Ai Tokiwa, physically assaulting her and questioning her authority and position as an educator (see Appendix 4):

Extract 15 (Volume 21, Lesson 169).

Tokiwa: "You're so naive, Ms. Azusa. You've probably never been hurt by a guy, have you?"

That's why you can still see the good in everyone...even the bad boys.

Well, you don't know shit, Ms. Azusa.

You have no idea."

Fuyutsuki: "..."

(Tokiwa closes the door and slaps Fuyutsuki)

Fuyutsuki: "Yeeow!"

(other girls grab Fuyutsuki by wrists to restrain her)

Wh-what do you think you're doing?! I'm your teacher! L-let go of me!"

Tokiwa: "Hmph. Some teacher. All you've got on us is age, lady.

Some prissy missy born to a good family, meets a good boy, goes to a good school, gets a good job, all like it's the most natural thing in the world..."

Fuyutsuki: "Ow... Stop that..."

Tokiwa: "What's someone like that got to teach us?"

You read what's in the textbook and you write it on the board.

That's all you do."

The students also mock Fuyutsuki because of her personal background, mostly due to the fact that she has, assumedly, had very little hardships in her life so far and that she is coming from a good family. Although the situation is ultimately solved through Onizuka's intervention, such oversimplifying remarks about what a teacher really does at school, not to mention the way her students

disrespected her by physically assaulting her and mockingly calling her “Ms. Azusa” instead of using her family name and referring to her as a teacher, force Fuyutsuki into self-reflection, which brings up her insecurity but also the feeling of responsibility and whether she can give her students the education they need. It is also obvious that Fuyutsuki is lacking in terms of conflict solving tools when encountering a surprising situation, such as being attacked by her students.

Unlike Onizuka, who thinks fast and often relies on methods that are not found in any pedagogical textbooks, she finds it very difficult to take control, even when the situation clearly calls for it. On the other hand, Fuyutsuki’s helplessness most likely reflects her persona as a rule-abiding citizen and a conservative educator, who is more bound by the social rules. Of course, the dilemma of not knowing what to do with actual, real-life problems is not exclusive to Fuyutsuki, as it is fairly common for young teachers to feel that they should have an instruction manual for every lesson and new situation they encounter. As a recently graduated teacher, she is also likely to be very reliant in terms of ready-made study materials and material guides that tell the teacher exactly how to use the materials, meaning that she needs to use less of her own thinking when planning lessons.

Considering the conservative atmosphere and the support for time-tested practices at the Holy Forest Academy, Fuyutsuki seems to be an ideal choice for a teacher, as she is not very interested in trying to change the existing teaching methods and thus adapts easily in a new working environment. She is not an outstanding and memorable person like Onizuka, which makes it easy for her to blend into the existing teaching staff, despite being a newcomer. Actually, the role of Fuyutsuki as a teacher is fairly interesting, as she fills pretty much all the expectations that the school staff, the students and their parents have in terms of

what a teacher should be like, but unlike Onizuka, she is not the person the (problematic) students, and some teachers, really need, despite of her otherwise school-friendly qualifications. Fuyutsuki is a more like the teacher the students tend to forget soon after graduation, which does not mean that the teacher necessarily did a bad job but that he/she was so ordinary or neutral that it is difficult to remember any of his/her lessons.

In comparison to Onizuka, who is often giving other people some advice, or sharing his personal life philosophy in order to help the others realize that their situation is not as bad as it looks, Fuyutsuki is not as eager to act as a role model. Instead, she is more conscious of what is going on inside her head, and often ends up pondering and reflecting upon her personal problems. For example, during their field trip to Okinawa, some female students from Fuyutsuki's class are caught having a secret drinking party with some of their male classmates. The next day, with the girls questioned by male teachers, Fuyutsuki has trouble maintaining her authority in front of the girls, who make intrusive comments about her clothes and breasts. Later on, while sitting on a beach, still feeling frustrated for not being respected by those female students, who have apparently caused her trouble before, she asks Onizuka what he would do in the same situation:

Extract 16 (Volume 13, Lesson 106).

Onizuka: "Treat girls as they were girls. Like you're all on the same level.

Toss the whole teacher/student thing. Just treat them like people."

Fuyutsuki (looking puzzled): "Huh...?"

Onizuka: "I'm not saying buy shoes or listening to pop music or be their best friend...none of that B.S.

I'm saying if they tick you off, get ticked off. When you mess up, say you're sorry. When you feel like hitting them...well, maybe that's going too far.

But why not just be Azusa with them. No games, no gimmicks, just you.

Don't be Azusa Fuyutsuki, the teacher. Be Azusa Fuyutsuki, the person. You know?"

After Onizuka leaves the scene, Fuyutsuki realizes something she had not considered before:

Extract 17 (Volume 13, Lesson 106).

Fuyutsuki: "It's so obvious.

And I never even thought of it.

Students and teachers are always students and teachers.

That's what I've believed up until now.

That teaching is a special job, classrooms are a special place and we have this pre-determined relationship with our students.

That was the only possibility I ever even considered.

So I walk into school each day shedding who I am and donning the image of who I think I should be.

But, we are all the same. We all cry, we all laugh, we have our likes and dislikes.

I remember hating the teachers that talked down to me.

And I was probably jealous when the boys went all gooey for a new young teacher.

These girls are the same way.

I've been trying too hard to be a good teacher. If it's not working, I should focus on just being a good me. Azusa Fuyutsuki, 22 years old."

Despite having found some new confidence in herself as a teacher, towards the end of the series, Fuyutsuki has an even more serious conflict with her students. After being assaulted by some female students and being accused of not knowing anything about the world they live in, as illustrated earlier in this section (see extract 15), Fuyutsuki begins to question her reasons for being a teacher. In a lengthy flashback sequence, she is taken back to her high school days, still wondering about what to do with her life (see Extract 18 below).

Extract 18 (Volume 21, Lesson 170, omitting the dialogue and focusing on Fuyutsuki's monologue).

Fuyutsuki: "What exactly is...the reason...I decided to become a teacher in the first place?

Back then I never gave a second thought to my future.

I had no ambition... No compulsion to do something.

What exactly did I enjoy doing back then?

I spent half my time at school...and then, I don't know, the other half talking to friends?

Watching TV? Listening to music?

When I look back, it seems like the only thing I ever did was waste time. Was there anything I really **liked** to do?

Wait a minute. There was one thing I really liked back in those days.

I liked Mr. Saito.

Mr. Saito was one of the few teachers at our school that the students actually liked.

He was mildly hygienic, poorly groomed, seldom shaved...and he wore that same, dingy jacket every day. He was hardly the iconic teacher, but there was something warm...and genuine...about him.

I wonder...back then...did I honestly want to be a teacher?

Or did I just feel like my future was too vague to figure out?

Or was I just saying that I wanted to be a teacher...to make Mr. Saito happy?

After all...I did go for the literature department.

Did I ever think about what I wanted to teach my students?

If all I wanted was regurgitate the contents of a book, I could have taught at a cram school.

I chose a first-rate university.

I chose teaching as my profession.

I didn't choose to fall in love like most girls.

I didn't choose marriage and children like most girls.

I couldn't have taken this path simply because my future looked too vague.

But I never expected to run into students with problems that I couldn't handle.

What do I have to offer them?

What can I teach them?"

Fuyutsuki's self-reflection brings up her university life as a gifted and decent student but also somewhat of that of a drifter, who has lots of options but does not yet know what she wants from life. Although she has made progress with seemingly ease, she seemed lost when deciding about her future as an educator, even wondering whether her career choice was initially meant to please someone else. Teaching was also not her calling or a dream job, but it seemed that she ended up choosing it because she had no any other aspirations in mind. It may be that because of her initial lack of enthusiasm for teaching, it was easier for her to continue on a conservative and conforming path, becoming an average teacher

who is not particularly passionate about her job but does it anyway. Fortunately, Fuyutsuki does eventually get over the confusion about her choice of profession, as is shown at the end of the final volume when she gets to act as a mentor for a new teacher called Minami Kikukawa:

Extract 19 (Volume 25, Lesson 200).

Kikukawa: "Ah, culture festival season.

It's so nice to be with a private school this time of year.

I'd love to get offered a position at a famous private academy like this.

It must be wonderful.

I mean, once they hire you as a teacher, you've got a job for life.

At least there's no danger of being fired over some little thing.

But if you're with a public school you've got to deal with the bad students, a decaying system, the whole corporal punishment problem.

Meanwhile, a private school like this one...

The students all seem so well-behaved. Teaching here must be a pleasure. And with all the new equipment you're getting."

Fuyutsuki: "..."

Kikukawa: "If I'm going to go on to teach, I definitely want it to be at a place like this."

Fuyutsuki: "A bit of advice. If you come into it with that attitude, they'll walk all over you, and not the administration.. the students."

Kikukawa: "What?"

Shortly after their discussion, Kikukawa meets Fuyutsuki's class and gets her first taste of what it is like to have a classroom full of lively and straightforward students, with one of the girls even sneaking behind her to confirm Kikukawa's bra size in a loud voice. After the students rush outside to see a monument built for the culture festival, Kikukawa's beliefs about teaching have already changed:

Extract 20 (Volume 25, Lesson 200).

Kikukawa: "I guess...it's not all that easy... Even in private schools.

Private, public... Kids are kids everywhere, I'm afraid."

Fuyutsuki: "The job's hard. You've got to be even harder.

That's the life of a teacher.

It's all about showing them the way"

It appears that during the last pages of the story, Fuyutsuki has finally found some confidence in herself as an educator, which can mostly be credited to

Onizuka's influence. Although she never managed to gain the students' respect in the same way her innovative and rebellious colleague did, at least Fuyutsuki managed to assure herself about the importance of her job and finding the motivation to continue as a teacher. Still, as a young and formally competent, but still conservative, fairly inexperienced and not particularly outstanding or creative educator, Fuyutsuki is a character with whom most readers can easily identify, as such teachers do exist in real life.

5.2.3. Mathematics teacher Suguru Teshigawara

Ideology: Intellectualism

The most tragic and mentally complex teacher in the series, Teshigawara is a perfectionist who, like Uchiyamada, believes firmly in the rigid social hierarchy, which favors people having a prestigious educational background. Teshigawara comes from a family of bureaucrats, with his father and older brother both working for the government (or so he thinks). As a child, Teshigawara was constantly bullied and had to meet the impossibly high expectations set by his demanding and dominating father. Although he still did well at school, Teshigawara was never the perfect student he thought his father wanted him to be, and even ended up altering his exam results to please his father. While having a difficult time at home, and being bullied by other students at school, Teshigawara's only positive human relationship seemed to be with the old lady who lived next to his home. Acting as a mentor of sorts, the old lady, whose name or age is not mentioned, saw Teshigawara's situation very clearly and tried to give him courage to act according to his own decisions, rather than always trying to live up to his father's expectations. During a flashback sequence,

Teshigawara is having a conversation with the old lady about altering his exam results:

Extract 21 (Volume 19, Lesson 155).

Old lady: "Suguru? What are you doing, Suguru?"

Teshigawara: "I'm fixing my test."

Old lady: "Fixing it?"

Teshigawara: "I can't show this to my family. I have to touch it up."

Old lady: "But an 87...that's a great score."

Teshigawara: "But it isn't a perfect score. This is shameful work.

My brother, my father, my grandfather, my great grandfather.

Nothing but perfect scores, all the time. This here is a blemish to my family's perfect record. I cannot allow them to see it."

Old lady: "Well, okay, but it'll still be an 87 on your final report. You can't fix that."

Teshigawara: "B-but what else can I do?"

Old lady: "If anything short of perfect is unacceptable, just go home with a zero?"

Teshigawara: "What?"

Old lady: "You know, answer every question wrong on purpose, or just don't answer anything."

Teshigawara: "My father would explode with anger."

Old lady: "Let him explode.

Tell him you're going to give up studying so hard if he doesn't cut you some slack. I mean, you don't want to be a bureaucrat. You want to be an entomologist.

And studying bugs sounds like a happier way to spend your life than striving to be so god damn perfect. I think it suits you better.

Doing what people tell you to do—that's easy.

Not doing what they tell you to do—that takes courage. If you don't change yourself every once in awhile, how are you going to discover other courses?

That's what I'd like to see you do, Suguru. Find your own course.

And start by finding the courage to bring home a zero. Heh heh...

Do it once...just to see what happens when you drift off course."

It is clear that Teshigawara has very little self-confidence, as his main motivation to study was to please his father and to live up to his family name. After applying for the state leadership studies and failing the university entrance exam, he had to change his plans, subsequently choosing teaching as his profession, graduated from the prestigious Tokyo University and became a mathematics teacher. Even though his own life plans did not turn out as planned, which he still laments, he still wants to emphasize his Tokyo university background whenever possible. His loathing for Onizuka, whose less-than-stellar

academic career in a less known Eurasian College leaves a lot to be desired, is shown clearly during their first encounter, when Teshigawara openly criticizes Onizuka's teaching methods:

Extract 22 (Volume 5, Lesson 39).

Teshigawara: "I just want to remind you that teachers are here to help the students learn. It looks like you spend all your time playing. Our students can play outside of school. You understand, of course, that in the vast majority of cases, success in life is dependant on success at school. The denouement [sic] of this academic drama being attendance at a prestigious university. When students haven't the skills to move on to a prestigious university, they usually turn out...well, forgive the example, but...like **you**. I suppose in that regard you're useful as an example of what to avoid."

It is clear that Teshigawara's worldview is structured very hierarchically, with the intellectual elite, such as the graduates from prestigious universities, being on top of the system, which does imply that his educational ideology is based on intellectualism. He also sees a clear and self-explanatory correlation between schooling and success in life, emphasizing his own position as a superior educator, because he could get into a prestigious university and Onizuka could not. Since he sees himself superior to Onizuka in terms of educational achievement and also as an educator, Teshigawara does seem to see a (good) teacher as being superior to his/her students in terms of superior wisdom and virtue.

In addition to questioning his educational qualifications and teacher authority, it is pretty soon revealed that the other reason why Teshigawara hates Onizuka is the fact that he sees him as threat, as Teshigawara has fallen obsessively and one-sidedly in love with Fuyutsuki. Teshigawara even goes as far as kidnapping Fuyutsuki, in order to know his true feelings and marry him. While Onizuka rescues Fuyutsuki, Teshigawara loses his temper and lets out a heart-wrenching account from his childhood and traumatized school days (see Extract 23 below).

Extract 23 (Volume 19, Lesson 151).

Teshigawara: "I frittered away my childhood in the magnificent shadow of my prodigy older brother, a child who was using chopsticks by two, knew the alphabet by three, and by four could rattle off the gross national product of any nation on earth alphabetically or in order of population! That's the world I grew up in!

I was born into the tomb academia, studying foot one [sic] out of the womb! I squeezed every last drop of sanity out of every neuron in my brain, bled deep red rivers from every follicle in my head!

I spent every free second of scholarly life ducking into empty room or scurrying to the roof top just to log in more study time! I spent so much time in those cloistered halls that I had to sink so low as to have my bowel movements in the cesspools they call school toilets!

And heaven forbid I stumble in even the slightest degree, calling upon the raptor-like scourge of my educators, needling me with admonitions about keeping up with the pace, about handling the pressure, about being left behind!!! But I **stayed!!!**

Friends?! Feelings?!

In my world those were trifling things for foolish creatures with little intelligence!

Mine was a world of order, discipline and the precipitous **success** that follows! But what would a troglodyte like you know about that?!"

It is obvious that Teshigawara is carrying deep traumas from his school days and he seems to be a very lonely person. His self-esteem is shown to be very vulnerable and fragile, and, before plotting the whole kidnapping plan, he gets put on a temporary leave after losing his temper in a classroom and severely slapping a female student who he thought was making mocking comments about him. It is obvious that despite his academic background, the perfectionist nature of Teshigawara does not allow him to take criticism from anyone, further pointing out his beliefs about being part of the intellectual elite that acts as the authority in intellectualism.

Again, though several conflicts with Onizuka, Teshigawara gets to a point where he finally has to admit that there is something very wrong in the way he sees himself and other people, a discovery that is followed by suicide attempt stopped by Onizuka. In the end, although his career as a teacher is over and he is being taken to the court to take responsibility for his actions, Teshigawara finally seems to be in peace with himself, courtesy of Onizuka who showed him the right way.

However, as a teacher, Teshigawara does not show any signs of reformation, which may be due to already having more enough he can handle in terms of coping with his personal issues. Still, with his sense of superiority over students, and most of the other teachers, Teshigawara's strong beliefs about his own intelligence, wisdom and educational achievement are in favor of categorizing him under intellectualism.

6. Discussion

In order to summarize how the teachers fit into educational ideologies and how the teachers and ideologies compare to each other, the following illustration provides further information:

Conservative educational ideologies			Liberal educational ideologies		
Fundamentalism Hiroshi Uchiyamada	Intellectualism Suguru Teshigawara	Conservatism Azusa Fuyutsuki	Liberalism Eikichi Onizuka Ryoko Sakurai	Liberationism Ryoko Sakurai	Anarchism Eikichi Onizuka
Past-oriented		Present-oriented	Future-oriented		
Most stable		Stable but moderately reforming	Most unstable, constant large-scale reforms		
Social/religious system	Based on a closed Ideological/philosophical system	Cultural/ethnocentric system	Based on an open system of experimental inquiry		
Emphasis on individual similarity			Emphasis on individual differences		
Teacher-determined and teacher-directed learning			Favors a high degree of student-directed learning	Self-directed learning	
Encourages competition among students			Does not encourage competition among students		

Looking into the educational ideologies of the five selected teachers from *GTO* provided some interesting results. The use of educational ideologies as a method of categorization worked well especially for the characters of Onizuka, Sakurai and Fuyutsuki. Of course, it should be noted that the said trio did represent “the good guys”, both in terms of the five selected teacher characters and in terms of pretty much every teacher found in *GTO*, meaning that they were, almost without exceptions, portrayed in a sympathetic light, making it easy for the reader to remain supportive for them at all times. Subsequently, the remaining two, Uchiyamada and Teshigawara, were, especially from the initial stages of the story, seen as “the bad guys”, but, despite being portrayed in a negative light at first, actually turned out to be among the most evolving teacher characters in *GTO*.

As pointed out by Conley (2010), it is a common practice in fiction to make the villains more interesting than heroes, which also seems to be the case with *GTO*. Although Onizuka, the titular character and the hero of the series, is by no means a typical protagonist, he does not see much development over the entire 25-volume series. The same goes to Sakurai, who seems to have no character development, and to Fuyutsuki, whose development, while evident, is very subtle. In comparison, Uchiyamada, who is constantly struggling with getting into terms with his decreasing authority and importance at home and work, and Teshigawara, whose collected and intellectual surface hides a tormented, self-effacing and submissive personality, are considerably more complex characters. Nevertheless, Onizuka, the most radical of the five teachers, representing liberalism and anarchism, proved to be an interesting exception among the teachers. Considering Onizuka’s standout qualities, it was fairly surprising to notice that chairwoman Sakurai, the teacher who is closest to him in terms of educational ideology, was actually very different as a person. Although Sakurai

and Onizuka shared several ideological points of view, Sakurai was, despite of her radical reform plans and their clever and systematic implementation through Onizuka, otherwise fairly ordinary and clearly not a person who stood out in a way that Onizuka did.

Fuyutsuki, the most neutral of the five characters, is thus almost like a bridge between the two extremes in the educational ideologies: fundamentalism and anarchism. Whereas Uchiyamada and Teshigawara represent the conservative side, with Onizuka and Sakurai being the radical liberals, Fuyutsuki's position in conservatism, although her support for Onizuka implies that she does not exactly condemn all liberalists educational ideas either, does seem less remarkable or interesting in comparison to the other teachers. On the one hand, teachers like her definitely exist in reality as well, but, on the other hand, are not very memorable or notable. Teachers like Fuyutsuki have no interest in changing the existing system, nor do they wish to return to the good old days of the past, and they do their job according to the prevailing practices and expectations, without emphasizing their persona very much. In that sense, while being almost overly neutral as a fictional character, Fuyutsuki is not very far from many such teachers that most students have encountered during their years in compulsory education.

However, it should be noted that while Fuyutsuki may be among the least interesting characters in terms of entertainment and storytelling, her status as a recently graduated, constantly insecure, conservative and young teacher is portrayed in a very realistic light. Although overshadowed by many of the larger and memorable personalities in *GTO*, Fuyutsuki stands out as the most likely existing teacher of them all. Whereas Onizuka, as a rule-breaking, ever-confident and one-of-a-kind educator, might be what many average, real-life teachers

would secretly wish to be like, Fuyutsuki is the one they can most easily sympathize with, because there are almost no fantasy elements in her actions. For an aspiring educator, Fuyutsuki offers an instantly familiar connection to the real-world challenges encountered by a fresh newcomer, who has only recently stepped out of the university and into being an educator herself. Together, Onizuka and Fuyutsuki stand out as the young, recently graduated teachers, who, despite their differences in terms of educational ideology, offer both inspiration and a target of identification for readers who are interested in, or are planning a career in school education.

In addition to the aforementioned observations about the ideology-related similarities and differences between the five teacher characters, the strict divide into conservative or liberal ideologies produced another interesting contradiction. Among the conservatives, namely Uchiyamada, Teshigawara and Fuyutsuki, and the liberals, referring to Onizuka and Sakurai, it was notable that the ones who actually took action to change the situation at school were solely liberals. Of course, considering the very nature of the six ideologies, it is somewhat self-explanatory that aiming towards an educational reform that is not related to the past traditions is a characteristic found in all liberal educational ideologies. However, the other correlation found between the conservatives and liberals was somewhat more unexpected, as it was connected to the thoughts and inner speech of the characters.

It turned out that Uchiyamada, Teshigawara and Fuyutsuki, who were not eager to take action, were actually the most introspective of the five characters. Uchiyamada and Fuyutsuki were especially prominent in terms of sharing their personal opinions on various topics with the reader through inner speech and thought, whereas Teshigawara, in addition to having somewhat less inner speech

and thoughts, did the same via his diary that he gave for Fuyutsuki before the marriage ceremony he had planned for them, but what got ultimately foiled by Onizuka. In contrast to the introspective trio, the active liberals, Onizuka and Sakurai, were shown to have very little inner speech or thoughts. It appears that Uchiyamada, Fuyutsuki and Teshigawara were very much aware of their personal situations, but instead of taking action, ended up stagnant and conforming, whereas Onizuka and Sakurai, with the emphasis on Onizuka, took action without pondering every single detail in advance and, while taking risks, ended up with remarkably successful results.

The aforementioned contrast between careful and thorough planning, and taking action with less planning is an interesting one, as it seems that without Onizuka, the fearless risk-taker, who always puts his students first, and Sakurai, the behind-the-scenes mastermind, the situation at the Holy Forest Academy could have remained the way it was for a long time. Of course, it has to be taken into account that, in a commercial *manga*, the happy ending is to be expected, and that real life is always more complicated and unpredictable than fiction, but there is undoubtedly something very inspiring in the way Onizuka and Sakurai do their best against an overwhelming resistance from their colleagues, parents and the students, ultimately solving the issues that have plagued the school for a good while. For any aspiring teacher, such tenaciousness and unwavering effort is hard to ignore, even though it is evident that the author of *GTO* is in favor of liberal education ideologies, as the supporters of conservative ideologies, who also act as the hinderers of the necessary reform, ultimately lose to the liberalists and also learn from them in the process.

As for the challenges encountered during the research process, there were some limitations in terms of the choice of the aforementioned analytical tools. For

example, the selection of the teachers was not a simple task, because the page counts for individual teachers varied considerably and some characters were portrayed in such a way that there was not much textual evidence to use in order to show them adhering to a particular educational ideology. Although the portrayal of actual teaching, with the exception of Onizuka's unorthodox "lessons", by the characters was scarce, most likely due to the readership and marketability of this particular *manga*, it was still possible to get some insight into their educational ideologies. Being a commercial hit for schoolboys, rather than a *manga* written for the educational science majors or researchers, *GTO* is clearly an action-packed and comical school drama about problem students and one exceptional teacher than an accurate portrayal of teachers with varied school subjects. Thus, the school life is also used as a setting for interesting characters, which is a common starting point for various forms of entertainment, including, among many others, the hospital or police dramas. Still, despite the aforementioned challenges, the research process did proceed and got completed fairly smoothly.

7. Conclusion

In this thesis, I have analyzed the best-selling, award-winning 25-volume *manga* series *GTO* by Tohru Fujisawa. After introducing the series and mentioning that despite of somewhat similar stories about inspirational and/or unusual teachers being told a number of times before in literature and cinema, while pointing out that they still manage to attract and fascinate the audiences, I defined the educational ideologies, the theoretical background of my thesis, in order to clarify the focus of my analysis. I then went on to give some basic background information about *manga* as a medium and the Japanese and Finnish *manga* market in general, while also providing some information about the series' creator and his personal experiences. Since the story of *GTO* takes place in present-time Japan, I felt that it was also necessary to mention some basic facts about real teachers in Japan. When looking into the previous research about similar topics, it was pointed out that despite the success and popularity of Japanese popular culture in Finland, academic studies about the phenomenon are still rare here and the aforementioned findings also pointed out the demand for the use of *manga*, and comic books in general, as an academic research topic in the Finnish universities. However, the situation abroad seemed much more promising, as illustrated by one of the *GTO*-related Master's theses found in a Taiwanese university.

Moving on to the theoretical framework, I focused on the conservative and liberal educational ideologies introduced by William F. O'Neill and described them in detail. Before moving on to the analysis, the five teachers chosen for the analysis were shortly introduced, aided with some illustrations from the *manga*. Using the educational ideology categorization, I then began my analysis to find

out how the teacher characters would measure up as far as their educational ideologies were concerned.

As the results of my analysis clearly show, two educators, Onizuka and Sakurai, represent the liberal educational ideologies, whereas the remaining three, Uchiyamada, Teshigawara and Fuyutsuki fall into the conservative ideologies. The complexity and similarity of Uchiyamada and Teshigawara as conservatives is obvious, while Fuyutsuki is portrayed as the most neutral teacher character. It was also interesting to notice that, while ideologically very similar, Onizuka and Sakurai are very different when it comes to their actions, behavior and personalities. However, it should be noted that although the ratio of the liberal and conservative ideologies of the teachers used in the analysis seems fairly even, two on three, the majority of the other teachers, who were left out from the analysis because their appearance in the series did not provide enough background information to make it possible to determine their education ideology or ideologies, seemed to be mostly conservative educators. Since *GTO* is, first and foremost, a story of the unconventional and unlikely teacher called Eikichi Onizuka, and, as detailed earlier, since he was unlike any other teacher in the series, it was hardly a major surprise that the conservative ideologies were the most common among the teachers.

Because of its sheer length, with more than 4000 pages, *GTO* could be used as a basis for further academic studies and research. As the scope of this Master's thesis had to be quite narrow to allow sufficient focus, the analysis was about five of the teachers, while almost completely ignoring the students, who are equally interesting as characters with varying world-views and personalities and would most certainly deserve to be analyzed as well. The present-day settings of *GTO* could also be studied from a sociological point of view, as the various social

issues, such as teen suicides and prostitution, brought up in the series could be analyzed in more detail, while finding more of such links between fact and fiction. In addition, the frequent use of humor and jokes, which are almost completely ignored in this thesis, could be looked into with more detail, again from a sociological point of view. Outside the field of sociology, the noted complexity of Uchiyamada and Teshigawara could serve as a basis for entirely psychology-related research topics, as the personalities of the characters could allow for a detailed study.

Still, the most important point made by this thesis was the use of a popular medium in order to bring up some rather important issues about teaching and education, in this case referring to *GTO* as a highly recommendable reading for aspiring teachers and the education science and pedagogy students. The characters of Onizuka and Fuyutsuki are especially notable, because the former offers inspiration and the latter someone to identify with for the aspiring and recently graduated educators, who are yet to find their own way of teaching. Although a work of fiction, *GTO* still reflects the society where and for which it was created, but despite its Japanese setting, its observations about the state of formal education, teachers and students are pretty much universal in a sense that similar concerns expressed for the decay of moral and educational standards, or the difficulties involved in teaching challenging students can be found in pretty much all societies where institutionalized systems of education exist. In addition, it is fairly safe to say that as long as there are people going to school, there will also be a readership for stories about inspirational teachers who, by using unconventional means, overcome all the odds and manage to make a difference in a classroom.

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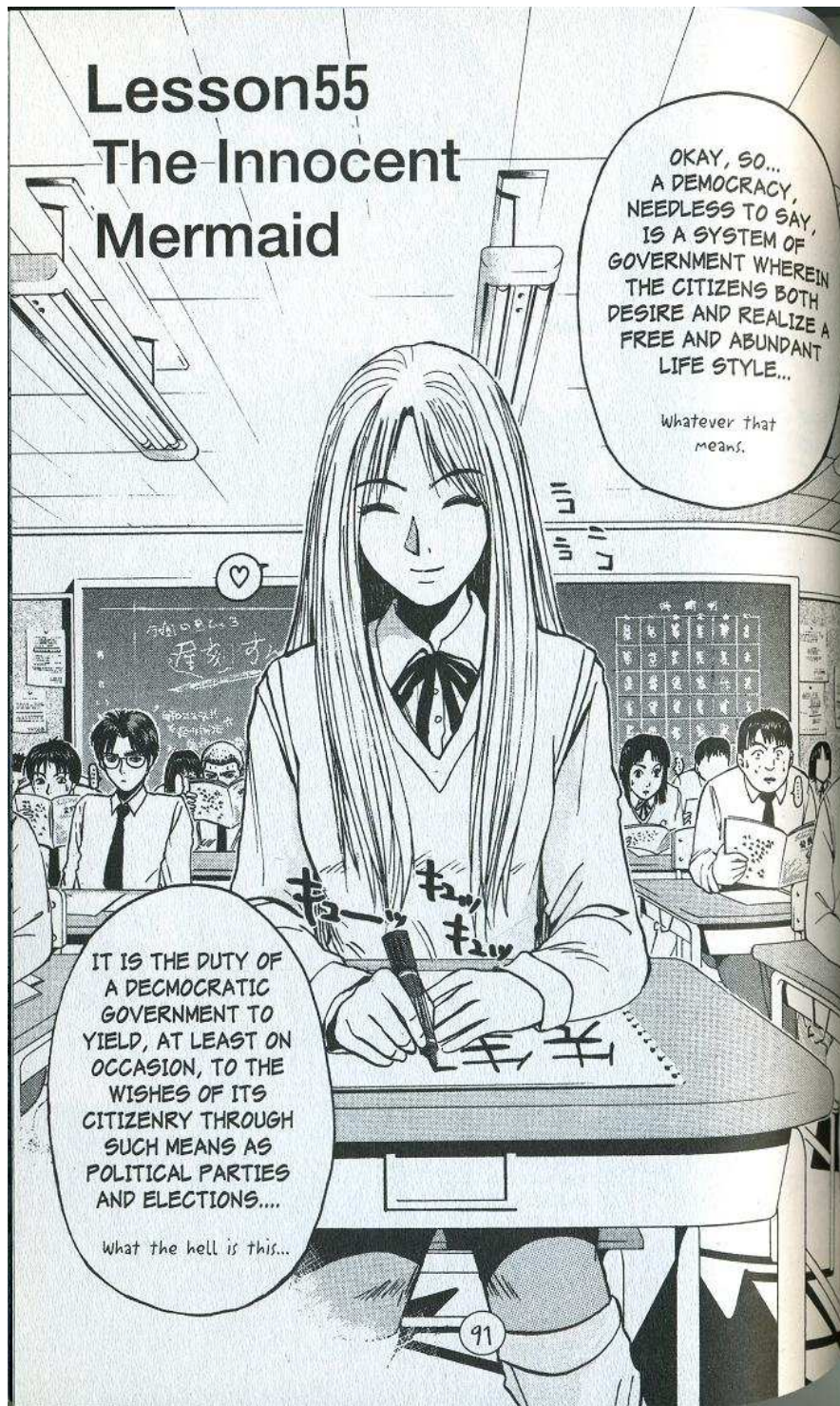
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Appendix 1 (Volume 1, Lesson 2. All appendixes to be read from right to left)

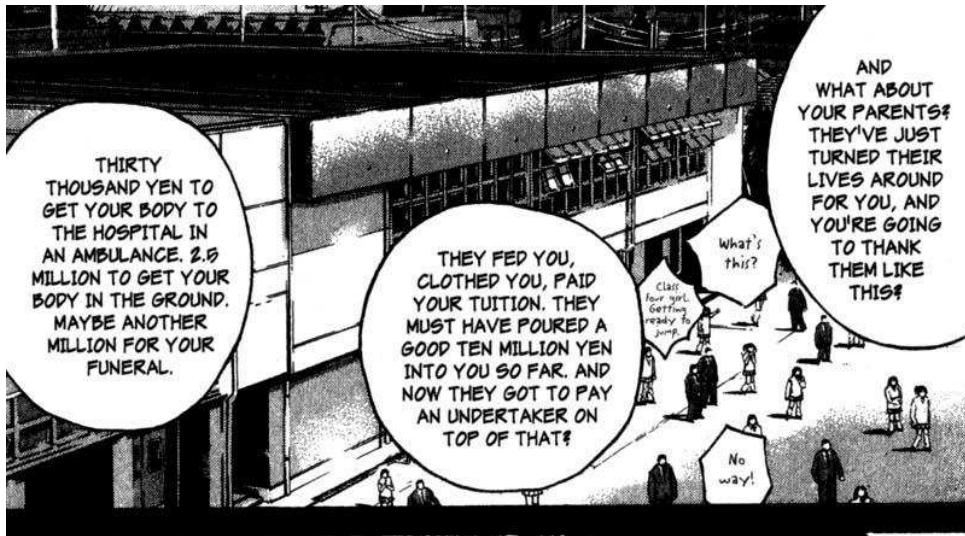






Appendix 3 (Volume 23, Lesson 188)





THIRTY THOUSAND YEN TO GET YOUR BODY TO THE HOSPITAL IN AN AMBULANCE. 2.5 MILLION TO GET YOUR BODY IN THE GROUND. MAYBE ANOTHER MILLION FOR YOUR FUNERAL.

THEY FED YOU, CLOTHED YOU, PAID YOUR TUITION. THEY MUST HAVE POURED A GOOD TEN MILLION YEN INTO YOU SO FAR. AND NOW THEY GOT TO PAY AN UNDERTAKER ON TOP OF THAT?

AND WHAT ABOUT YOUR PARENTS? THEY'VE JUST TURNED THEIR LIVES AROUND FOR YOU, AND YOU'RE GOING TO THANK THEM LIKE THIS?

What's this?

Class for you! Getting ready to jump.

No way!



AND THIS IS HOW YOU HAVE DECIDED TO CLEAR THINGS UP?

AND THEN, OF COURSE, THEY HAVE TO LIVE WITH NO DAUGHTER.

Appendix 4 (Volume 21, Lesson 169)



