

**A TEACHING ADVENTURE UNDER AFFECTIVE MEDITATIONS IN TEACHING-
LEARNING: A STUDY ABOUT THE JAPANESE COMIC (MANGA)
ASSASSINATION CLASSROOM**

***UMA AVENTURA DOCENTE SOB MEDITAÇÕES AFETIVAS NO ENSINO-
APRENDIZAGEM: UM ESTUDO DO MANGÁ ASSASSINATION CLASSROOM***

***UNA AVENTURA DOCENTE CON MEDITACIONES AFECTIVAS EN LA
ENSEÑANZA-APRENDIZAJE: UN ESTUDIO DEL CÓMIC JAPONÉS (MANGÁ)
ASSASSINATION CLASSROOM***

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ABSTRACT: This paper aims to think about two main points: exploring the reflective contributions to teacher education and observing the didactic possibilities for teaching through the Japanese comic (Manga) Assassination Classroom, by Yusei Matsui. Thus, the intent of this research is to conceive the Mangá as a bridge to imagination: either to discuss the human condition in the adventure of teaching - about its responsibilities and its limitations, or to understand the value that lies in nurturing and developing affective-knowledge relations with students, with the intention of welcoming and caring in order to better teach how to live and exist in society.

KEYWORDS: Education. Teaching. Affectivity. Manga.

RESUMO: *Este trabalho visa pensar dois pontos principais: explorar as contribuições reflexivas para a formação docente e observar as possibilidades didáticas para o ensino através do mangá Assassination Classroom, de Yusei Matsui. Dessa forma, o intento desta pesquisa é conceber o referente mangá enquanto ponte para imaginação: seja para debater sobre a condição humana na aventura docente, acerca de suas responsabilidades e de suas limitações, seja para entendermos o valor que reside em nutrir e desenvolver relações de saber-afetivo com os discentes, na intenção de acolher e cuidar para melhor ensinar a viver e existir em sociedade.*

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Educação. Docência. Afetividade. Mangá.

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RESUMEN: Este trabajo tiene como objetivo pensar dos puntos principales: explorar las contribuciones reflexivas a la formación docente y observar las posibilidades didácticas para la enseñanza a través del cómic japonés (mangá) *Assassination Classroom*, de Yusei Matsui. De esta manera, el objetivo de esta investigación es concebir el mangá como puente para la imaginación: ya sea para debatir sobre la condición humana en la aventura docente, acerca de sus responsabilidades y sus limitaciones, sea para entender el valor que reside en nutrir y desarrollar relaciones de saber-afectivo con los discentes, en la intención de acoger y cuidar para mejor enseñar a vivir y existir en sociedad.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Educación. Docencia. Afectividad. Mangá.

Introduction

The related research arises from the need to understand the value of comic books to, at the very least, make us think and question about numerous issues, depending on the work adopted and the approach used. Here, we will work with an oriental art that has been achieving success among children, young people and adults all over the world: Japanese comic books, or manga. How manga, which "means 'involuntary' (man) and 'drawing/image' (ga)" (BARBOSA, 2020, p. 105, our translation), is a support that contains a verb-visual language in its constitution, we will examine it in all its richness, through an investigation of its use throughout history and the possibilities of its applicability in education. To this end, authors such as Waldomiro Vergueiro and Sobia Bibe Luyten, pioneers in studies and research in comics in Brazil since the 1960s, will be asked to discuss both comics inside and outside the classroom, and to mobilize reflections related to the teaching profession.

Thus, we will try to understand not only the ability of manga to sew its literary art with the reality in which we live and to be a genuine source for the study of social, cultural and historical issues, but also to explore the presence and approach of the human condition in its plots. As an example, clippings from the work *Ansatsu Kyoushitsu*⁴ (or *Assassination Classroom*, in the West), by author Yusei Matsui, originally published between 2014 and 2018 by Shueisha, through the weekly manga magazine *Weekly Shonen Jump*, in total of 180 chapters will be analyzed. The research will be carried out in the digital field, via websites such as "Mangayabu" (responsible for translating the complete work in 2019), which translates and adapts several manga from Japanese into Portuguese, with the interest of disseminating Japanese culture.

Finally, this work aims to think about two main points: to explore the reflexive contributions to teacher education and to observe the didactic possibilities for teaching

⁴ In a free translation "Assassination Classroom".

through the *Assassination Classroom* manga. At first, we will briefly contextualize the use of manga throughout its history and the difficulties of its receptivity in the West as an intellectual and academic reading, in addition to addressing the differences and advantages of manga in relation to North Americans comic books. Then, as we discuss the use of manga in the classroom, we will use the dialogues, situations and disputes present in the work *Assassination Classroom* as the source of our study, analyzing the intertwined codes of both verbal and visual language contained in its format. Thus, the intent of this research is to conceive the manga referent as a bridge to imagination: either to debate about the human condition in the exercise of teaching, about its responsibilities and limitations, or to understand the value that resides in nurturing and developing relationships of affective knowledge with the students, with the intention of welcoming and caring in order to better teach how to live and exist in society.

The traces of a story: black and white narratives

Having the manga the power to create worlds and invite us to travel in them under full imagination, capable of swirling and shuffling feelings ranging from our biggest dreams and fantasies to our worst fears and frustrations, truly a weapon, nothing more cohesive than carrying its potential inside – and outside – the warm and bustling classrooms, presenting it both for educators and for students of the most varied levels of education. That said, it is necessary to contextualize its potential in a prose through which we can learn about its history and development, as well as explain about its thorny path to arrive and enter, even if timidly, in the school veins.

It all starts from the relationships that Japan builds with foreigners, through the movement of people, stories and goods. Already “in the beginning of the 20th century, Japan was absorbing Western culture intensely in all areas” (LUYTEN, 2000, p. 104, our translation). Therefore, in view of a cultural clash between different worlds, the hybridization process will generate appropriations, voluntary or not.

With this, currently, after inserting the “Japanese spirit” in these “alien influences” of comic books and better developing their format, making, in addition to being unique, the richest in composing plural languages on the same support, manga can come closer to its place in the sun in the country by conquering a “peculiar bond – in format, in publishing and, mainly, in content” (LUYTEN, 2000, p. 168, our translation). However, even though their evidence was more linked to purely economic issues, “before World War II, Japanese comics

had already established themselves in popular taste” (LUYTEN, 2000, p. 26, our translation), perhaps because it was “a means of relief of tension and stress, especially in the juvenile range” (LUYTEN, 2000, p. 15, our translation), after a few decades of World War II, “the Japanese invested in comic books as a way of preserving traditions and the idea of national unity” (BARBOSA, 2020, p. 108, our translation). What was needed now was to gain the attention of the rest of the world.

I mean, despite being considered today one of the largest industries in the modern Japanese world, capable of mobilizing millions of sales in weekly runs and being a relevant economic engine for its people, manga had to deal with an arduous and long path to reach a most prestigious level in society and in academic banks. And this was only possible through a wide advertisement of the manga abroad, even if in a different medium

Mainly through the anime, Japanese comics could be better known around the world, as “they were the great promoters of the manga line, before they were published outside Japan” (NAGADO, 2005, p. 52, our translation), serving “as agents of large-scale dissemination of manga to the West” (LUYTEN, 2005, p. 9, our translation). In other words, from the contact with the anime, the manga was present, as many times the stories serialized for TV’s do not produce their content until the end, making it necessary to search for the original source in order to read it completely. However, even after the manga conquered more territory, comic books, in general, were always considered as pure entertainment, without ethical, social and historical value.

Right away, “[...] comic books encountered many obstacles until they were properly appreciated by intellectuals” who, in general, “saw comics as 'child's thing', totally superfluous, products made for quick reading and destined to oblivion” (VERGUEIRO, 2005, p. 16, our translation). In addition, “[...] the Japanese comic, due to language barriers or lack of knowledge on the subject, is not treated with great importance in the Western world, in the international context of comics” (LUYTEN, 2000, p. 13, our translation), unduly underestimated “in its real value as a universal means of communication, with effective didactic power, artistic improvement and historical record” (ROSA, 2005, p. 104). It was certainly not understood that “[...] the pursuit of pleasurable reading does not exclude the acquisition of knowledge, as it never fails to bring information to the reader” (OLIVEIRA, 2010, p. 42, our translation).

Even when exposed as “a target of criticism by educators”, with arguments that “[...] they offer all kinds of bad influences, divert attention from studies and are harmful to the child's education” (LUYTEN, 2000, p. 163, our translation), manga resists the world. Part of

this resistance was probably strengthened by its recent promotion to the status of literature by the Western intellectual milieu, since “both are predominantly narrative” (POSTEMA, 2018, p. 115). In view of its consumption also as a type of literature, manga begins to occupy new spaces and reach new audiences, as a literary text.

Despite mentioning the relationship between comics and literature, it is important to highlight that both languages have their own communicational singularity. Furthermore, mangas “are an autonomous artistic expression, as are literature, cinema, dance, painting, theater and many other forms of expression”, as well as a truly emancipated language (VERGUEIRO; RAMOS, 2020, p. 37, our translation). So, it is common, and even healthy, that we move and let ourselves be involved in the most diverse languages, as long as the richness and importance of each one is preserved. Therefore, “[...] it is not surprising, then, that there is a dialogue between literature and comics” (VERGUEIRO; RAMOS, 2020, p. 37, our translation), due to this relationship that “has been shown to be an efficient way for the creation of the most diverse narratives” and conveyed “ideas in different ways, revealing other ways of 'reading' and understanding the world around us” (OLIVEIRA, 2014, p. 38, our translation). That said, and to better distinguish it from literature, let's talk about the format that properly links the configurations of a comic book.

In addition, the very execution in the way of making Japanese comics has in its wake multiple artifices and techniques capable of transmitting sensibilities to any reader who is open to such an experience, due to the narrative construction that not only involves those who read but embraces what is most human in us. Not to mention that “[...] in comics, in addition to writing, the perception of meaning is complemented by the characters' facial expression, which helps to convey meaning” (LUYTEN, 2000, p. 174, our translation).

Consequently, through this conversation and interaction between visual and verbal, manga “[...] form together a meaning and an irony that are not present in any of them, separately”, being “[...] more accurate to think about comics more as a form that is mainly driven by the visual, in which the verbal often adds interest or depth” (POSTEMA, 2018, p. 116, our translation). Even so, “the vast majority of messages are”, however, “perceived by readers through the interaction between the two codes” (VERGUEIRO, 2020, p. 31, our translation), which does not mean a visual language simply added to a verbal one, but its own visual-verbal language, inseparable and independent in the same narrative structure. And the narratives, we cannot forget them, are also crucial in the process of this visual-verbal contact. Because, it is with them, through the link between image and text, “[...] that we make the inconstancy of human things intelligible to ourselves, it is through the narratives that we

situate ourselves in the world, situating the place of the other", that we give a chance to access "experiences that we would hardly have from other social discourses" (DALCCASTAGNÉ, 2014, p. 183, our translation).

At this point, it is possible to imagine a significant similarity between Western and Eastern comic book productions, given the apparent proximity of narrative structures and their format, in general. However, the differences are too marked, from the approach of the subjects to the construction of the concept and the journey on the figure of the hero.

Thus, it is not a question of defining which of the formats would be the best among the best, but of emphasizing the representations that each people produce about their history, their relationship with the world and the affections of themselves and others. Obviously, depending on the work you want to prepare, the format and place of origin are important choices to consider during the research. In this way, unlike the blocks "often castrating the politically correct North American heroes", we chose mangas "for dealing with universal themes such as friendship, loyalty, courage and love", precisely because they guide the human condition with more priority, being this the cause for finding "easy identification with people of any ethnicity" (NAGADO, 2005, p. 53, our translation).

In this case, when it comes to the human condition, we have "an internal need for heroes", as they are responsible for populating "[...] a privileged sector of our imagination, governed by fantasy" (LUYTEN, 2000, p. 69, our translation). This mastery is due to numerous factors: the historical formation of each territory, whether or not it was colonized (and if so, by whom, when and for how long), the development of language and writing, spirituality, behavior and of the ways of seeing and relating to the land you step on. In considering these factors, we will always find a unique way of representing and appropriating the world and things. It would therefore be no different with comics.

We understand that the characters present in Japanese comics are "conceived from the real world, in which people can find", to some extent, "the ingredients to live out their fantasies" (LUYTEN, 2000, p. 40, our translation). Considered "a possibility of escape through fantasy", manga is not simply an escape in itself, but an opening for the reader to find the paths of their strictly personal escape, treating it as "a well-behaved medium of channeling, outflowing their emotions" (LUYTEN, 2000, p. 223, our translation). In kids, evasion and fantasy "can enrich the reader, reconcile him with the absurdity of the human condition" and, significantly, "raise his hope, broaden his language and his conscience" (BOSI, 1981, p. 177, our translation).

Furthermore, having clarified part of the history and development of the manga industry in Japan and around the world, as well as some of its reception in Japanese and foreign society, we will turn our efforts to reconcile these and other learnings with those of the selected source, *Assassination Classroom*, with the intention of producing a research that highlights the mysterious and enchanted force that the manga holds to deal with love, fantasy and, of course, education.

A tough teacher to kill: teaching to feel, learning to live

As is to be expected, before we enter the work *Assassination Classroom*, it is necessary to introduce the reader to the story, even if briefly. Next, we will select manga pages to analyze our proposal, stripping its concepts, gathering reflections, exploring its language.

It all starts when a monster, a smiling octopus with several tentacles and a completely yellowish appearance, appears at the renowned Kunigigaoka School and demands to be the teacher of Class 3-E (last year of elementary school). Responsible for destroying 70% of the moon, it threatens to extinguish the entire earth within a year. The condition of peace that makes government leaders is only one: to be a teacher. Without choices and subjected to this whim, given the speed of the monster that goes beyond human understanding and technology, after several lost battles, the world government allows such madness, since those students could do what armies from around the world could not: that is, assassinate him. Considered a state secret, not even the family, friends and the school itself could be aware of this situation, being only known to the government and to Class 3-E. Weapons with special ammunition are provided exclusively for the murder of the professor, their firepower being harmless to humans and lethal against Koro. Promptly, Koro-sensei assents to the terms and becomes the target of daily murders in the classroom by his students.

Figure 1 – In the background, Teacher Koro; in front, the students tidying the room ⁵

⁵ The oriental reading of manga is always done from top to bottom, from right to left.



Source: Matsui (2019a, p. 8)

That said, it is evidently necessary to be careful to understand the metaphors and other figures of speech present throughout the work, considering that it is a fiction that mirrors real issues. Like any other fantasy story, “just a few pages are enough for the reader to activate their 'disbelief suspension pact'” and immerse themselves “in the dramatic and adult universe of the narrative” (DALCCASTAGNÉ, 2014, p. 178, our translation). By activating this mode, we will be authorizing ourselves to learn “a knowledge about the world” through fantasy and fiction, “offering the reader ways to interpret it” (OLIVEIRA, 2010, p. 41, our translation).

In this sense, we will continue to contextualize what is necessary so as not to lose the understanding of the work while reading this article, both about Koro-sensei's trajectory and about the difficulties present in his classroom, to build bridges during his journey, about the bridges from fiction to reality.

Resignification of a value: the 3-E3 class

When starting his teaching life, Koro-sensei, the name of the teacher with the face of an octopus with several tentacles, gets the approval to teach in the way he had proposed. The reward for killing him, in addition to saving the Earth of course, is 10 billion yen (Japan's official currency) for the class. Thus, Class 3-E consequently ends up becoming an entirely class of assassins, now more motivated than ever to attend school. Obviously, at first, they find this request very strange and are scared to face such a challenge. However, in a short time, they get used to the idea due to the professor's excellent classes and his full willingness to let them all assassinate him. At the Kunugigaoka school, classroom 3-E is considered a class of troubled, failed, and incompetent students. A class that, in practical terms, does not even exist: isolated and “excluded to the end”.

The classroom is far from the main building, leaving them segregated as inferiors. With nothing to lose, as they are invisible to the institution, they accept the task assigned to them. Thus, the plot continues with numerous failed attempts to assassinate the teacher, even with the most elaborate and complex strategies and traps devised by the class. Not infrequently, they try to kill him even with suicidal methods. Koro's concern for the students is such that, when he realizes that they are at risk of life in an attempt to plan an attack against him, he promptly protects them so that they do not get hurt. In this way, he rejects dirty methods and cowardly actions that put the lives of his own classmates in danger, yearning for a class where they truly care for one another, even in murder. So why does this desire to assassinate Koro-sensei motivate them so much? For money? To become heroes who will protect the Earth? No, they want to save themselves by proving their efforts to achieve what was considered impossible. Once in a lifetime, even at the expense of their existence, their value would be legitimized by society. What they did not know: that teacher was going to change everyone's lives in the most unexpected way.

This gradual acceptance by Class 3-E of the professor is due to his exacerbated empathy, provoking speeches about the class's talent and potential to be good people, even with society pointing out the opposite. Even though apparently meaningless, this mission makes them let the best of themselves stand out, given that Koro not only taught content, but educated, above all, for life (ORTEGA; GASSET, 2010). That is, regarding the skills already exercised by each one – and without any recognition from the school: from baseball players to computer geniuses; talents in chemistry and excellent sculptors; natural swimmers and good movie directors; great gymnasts and fabulous gastrologists, so on. However, the school only sees that they are mere delinquents due to one or more negative episodes that labeled them the institution's “worst students”. What matters, in the end, is the grade. Their individuality is ignored, and even those who are still good at their studies are not accepted for failing to obtain top marks, given that the highest priority of this educational system is to preserve the school's own prestige. Thus, the social dimension of these children is totally discarded. Fortunately, from Koro-sensei's lessons, they discover the richness of valuing what they already knew, with what they learned about murder.

Figure 2 – On the right, class 3-E; Top left, Koro-sensei; on the lower left, two students talking

If we get the
skills
needed to
kill

But the skills
that we
developed...



Source: Matsui (2019b, p. 19)

The relationship that operates is to encourage our students to express their prior knowledge, common to their daily lives, making them evident. In this way, we will know how to combine what they need to know with what they already enjoy knowing.

That's why the concept of affective-knowing is an appropriate position, because as we discover the students' tastes, we intertwine knowledge with more sensitivity, with meaning for their lives, given that each student has their own objective. Further on, Class 3-E finally begins to understand that their learning in different disciplines is not just for academic purposes, but also as a fundamental power to help those in need, if they wish, through what they have learned.

Figure 3 – Right, student describes an example; lower right, student's mother



Source: Matsui (2019c, p. 09)

Soon, they realize that learning to murder the teacher offers them learning not only about content, but about what they want for their future. This makes them think considerably about what to do with what is learned, regardless of the lesson, a process that is possible when “the students are invited to critically recognize and unveil reality” (FREIRE, 1979, p. 125, our translation).

Hence, as they need to kill Koro-sensei, they begin from their personal abilities to do that, making them more confident in what they like and want to do later. So, even in view of his own death, Koro-Sensei is available to help them improve their skills after class, always considering the lessons in which assassination can contribute to themselves: an overcoming.

An example of this learning is when Koro-sensei decides to improve the skills of a student who is passionate about Chemistry, teaching her to elaborate a super poison capable of killing him. However, this student believes that the world of numbers and chemical processes are the only ones that truly matter, while the ability to express emotions and understand the other would be unnecessary. Thus, the student admits to being terrible in Literature. Then, when she manages to produce the powerful poison, she simply offers it and, promptly, Professor Koro tastes it – almost dying – congratulating her advance. However, he lies about the harmfulness and effect of the poison against him. And, unexpectedly, he teaches:

Figure 4 – Right, Koro-sensei; Left, student. Below, Koro-sensei



Source: Matsui (2019d, p. 16-17)

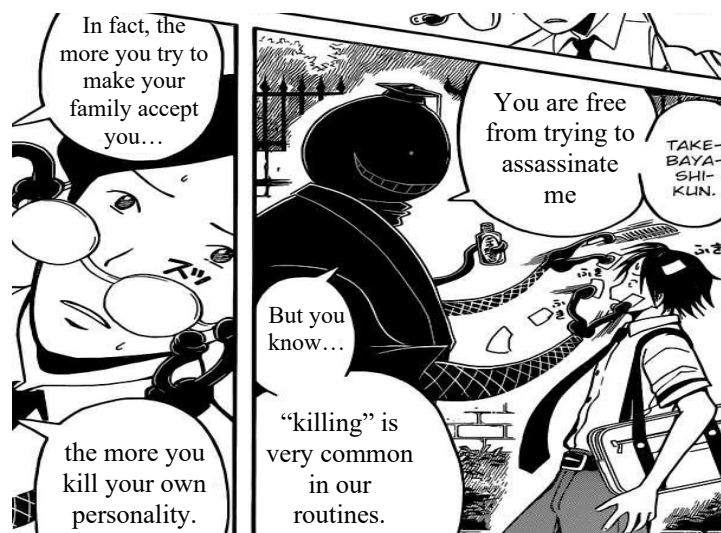
That is, the teacher pays attention to “teaching the need for a science and not teaching a science whose need is impossible to make the student feel” (ORTEGA Y GASSET, 2010, p. 70), expanding the student's knowledge in the area in which she already felt good, using her pleasure as a bridge to make her understand the importance of another area, which she had previously despised: literature. In this situation, what good would it do to make fatal poisons without knowing the possibilities of persuasion and manipulation also incited by the use of language? That is, without literature, with its fictions that talk about realities in a different language, with “the power to know the real through the imagination” (OLIVEIRA, 2010, p. 49, our translation), we are left without the support to express what we feel. Therefore, “studying is not enough”, but to make one “authentically feel its need, that the issues to be studied concern me spontaneously and truly” (ORTEGA Y GASSET, 2010, p. 70, our translation), broadening the perspectives of knowledge that already we nurture with passion.

Based on this reasoning, it is understood that “killing” is the vital metaphor for the learning of any teacher and student: a life-death-life cycle, changing a thought, displacing a previously absolute knowledge, considering an angle never imagined. It is the leap from the abyss of what is unusual, unknown, distant. Proof of this is that we often need to eliminate behaviors, habits and even ideas, so that we can recreate them from a different view and perspective of the world, with death being the transition point for the novelty of different versions from ourselves, the courage to “go the distance necessary to reach the other” (ESTÉS, 1999, p. 106, our translation). In fact, we need this to be common in our lives: it is

when we are on the move that change occurs (to us). To grow and “for human beings to live”, it is vital “to face what is most feared”, perhaps the very death of oneself (ESTÉS, 1999, p. 98, our translation). That is why assassination and education have a lot of connection in the *Assassination Classroom* story, since there is a connection between them. So, murder is about learning how to build a path to achieve what you want, a goal or a dream.

Thus, what Professor Koro longs for his students is an assassination, nothing less, of their own frustrations, fears and failures, elements responsible for chaining their most singular dreams and desires in the deepest core of your hearts. He therefore desires them to surpass themselves.

Figure 5 – On the right, Koro-sensei warns his student; on the left, a student



Source: Matsui (2019e, p. 8)

Here, overcoming means not a process of exclusion, but of integration. In other words, for us to overcome something, it is necessary that we assimilate it into our lives, whether it is fear, frustration. By overcoming Professor Koro, they are affirming a learning experience that assumes teamwork, that is, of needing each other, since no one lives, builds or achieves anything alone. This truth is even understood by teaching itself, that “it is deeply a profession in the field of human relations”, therefore, it needs the other to flourish (PEREIRA, *et al.*, 2020, p. 93). And this is a fact for us, educators, since we also need students to better form us as teachers, but above all as humans. From these words, we will get to know better the teaching impregnated by the character Koro-sensei.

Teaching under the target of affections: a donation

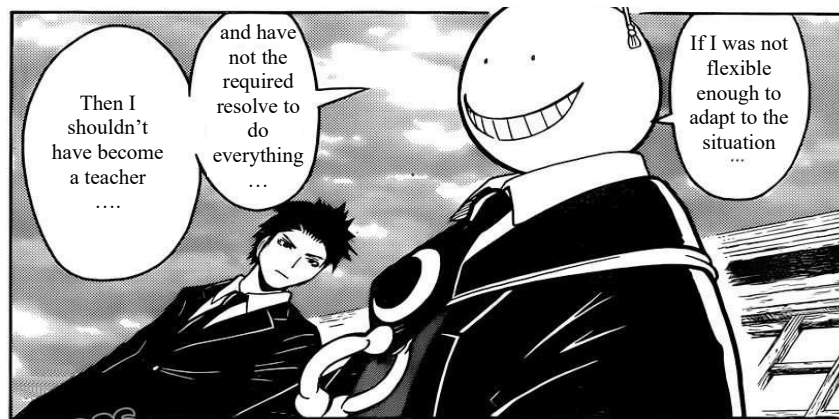
In order to know the teaching in which the murder teacher is later immersed, it is necessary to know an important part of his past. First of all, Koro-sensei was a human. Known as “the god of death”, he was considered the greatest murderer in all of history. When finally captured, he is exposed to a secret experiment by a group of scientists that unexpectedly fails, turning him into the monster we know. In this scenario, after the laboratory explosion, he notices the deathbed of a friend who has been injured by the rubble and listens attentively to her last request: to use his incredible power not to continue his old work, but to devote himself entirely to education. Respecting the bond they built during the experiment, he accepts the request and goes on the trail of teaching.

In other words, the example of Koro-sensei's character serves to make us think that neither the environment in which we were born nor what we do with the opportunities that are given to us in the heat of our moments, define our character and our history. “There is no activity more intimate than the work of assigning meaning”, and that is why we decide what to do with what affects us (CYRULNIK, 2006, p. 13, our translation), since “we would not even be able to find out who we are” if “our existence was peaceful” (CYRULNIK, 2013, p. 23, our translation). Comfort, then, does not mobilize anyone to new consciousness. After all, what we do with what is imposed on us by force is the difference for a transformation.

What society forces us to do due to the circumstances of the environment in which we grew up, may, yes, distort our way of seeing things and people, but it will never define our character. For that, there are opportunities and chances that not everyone is alive long enough to find. One of them is when we find ourselves in a difficult, confused situation, surrounded by "a jungle, closed, tangled, tenebrous, in which we cannot walk, under penalty of getting lost", and "someone appears who explains the situation to us with a happy idea" (ORTEGA Y GASSET, 2010, p. 56, our translation); when someone enters our lives, messing up our dreams, organizing our pains, questioning our beliefs: a teacher who believes in those he teaches, making every effort to rescue the private dreams of each one.

This donation, and why not also call it sacrifice, that the teacher undertakes for his classes, has nothing to do with romanticizing the profession, but suggesting that there is sensitivity in it, instigating "courage and curiosity, love and hate, intellectual agility, the desire to be happy and win, confidence in oneself and in the world, the imagination" of students (ORTEGA Y GASSET, 2010, p. 27, our translation).

Figure 6 – Koro-sensei, on the right, talking to the substitute teacher, Karasuma, on the left



Source: Matsui (2019f, p. 12)

In short, this gives us a look to realize the sacrifice that exists in our teaching profession: how much do we have to abdicate to save our students? That is, if just once, when we had the time to help a student in a small challenge/problem, would not we be demonstrating how important they are to us? Is it any use forcing them to learn content that has nothing to do with their lives? By maintaining and operating the maintenance of an affectionate relationship with them, would not we be taking the first step to know what they really need to learn? How do you know what matters to be taught or not taught if we do not care about what they want to learn? If the child is not being “involved in an atmosphere of daring and magnanimous, ambitious and stimulating feelings” (ORTEGA Y GASSET, 2010, p. 27, our translation), we will not reach any conclusions. To understand so many questions and teaching itself, it is first necessary to understand this other that makes it possible for us to constantly (re)construct, bring it closer and listen to it, since “the progressive mastery of work leads to an opening in relation to the construction of their own learning, of their own experiences” (TARDIF; RAYMOND, 2000, p. 231, our translation).

Now, how can we learn to relearn if we are not able to recognize our own setbacks and defeats, even small mistakes? In the teaching adventure, it is an indispensable requirement to be seriously considered, without needing any super speed or incredible powers, but only the courage to respect our own inconclusiveness as educators and, above all, as humans. Fortunately, “over time, teachers learn to know and accept their own limits”, making them increasingly “more flexible” (TARDIF; RAYMOND, 2000, p. 231). Therefore, sensitive contacts, whether in relationships or in the materials worked, it becomes essential to perceive the weakness of things. In this sense, nothing better than getting lost in the arts: by leaning, for example, on the charms of a literary text such as manga, "there is the possibility of recovering for us, in us, the beauty that we have and do not know, or we only intuit, and what

we have lost”, as well as “a very concrete possibility of seeing and feeling reality in an unusual way” (OLIVEIRA, 2010, p. 46, our translation).

And this aspect clearly resides in our teacher Koro: being flawed. Yes, although super speedy and versatile in many superhuman ways, it still manages to be flawed in certain situations. And this is not the main point: it is to admit the error and learn from it, either from the observation of the students or by turning his gaze inward.

That is, whether because we have learned this defensive posture of denying mistakes and failures from our own university professors; be it because we assume that by admitting our stumbling blocks in front of students we are “downgrading from a professional level”, becoming a mediocre teacher; in other words, “losing their respect”, clearly presupposing a historical relationship of knowledge hierarchy, in which we always know everything just because we are teachers, it is at least coherent to point out: we have difficulties in sharing our gaps. However, as a teacher, Koro teaches us not to fear this inevitable reality: he brings his mistakes to light in front of the whole class, as often as necessary, because before anything else he suffers from a condition that is none other than human.

In other words, how will we practice the idea of being immersed in an incompleteness that is constitutive, if we do not overcome – or here, murder – what blocks the dance of our steps? We need to interpret and understand the other that constitutes us, and for that, we have to read the place where we are located, read the world before anything else (FREIRE, 1988, p. 9). In other words, to walk, we need freedom and experience in this dance, so that we can move, step by step. This is only possible through the attitude of learning from the mistakes of our profession and, based on them, transforming our behaviors and methods, sensitizing ourselves to a teaching watered by affection. To cultivate the very need and beauty that lies in constantly changing and rethinking their teaching practice, teachers need to destroy several images of themselves along their arduous journey, not only to find a supposed identity in their profession, but to not allow to oneself a disastrous immobile condition: that of comfort. The exit? Continue (re)learning.

In teacher education, this task should not be so uncommon. A teacher who does not do everything in his power to change his posture and, therefore, touch the hearts of his students when it comes to listening carefully to them, has a huge professional and affective hole in his career. Without listening to their voices, we are unable to help them.

Hence the need to kill the ideas and beliefs that imprison new openings of ourselves to the world and to the other, having, in this death, the possibility of growing a life, at least, different. We understand that through the term “assassination”, used in the work, we can

adapt the idea of “overcoming” oneself and the other, that is, from the old story of the apprentice who surpasses his dear teacher, considering neither the knowledge nor the master, but the student himself as a priority (ORTEGA Y GASSET, 2010, p. 31).

I mean, in teaching, we want our students to be able to go beyond what we propose and present, hence our constant insistence that they participate in debates and dialogues. A teacher, like Koro-sensei, needs to open up to the possibilities of being reached, allowing the touch of relationships during the process. Getting to know his student, welcoming him in a pedagogical embrace capable of building affection, in order to finally be able to teach him, "what is required to live up to his time, and what he can learn with ease and fullness" (ORTEGA Y GASSET, 2010, p. 31, our translation), is fundamental for a genuinely human formation in teaching.

By always being open to the unknown and the unheard of, or by bullets in the case of Koro-sensei, the teacher becomes able to understand that he also learns about his profession every day, observing "the ethical and moral values of the human being" that result in “formation throughout existence”, responsible for contributing to “the ability to read the world and reflect on it” (OLIVEIRA, 2010, p. 52, our translation), in a lifelong dance full of incomplete, yet constitutive, movements for our edification as a teacher. Only then will we be able, like Teacher Koro, to guide our students about the importance of what they already know and will learn for a living, about "relation oneself with the world, addressing it, acting in it, taking care of it" (ORTEGA Y GASSET, 2010, p. 54, our translation). That is, in educating them for life.

Considerations at the brink of death

Furthermore, suspending the beliefs of reality to better capture and adhere to the ideas of a fiction, we perceive the capacity of this manga to address two fundamental points in the life of a teacher: their continuous formation and their constant self-donation in the teaching-learning process. Even though it seems unreasonable to draw a comparison of a teacher like Koro to our reality, we know that, when it comes to love for teaching and the desire to change the world from a classroom, there are already teachers like that. What we need to worry about is multiplying this rare kind of professional, who hears the sound of affective knowledge pulsating between what he teaches and for those who teach, a harmonious donation, perhaps through the comics that "there they are, ready to be discovered and used" (VERGUEIRO; RAMOS, 2020, p. 41, our translation).

By the way, it is not pretension to see this work, as well as any other that is analyzed in this tone, as a point of arrival for absolutely nothing. And rather as a starting point that expands its possibilities, similar to a bridge, connecting one type knowledge to many others, being up to “the teacher to choose the story that best fits his pedagogical proposal” (BARBOSA, 2020, p. 125). In this sense, using this work to think about teaching, teacher education and the teacher-student relationship is an artistic and literary way of thinking about the beauty of the process of closing certainties and starting changes in oneself and the other. And what we do with that is for another story.

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