“Illustrated book “Ehon hanakazura” (1765): pictures, poems, proverbs”

(Slide 1)

I'd like to talk to you today about the illustrated book published in 1765 in Edo with woodblock technique. I shall only take 20 minutes of your time and try to be brief.

I titled my presentaiton: “Illustrated book “Ehon hanakazura” (1765): pictures, poems, proverbs”, because I’d like to develop three main points of this book. First, pictures of a famous artist, which make this book incredibly beautiful and well popular. Second, poems of “Thirty-six Immortals of Poetry”, wich make this book interesting and popular. Lastly, proverbs (or comments, which includes proverbs), wich make this book useful.

Let me start with an explanation, that I represent the results of work of a group of people. There is a seminar organized by Maria Toropygina, my supervisor, which is held in Institute of Oriental Studies. There were 5-6 of us, who are familiar with classical Japanese and also 2 persons, who are practicing calligraphy. Maria Toropygina chose this text for us to read and once per week during last academic year we gathered to read and translate this book into Russian.

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As usual, a hard part of such texts was to clarify a cursive script: text is written in cursive style, in XIIIth century there still were several characters for the same letters and no punctuation symbols.

(Slide 2)

Now let me turn to the text we researched. The original book “Ehon hanakazura” is kept in the British Museum. You can easily find this book on-line on the web-side. A copy of the book was published in “Fūzoku zuesyū” in 1929 (『風俗圖繪集』 (1929) 日本名著全集刊行会).

The book (22 cm height and 15 cm width) consists of 58 paper pages printed in woodblock technique.

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To say shortly, “Ehon hanakazura” is an anthology of the “Thirty-six Immortals of Poetry”, with commentaries by Naniwa Tokusōshi. Suzuki Harunobu (1725?-1779), one of the most famous artist in the Ukiyo-e style, created 36 pictures accompanying each poem and the portrait of the anthology complier Fujiwara no Kintō (966-1041) as you can see now on this slide.

(Slide 3)

Let me now move on to the author Naniwa Tokusoshi. He wrote the preface, in which he says about deeper meaning of Japanese poems *waka* and his intention to explain “the right way” to children. For this purpose he asked Suzuki Harunobu to draw pictures.

Let’s move on now and look at the example of such trio of a picture, a poem and a proverb.

Picture (Slide 6)

I am to say, that the most popular with creators of that book is, of couse, Suzuki Harunobu, as you know he was a [Japanese](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Japan) [woodblock print](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Woodblock_print) artist, one of the most famous in the [Ukiyo-e](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ukiyo-e) style. He was an innovator, the first to produce full-color prints ([*nishiki-e*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nishiki-e)) in 1765, rendering obsolete the former modes of two- and three-color prints. His pitures in this book are black-and-white, what doesn't make his painting worse. In this book Suzuki painted landscapes, animals people of different estates: aristorcats, ladies, searving in court, monks, peasants, travelers etc.,. I am not an art-researcher, so I can't say critically about these pictures. But I really do like them, espesially situations described on it.

Poem (Slide 7)

The upper part of the slide is a poem. Here is a poem written by a monk Henjo.

### Хэндзё

### たらちねは

### かかれとてしも

### うばたまの

### わがくろかみを

### なでずやありけむ

### My mother,

### Could you even expect?

### When you patted

### My deep-black hair

### Used to be like mulberry.

### As you can see the poem is written in more difficult style to read. On the other hand, the poems of 36 immortal poets were widly known. And what is more valuable for us, today could be easily found in Internet. That helped us to recognise first symbols written in cursive style and to start creating the table I showed you earlier.

Proverb (Slide 8)

Когда не можешь больше терпеть, наступает то, что есть терпение. Если только потерпеть, то когда-нибудь и невестка станет свекровью. В мире все меняется день за днем, поэтому сейчас нужно выполнять свои обязанности. В мире говорят: давайте терпеть! Подобно этому говорят: если сидеть на камне три года, то он согреется.

Naniwa Tokusōshi himself, as he mentioned in the preface, wrote “proverbs” (諺) by the side. These “proverbs” consist usually of three, rarely just two lines and contain some didactical commentaries usually ending with a proverb.

I like this part most of all. Because first you see a picture, then a poem, which might be familiar, and finally a new unknown text, which is supposed to teach you something. Let me give you as an example the proverb part from the same pages.

「Bearing the unbearible is the very thing called patience. You’d better be patient, because even a bride one day becomes a mother-in-law. Day by day everything is changing in that world, that’s why right now you must do your work. People say: “Let’s be patient!” For instance: if you are sitting on a stone for 3 years, it will become warmer.」

Before I finish, let me just say, that one of the interesting tasks was to find connections between a poem, a picture and a proverb combined together. It is to say, that most of them are slightly connected, and involve a reader to create some context or find associations. Very likely, the book was popular not only among children, but a large number of Edo citizens.