

# Private Rhenish Collection

## Chinese Gusu Woodblock Prints from the Early Qing Dynasty

Printing with wooden models has a long tradition in China, which already began in the 4th century with fabric patterns. In the Tang Dynasty (617-907), Buddhist texts were printed in this technique. The medium flourished in the Qing Dynasty with the opening of ports on the eastern and southern coasts in the Kangxi to Qianlong period (late 17th to mid-18th century) for foreign trade with Europe. The extensive collection here provides an impressive insight into Chinese traditions and ideas with rare leaves that are almost unknown to this day and not mentioned in the literature. These color woodblock prints from the region of Gusu (today Suzhou), especially from the Lü family, illustrated novels, plays, legends and genre scenes (cat. No. 2047-2050 and 2052-2054). Cat. No. 2047 includes an unusual sheet: It shows in 20 rectangular cartouches, almost reminiscent of modern comics, scenes with examples of honest and dishonest Confucian behavior. In addition, the sheet with fifteen tribute-giving states from the real world but also from legends is extremely rare and represents a rarity. Also noteworthy is a group of wrapping papers for various types of tea (cat. No. 2055), among them probably also tea for imperial use. Last but not least a small group of colored woodcuts for the Chinese New Year (cat. No. 2051).

清代早期姑蘇版畫  
—德國萊茵地區私人收藏

隨著17世紀晚期至18世紀中葉康乾兩帝開放東南口岸通商，江南蘇杭一帶的木刻版畫“姑蘇版畫”流傳至歐洲，開始了它發展史上的黃金時期，題材以戲出故事、仕女童子、勝景圖、吉慶祥瑞等為主。這裡的版畫收藏匯集了近二十張珍貴的姑蘇版畫（2047至2054號），多為姑蘇呂氏家族兩代匠人出品，其中一些作品可與知名博物館藏品媲美，如2047號反映儒家入世哲學的連環畫式版畫以及諸侯國進貢圖。值得注意的是2055號的一系列茶葉包裝紙，其中也許不乏御茶用紙，對中國茶文化的研究將是有益的補充。頗具傳統特色的大幅年畫與手繪門神像（2051號）亦是本收藏的珍品之一。