Welcome to NUS Museum!

1. The development of woodblock print mirrored China’s Modern Woodcut Movement, with Lu Xun being its chief promoter from 1929 till his death in 1936. Works of German expressionist artist Käthe Kollwitz and the Belgian artist Frans Masereel, were often introduced by the late writer and scholar Lu Xun. Although initially trained as a doctor, he came to believe that the plight of the masses could be improved only through the wide spread dissemination of socially aware art and literature. Artists who were influenced by Lu Xun focused on the inequities suffered by the lower classes.

a. Does the woodblock medium enhance the emotional impact of the image?

b. If so, how?

c. How do you decide whether the artist is a “reliable narrator”?
2a. What do you think is the practice being criticised in this woodblock print?

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b. Does the practice still exist today and what are the implications toward our society?

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c. What are the sources of help where Singaporeans can get from?

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3. A campaign to raise funds for the creation of a university for Chinese education met with overwhelming response from people of all walks of life to build the campus. From the print below, what social inference can you draw from the representation of human activities?

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4. The gentleman seated at the center of the table is a prognosticator by trade. Who do you think his clients might be, and what types of questions would he be consulted for?
5. The portrayal of the scenes and events of woodblock prints highlighted the plight of the people in the lower strata of society and with some, serving ideological messages. In the 1954 print below, what do you think is happening? What symbolic significance does the seedling have?

*All images are available in the Prints prep-room at NUS Museum from 8 Feb – 30 June 2012.

*We hope that you have enjoyed yourself. Thank you for visiting our Museum!