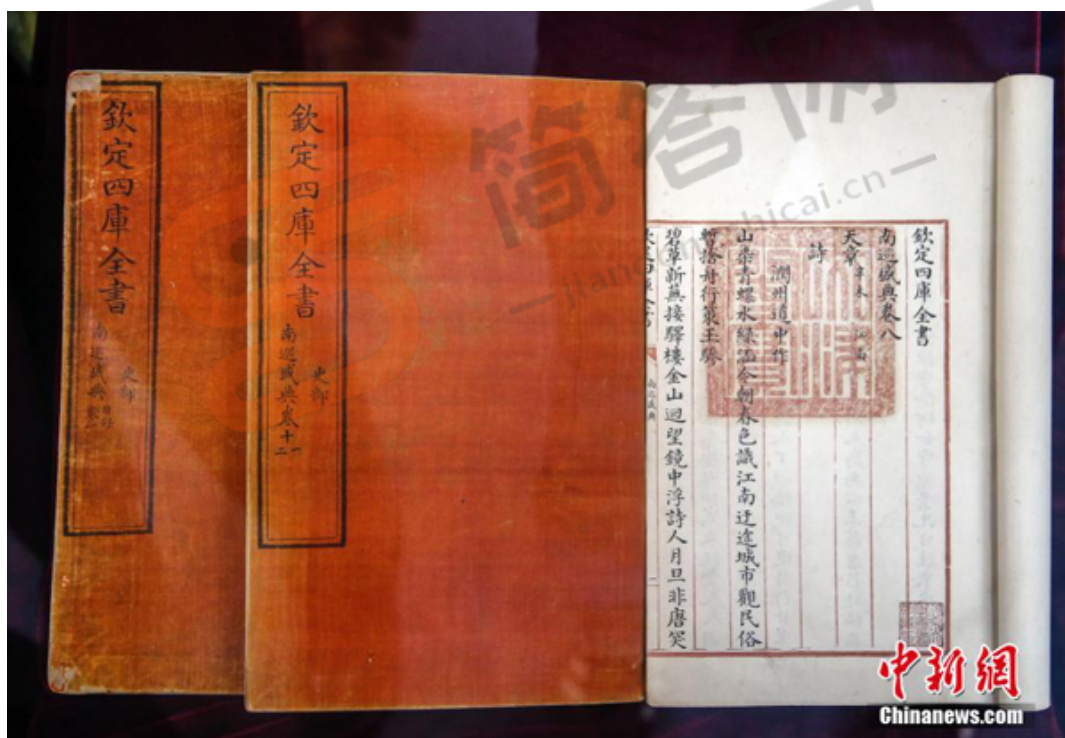


《CCTV9英语新闻：28000本古书回归中国》

CCTV9英语新闻：28000本古书回归中国

A huge volume of ancient Chinese books, formally owned by a Japanese business group, has been brought back to China. And Peking University, which bought the books, is hosting an exhibition of them. The return of the 28,000 books is the biggest buying project involving overseas Chinese relics in history.

The Chinese books were bought by Peking University from Japan's Okura Museum of Art at the end of last year. They are in good condition and cover themes of Chinese philosophy, history, and literature - a treasure trove for both the university and scholars.



The ancient Chinese books were collected by the royal court after emperor Qian Long commissioned to compile "Siku Quanshu", or the "Complete Library of the Four Treasures".

"Here we have books collected by the royal court, soon after emperor Qian Long commissioned to compile 'Siku Quanshu, or the 'Complete Library of the Four Treasures'. They were all stamped by the seals of the Imperial Academy, so they are very rare. There are only about 1,000 such sets in existence in the world. And here we have 20 sets," said Luo Lin, researcher at National Science Library of the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

The addition raises Peking University to third place among all Chinese libraries that own "Siku Quanshu" books.

The collection includes books dating back to the Song, Yuan, Ming, and Qing dynasties, and varies in terms of copying and printing. In the Ming dynasty, bronze characters were used for movable-type printing, rare examples of which are luckily found in this collection.

"Books printed with bronze characters are rarely seen. Just getting a single such book is a real bonus, but here we have 11 sets, or 18 such books, which are collections of poetry," said Zhu Qiang, director of Peking University Library.

With half of the money coming from the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Finance, Peking University bought the collection for more than 100 million RMB. The university is now working to protect the books, in order that the resources can be shared by the whole society.

"Going digital is a solution. We'll digitalize the books and then print them to benefit more scholars and readers," Zhu said.

After the public exhibition, access to these rare books will be by appointment only.

