

《清明将至曲阜举办仪式纪念圣人孔子》

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The upcoming Qingming festival is when Chinese people pay tribute to their ancestors. For some people in Qufu in Shandong Province, it ' s also a must to pay tribute to Confucius, who was born there some 2,500 years ago. A ceremony was held in honour of the Chinese philosopher on Wednesday.



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Accompanied by ancient music, some 500 people walked in a procession to the Confucius Temple. The temple was first built in 478 BC, a year after Confucius died, for the purpose of celebrating him and this traditional ceremony began the the same year.

Today, worshippers present baskets of flowers, bow and listen to words about the achievements of Confucius.

The ceremony is held twice a year and attracts not only residents of the town, but also visitors from around the world. It's cultural significance was recognised in 2006 when the ceremony became a national intangible cultural

heritage.



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"This is the first time I've come to the ceremony. It's very grand! I'm amazed actually. Right here, I've felt the profoundness of Confucian philosophy," said Wang Qi, deputy director of training center, China Education Assoc.



"As the most well-known philosopher in Chinese history, Confucius' thoughts are not only are a vital part of Chinese culture, but an important part of Asian and world culture. Today we talk about the Chinese Dream. I think rejuvenating traditional Chinese culture should be part of that," said Li Zijun, a teacher.



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And a group of students, wearing traditional costumes, attended another ceremony, also at the temple, just before they start elementary school. This ceremony includes bowing to their teacher, having their foreheads marked with a red spot and learning calligraphy.

The second ceremony of the year will be held in the autumn to mark the birthday of the ancient sage.

