

## Manifesto of Accession of the First Ming Emperor, 1372 C.E. (Sent to the Byzantine Emperor)

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"Since the Sung dynasty had lost the throne and Heaven had cut off their sacrifice, the Yuan [Mongol] dynasty had risen from the desert to enter and rule over Zhongguo [China] for more than a hundred years, when Heaven, wearied of their misgovernment and debauchery, thought also fit to turn their fate to ruin, and the affairs of Zhongguo were in a state of disorder for eighteen years. But when the nation began to arouse itself, We, as a simple peasant of Huai-yu, conceived the patriotic idea to save the people, and it pleased the Creator to grant that Our civil and military officers effected their passage across eastward to the left side of the River. We have then been engaged in war for fourteen years; We have, in the west, subdued the king of Han, Ch'en Yu-liang; We have, in the east, bound the king of Wu, Chang Shih-ch'eng; We have, in the south, subdued Min and Yueh [Fukien and Kuang-tung], and conquered Pa and Shu [Sze-chuan]; We have, in the north, established order in Yu and Yen [Chih-li]; We have established peace in the Empire, and restored the old boundaries of Zhongguo. We were selected by Our people to occupy the Imperial throne of Zhongguo under the dynastic title of 'the Great Ming,' commencing with Our reign styled Hung-wu, of which we now are in the fourth year. We have sent officers to all the foreign kingdoms with this Manifesto except to you, Fu-lin [Byzantium], who, being separated from us by the western sea, have not as yet received the announcement. We now send a native of your country, Nieh-ku-lun [Fra. Nicolaus de Bentra, Archbishop of Peking], to hand you this Manifesto. Although We are not equal in wisdom to our ancient rulers whose virtue was recognized all over the universe, We cannot but let the world know Our intention to maintain peace within the four seas. It is on this ground alone that We have issued this Manifesto."

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### Source

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