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[Review of] *The Annals of King T'aejo: Founder of
Korea's Choson Dynasty*

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The annals of King T'aejo: founder of Korea's Choson dynasty, tr. and annot. by Choi Byonghyon. Harvard, 2014. 1,028p bibl index ISBN 9780674281301 cloth, \$55.00

Byonghyon (Honam Univ., South Korea) helps fill one of the most unfortunate lacunae in the teaching and writing of East Asian history—the lack of primary source material about Korean history in English. This monumental tome is a translation of the first 15 of the 1,893 volumes of *The Annals of the Choson Dynasty*. These annals are a monthly and sometimes daily compilation of memorials, meetings, and major events of each Korean king in the Choson dynasty (1392-1910). King T'aejo is the posthumous name of Yi Song'gye, the founder of Choson Korea; the text under review covers his reign from 1392 to 1398. *The Annals of King T'aejo* is essential for Korean history but is equally helpful to non-Korean specialists for at least two reasons. First, it is a fascinating lens into the international relations of 14th-century northeast Asia. This includes relationships between Korea and Ming China, Japan, the Ryukyu kingdom, and the Mongols. Second, it provides historians with case studies of issues facing all pre-modern East Asian states, such as tension between a rising Neo-Confucian political statecraft and Buddhism, and problems with Japanese pirates. **Summing Up: ★★★★★** Essential. All academic levels/libraries.—*M. J. Wert, Marquette University*