inadequate alphabet in which a number of letters represented more than one sound, and in particular that the letters which represented plosives, *b*, *d*, etc. also represented fricatives, *v*, *ḏ*, etc. ; we know that so far as the consonantal sounds are concerned there was very little difference between the phonetic structure of early Turkish and the neighbouring Iranian languages, and we know that there is great confusion and inconsistency in the representation of the dental and palatal sibilants, *s* and *ş*, in the inscriptions. All this laboriously accumulated knowledge has gone clean over Dr. Tekin's head. In his preface he states that ' the basic assumptions which guided my re-evaluation of the old Turkic script were (1) any given sign with the exception of the vocalic and syllabic signs, represents only one and the same sound whenever it occurs ... '. By p. 23 this has become ' 20 are double " consonant characters " (syllabic characters) which designate syllables beginning with *a* or *ä* and ending in this characteristic consonant. They can also represent the consonants alone ', and on p. 30 ' The old Turkic system of writing is a mixture of syllabic and alphabetic systems of writing. ... Judging from this we can say that the old Turkic script was on the verge of becoming an alphabetic system of writing '.

All this is of course nonsense ; nearly all languages are rich in consonantal and vocalic sounds, and until the first true phonetic alphabets were invented in the nineteenth century, all alphabets were inadequate to represent them, even though some letters were used, singly or in combinations, to represent more than one sound. The inventor of the runic alphabet was fortunate in the fact that in the script with which he was most familiar, probably Sogdian, several consonants represented both plosives and fricatives, but unfortunate in the fact that nearly all short vowels were left to be supplied by the reader. He saw that this would not do for Turkish, and used vowel letters in the first syllable to represent both short and long vowels other than **a/e**, one for **é, ı, i**, one for **o, u**, and one for **ö, ü** ; but he saw no reason to do this later in the word. If he had to write, say, **ölürüp** (or more probably **ölöröp**), **süŋüş** or **bermiş**, he was quite happy to write **ö l r p**, **s ü ŋ ş**, or **b r m ş** and leave the reader to supply the other vowels.

The actual grammar is less open to objection. It does of course contain some mistakes ; for example, by disregarding the fact that no Turkish words begin with **m-** except loanwords and words in which **b-** has become **m-** by regressive assimilation to adjacent nasals (e.g. **men** from **ben** ' I '), it has added two ghost words to the vocabulary, **matı** ' loyal,

faithful(?) ', a mistranscription of **amtı** ' now ', and **maǧ** ' glory, honour(?) ' taken from a damaged passage of which the true reading seems to be **]küm aǧı**[.. . But its chief fault is its intolerable prolixity, which is reflected in the high price (£4 3*s*. 4*d*.). Dr. Tekin is obviously a skilled punched card sorter, but surely it was unnecessary to quote 119, 36, 8, 21, 41, and 8 words respectively to prove that **t** can occur initially, intervocalically, before medial consonants, after medial consonants, finally after vowels, and finally after certain consonants ? Imagination boggles at the number of illustrations which would have emerged if the raw material had been more than 20 pp. of text.

Finally, a word about the title. In English the language talked by Turks is, and always has been, called ' Turkish ', qualified, if necessary, by an adjective (early, eastern, Ottoman, Republican, etc.), just as we call our own language ' English ', and the languages spoken by Danes, Flemings, Poles, Spaniards, and Swedes ' Danish, Flemish, Polish, Spanish, and Swedish ' respectively. Scholars who accept such neologisms as ' Turkic ' will have only themselves to blame if they are confronted with a monograph on the differences between English, American, and United Nations ' Englic '.

<div align="right">GERARD CLAUSON</div>

YE. I. KYCHANOV: *Ocherk istorii tangutskogo gosudarstva.* (Akademiya Nauk SSSR. Institut Narodov Azii.) 355 pp. Moscow : Izdatel'stvo ' Nauka ', 1968. Rbls. 1.65.

M. V. SOFRONOV: *Grammatika tangutskogo yazyka.* (Akademiya Nauk SSSR. Institut Narodov Azii.) 2 vols. : 275 pp. ; 404 pp. Moscow : Izdatel'stvo ' Nauka ', 1968. Rbls. 3.13.

It is odd that a people speaking a Sino-Tibetan language, who called themselves, and were called by the Tibetans, *Mi-ñag*, and in the tenth century founded a kingdom called by the Chinese *Hsi Hsia* ' Western Hsia ', for no better reason than that it occupied territory which had supposedly been the homeland of the first, probably mythical, Chinese dynasty, Hsia, some 3,000 years earlier, should have become known to European scholars first as Hsi Hsia and more recently as Tangut. This name first appears as *Taŋut* in a Türkü inscription erected in the second quarter of the eighth century, when the Tangut were still a loose confederation of

primitive tribes. The most plausible explana-
tion of it is that put forward by Aoki Bunko
(see Kychanov, 21) that it was a geographical,
not an ethnical, name and represented the
Tibetan phrase *thaṅ rgod* ' wild steppe '. The
Türkü xaǧans were at this time in diplomatic
relations with the kings of Tibet, who used
to send delegations headed by ministers (*blon*)
to their royal funerals, and they may well
have adopted a Tibetan name for an area
inhabited by people akin to the Tibetans
which lay squarely between their two do-
minions and was not permanently controlled
by either. The theory, also mentioned by
Kychanov, that the name was *tang*, the first
half of the unexplained Chinese name for the
Tangut *tang-hsiang*, with the Mongolian
plural suffix *-ut*, should be flatly rejected. It
derives from Pelliot's unhappy conjecture,
since accepted as gospel by too many scholars,
that *t'u-küeh*, the Chinese representation of
Türkü should be transcribed *türküt* and
analysed as *Türk* with the Mongolian plural
suffix *-üt* ; there are several reasons why this
cannot possibly be so. There are extensive
references to the Tang-hsiang and the Hsi
Hsia kingdom in the Chinese histories, and
specimens of the peculiar Tangut script came
to the attention of European scholars in the
nineteenth century, but no real progress
could be made with its decipherment until
the fortunate discovery by Col. Kozlov in
1909 of an extensive but damaged monastic
library in a ruin at Kara Khoto in Inner
Mongolia, and its removal to St. Petersburg
(as it then was). Since then several Russian,
Chinese, and Japanese scholars have been
working away at this material and a good
many books and articles on various aspects
of Tangut language and history have appeared
in these languages. The pace has quickened a
good deal in recent years, and the publication
of the two books under review, by two young
Russian scholars who have been working in
close co-operation for some years, marks the
most important stage that has yet been
reached in Tangut studies.

For some years now Kychanov in Leningrad
has been devoting himself primarily to the
study of Tangut history in all its aspects,
basing himself on a sound knowledge of the
Chinese and Tangut languages and a compre-
hensive familiarity with the relevant literature
in these and other languages. It is hardly too
much to say that, if Barthold had had the
same interests and knowledge, this ' Outline
of the history of the Tangut kingdom ' is the
kind of book that he would have written ;
and there could be no higher praise than that.
Although modestly described as an ' outline ',
it deals comprehensively with the whole
political, economic, and cultural history and

the way of life of the Tangut people, with
copious references to the original authorities,
from their first shadowy appearance at about
the beginning of the Christian era to their
final disappearance (unless some of them still
survive as the Minyak tribe in the border
country between Tibet and China) in the late
Middle Ages. The last specimen of the script
is a side-note to a Chinese version of the
Tripiṭaka printed between A.D. 1573 and
1620 (Kychanov, 329). It is likely to remain
the standard book on the subject for a long
time to come. I am not competent to check
it with the original authorities, but it reads
entirely convincingly. I have found only one
error, and that a minor second-hand one. In
a discussion of the existence of slavery in the
Tangut kingdom (p. 106) he quotes a sentence
from the inscription of Bilge: Xaǧan (east
side, l. 24) as ' I routed the Tangut people
and captured their children, slaves (*yutuzi:n*),
livestock and property '. But *yutuz* means
' wives ' not ' slaves ' ; apart from its occur-
rence, alternating with the synonymous word
kisi:, in the same phrase elsewhere in Türkü
inscriptions, it occurs by itself elsewhere in
contexts which leave no doubt that it meant
a (legitimate) wife.

Meanwhile Sofronov in Moscow has been
devoting himself to a profound study of the
language, an unusually difficult subject.
Tangut is written, like Chinese, not in an
alphabetic script but in nearly 6,000 characters
(logograms). His first task was to arrange
these characters in a logical order so that
they could easily be found in a list. The start
was inevitably to analyse them into a number
of components which could be used in the
same way as the letters of an alphabet.
Several attempts at this have been made.
Nevsky's pioneering attempt produced a
system which led to the same character
sometimes appearing two or three times in
different places in his list. Kolokolov and
Kychanov in *Kitayskaya klassika v tangutskom
perevode*, Moscow, 1966, devised a system by
which the order was determined by the
bottom or right-hand component. In the
present book Sofronov has adopted a system
by which it is determined by the top or left-
hand component. Both have their advan-
tages, but the main disadvantage of any
system is that it is mechanical and arbitrary
and that a small distortion in a character
(and distortions are not unusual) can send
the seeker to the wrong place in the list. For
example in Sofronov's list of 5,819 characters
at the end of vol. II, the first components of
nos. 0163 to 0256 and 3301 to 3343 are barely
distinguishable from those of 5148 to 5188
and 3508 to 3550 respectively. A small slip
of the pen would make all the difference. In

the list of characters used to represent Chinese words in Kolokolov and Kychanov, op. cit., 125 ff., the characters representing *rong* and *yong* (two alternative pronunciations of the same Chinese character) are at first sight different and both look perfectly normal Tangut characters. But in fact apart from one stroke and a different placing of one sub-component they are identical. That for *rong* is Sofronov's 1785; that for *yong*, if it existed, would come between 2428 and 2429. When the Tangut dictionary finally comes to be written it will presumably be in Sofronov's order, but a good deal of careful cross-referencing will be necessary if the seeker is to be saved from many wild goose chases; better still, an index based, like Kolokolov and Kychanov's, on the bottom or right-hand component might be added as an appendix, so that a seeker would have a double chance of finding the character. There are very occasionally errors in Sofronov's list, for example 1348 should precede 1346, which is the same character with an additional component in the bottom right-hand corner, and 1347 should come before both of them. There are, oddly enough, two blank spaces in the list, 1349 and 3895. I think that the first missing character is made up of the two vertical lines and the whole of 0241, but cannot suggest what the other is. Once the characters had been reduced to a manageable order, three tasks emerged, to establish the pronunciation of as many characters as possible, to compile a grammar, and to compile a dictionary. The last is reserved for a future volume, the present work deals with the first two. Establishing the pronunciation of words in an unknown language written entirely in logograms is obviously an uphill task. As Sofronov points out, it must start from the available external evidence. The main part of this is the transcriptions of individual characters in Chinese characters or Tibetan script in a few books and documents. There are also in Tangut translations of Buddhist scriptures and Chinese classics some transcriptions in Tangut characters of Chinese words and Indian *dhāraṇīs* and names. By themselves these would not have taken us very far, but fortunately some Tangut scholars were enthusiastic lexicographers and phonologists, well acquainted with Chinese works on these subjects, which they used as their models, making appropriate adjustments to fit them to their own language. The Tangut collection contains a number of works on lexicography and phonology which provide material from which it is possible to group the characters in three ways, those which are completely homophonous, those which begin with the same initials and

those which end with the same 'rhyme', to adopt the terminology of Chinese, the total number of initials (36) and 'rhymes' (107) being known. Until recently it was supposed that all this material was homogeneous, but it now appears that in fact between A.D. 1036, when the script was invented, and the last quarter of the twelfth century, when most of the surviving transcriptions in Chinese characters or Tibetan script were made, the phonetic structure of the language was decaying in much the same way as that of Chinese (loss of initial consonantal clusters and plosive finals and the like) but much more rapidly. The phonological works, even those written fairly late in the period, seem to reflect the phonetic structure of the language as it was in A.D. 1036, with rather more initials and a great many more different 'rhymes', than could be deduced from the late transcriptions. By co-ordinating all this heterogeneous material Sofronov has succeeded in producing (I, 136 ff.) a provisional table of the pronunciation of the initials and rhymes in the last quarter of the twelfth century. The raw material is presented in a manageable form in II, 6–273, and on this basis a provisional pronunciation at this date is set against nearly all the characters in his comprehensive list. For a few characters no evidence is available since all the Tangut works on phonology are more or less incomplete.

This is a considerable feat, but it is only a beginning if Tangut is to be placed in its rightful position in the Sino-Tibetan language group. The next stage is to see what can be got out of the Tangut transcriptions of Chinese and Indian words, which probably come from fairly early in the period. There are obvious difficulties about this since the exact pronunciation of northern Chinese and the phonetic value of some Tibetan letters at this period is uncertain. Moreover it is likely that the Indian *dhāraṇīs* and names were transcribed not from the original Sanskrit but from intermediate translations in Tibetan or Chinese. A preliminary test is not wholly encouraging. There is in Kolokolov and Kychanov, op. cit., 125 ff., a list of Tangut transcriptions of Chinese words in translations of the classics. Eight of these characters end in rhyme 58, reconstructed by Sofronov (I, 137) as *-ịon*. The pronunciation of these words in 'Middle Chinese' (Pulleyblank) in four cases ended in *-ịang*, in three in *-ịung*, and in one in *-ịong*. These suggest that the final consonant of this rhyme was originally *-ng*, but the vocalization is chaotic. Nor are these transcriptions likely to help with the final plosives, which had probably disappeared from northern Chinese by this time. The only scrap of evidence on this subject (Sofronov,

I, 122) is that the second character of the Tangut national name *Mi-ñag*, no. 5745 *nįaw*, ends in rhyme 21, which therefore presumably originally ended in -*g*, modified to -*w* by the late twelfth century.

Sofronov (I, 64) points out that the inventor of the script, taught by his experience of Chinese, constructed, as well as the characters representing Tangut words, some purely phonetic characters to represent foreign sounds. To the extent that the phonetic values of these characters can be determined quite firmly they have a double value. They fix the pronunciation of the rhymes to which they belong, and they prove that no other rhymes could have been pronounced in exactly the same way. They may also help in another way. In addition to two pitches, high, associated with unvoiced initials, and low, associated with voiced initials, there were in Tangut proper two, and only two, tones, level and rising ; but there are also in the case of a few characters puzzling references to a falling and an entering tone, associated respectively with the level and the rising tones. It would be worth investigating whether the characters concerned are phonetics representing Chinese sounds, since these are specifically Chinese tones. Speaking with all the advantages of hind-sight, one might suggest that in any future list of Tangut characters purely phonetic ones might be marked with an asterisk.

Even a tentative reconstruction of the early eleventh-century pronunciation would open the door to another possibly fruitful line of research. There have been discovered, mainly at Tunhuang, a few texts, tentatively dated to the eighth and ninth centuries, in Tibetan characters but not in the Tibetan language. Some of these are in Chinese, one or two in Turkish, the others in unknown languages. There seems to be a good chance that one of these may be Tangut written before the invention of the script. Translating a text on an unknown subject in an unknown language would involve some hard guessing, but if one or two sentences could be made to give sense if the words in them were translated as Tangut, the case that the language was in fact Tangut would be a strong one, and much light might be thrown on the phonetic structure of pre-eleventh-century Tangut, since these texts have a richer array of initials and finals than reconstructed twelfth-century Tangut.

After the phonetics have been disposed of the rest of vol. I is devoted to grammar proper, morphology, and syntax. This is described, very sensibly, in the traditional European way with the traditional Russian grammatical terminology, the various terms used being defined very clearly, though not always very briefly, with the result that the exposition is very clear. This form of presentation, however, applied to a Sino-Tibetan language, does sometimes involve some unreality. For example to describe ·*in* (5283) as a dative suffix both in ' to look at (·*in*) him ' and in ' my (*nga* ·*in*) only wish ' and *ndo* (2114) as a locative suffix in both ' to live at (*ndo*) the ruler's court ' and ' to go to (*ndo*) the ruler ' is a bit Procrustean. It might have been better to approach this subject from the opposite direction, listing the suffixes rather than the cases and describing their functions in the traditional terminology, with an introductory paragraph on the circumstances in which an unsuffixed noun is governed by a verb in meanings in which it would, in an inflected language, have been in one of the oblique cases. Another possible criticism is that, although there are sufficient, and not too many, grammatical examples with the original Tangut, transcription, and translation, it is difficult, in the absence of a vocabulary, to see which word has which meaning. There are, for example, several words translated ' Buddha ', and a good deal of cross-comparison is required to identify them. All in all, however, it is doubtful whether anyone could have made a better job of Tangut grammar than Sofronov, and this too will be an indispensable work of reference for some time to come.

The whole book is produced in a very clear reproduction of typescript with the characters written in by hand, and seems to be practically free from errors. I have noticed only one ; in the last line but two of I, 66 the substitution of 3978 for 3971 makes nonsense of the sentence. A particular word of commendation is due to the calligrapher (Sofronov himself ?) who has developed such an admirable Tangut hand. The grammatical examples in the text are in a rather smaller hand, and the more complicated characters are occasionally ambiguous, but the characters in the list at the end of vol. II are beautifully clear.

GERARD CLAUSON

KLAUS SAGASTER (tr.) : *Subud erike ' Ein Rosenkranz aus Perlen '. Die Biographie des 1. Pekinger lČañ skya Khutukhtu Ñag dbañ blo bzañ č'os ldan, verfasst von Ñag dbañ č'os ldan alias Šes rab dar rgyas.* (Asiatische Forschungen, Bd. 20.) 435 pp. + 164 pp. facsims. Wiesbaden : Otto Harrassowitz, 1967. DM 96.

This ambitious publication is an enlarged version of the author's doctoral dissertation