The Daśakarmapathāvadānamālā in Old Uyghur: Recent Identifications

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The Daśakarmapathāvadānamālā ("Garland of legends pertaining to the ten courses of action") in Old Uyghur is a vast collection of stories comprising various tales many of which have been identified since scholarly work on this text began approximately a hundred years ago. Among these stories are, e.g., the avadānas of Sutasoma and Kalmāşapāda, Sena and Upasena, Hariścandra, Āṭavaka, Kāñcanasāra, Priyańkara, Hiḍimba, Mahāpadma, Śaśa, Mahākapi. In the course of recent editorial work some hitherto unidentified stories could be traced in Buddhist narrative literature. The paper will give an overview of newly identified parallels to less known stories contained in the work.

The Old Uyghur Daśakarmapathāvadānamālā was translated from Tocharian A but from this latter version which in turn was translated from Tocharian B only a few fragments have survived. On the one hand, the rather well preserved Old Uyghur translation can help identify fragments of the work in Tocharian A or even in Tocharian B, on the other hand, the identification of parallel versions in Buddhist literature sheds some light on the possible sources of the Tocharian B original.