THE SUFI LEGEND OF SULTAN IBRĀḤĪM b. ADHAM

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Ibrāhīm b. Adham al-Balkhī al-‘Ijli (d. 161/777-8) was an ascetic and mystic belonging to the earliest period in the history of Islamic mysticism. Very little is known about him. He fled to escape Abū Muslim, the leader of the revolutionary Abbasid forces, and after having roamed the mountains and plains of Syria, he is said to have died during a raid (ghazwa) on Byzantian territory. Two or three centuries after his death there had evolved a legend (hikāya) which identified him as a pious and virtuous wandering saint (wa/lī). Thus, by the eleventh to twelfth centuries there had been created, chiefly in Iran, Iraq and Syria, various legends about Ibrāhīm b. Adham in both Arabic and Persian, and these have been gathered together in collections. Moreover, with the wide circulation of these legends about Ibrāhīm throughout the Islamic world, many of the faithful began to visit his tomb in Jabala. We may ascertain that the legends of Ibrāhīm have diffused not only to the Middle East, but also to the regions of North India, Central Asia and Southeast Asia.

Keywords: early sufi saint, legend, wali, ziyāra, legend diffusion

I. The Life of Ibrāhīm b. Adham
Ibrāhīm b. Adham b. Manṣūr al-Balkhī al-‘Ijli, Abū Işıq (d. 161/777-8), was one of the most prominent mystics in the early history of Sufism, celebrated in later legends (hikāya) particularly for his rigid asceticism (zuhd). He was born in Balkh, an eastern city of Khurasan, into a family called ‘Ijl (belonging to Bakr b. Wā’il), which had migrated from al-Kūfa at around the end of the Umayyad period.

According to Ibn ‘Asākir (d. 571/1176), Ibrāhīm b. Adham ran away from Khurasan with his comrade, Jahdām b. ‘Abdullāh, to elude Abū Muslim’s pursuit.1 Both Ibrāhīm and Jahdām had belonged to a group of youths numbering sixty in total, seeking knowledge in Balkh.2 When Abū Muslim rose in revolt against the Umayyad rule outside the city of Marw in June 746, a

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federation was formed among the tribal groups of Muḍar, Rabi’a and Qaḥṭān to fight together against him in Balkh. Since Ibrāhīm was from a family belonging to Bakr, a branch of Rabi’a, it may well be supposed that Ibrāhīm had participated in this anti-Abbasid federation with his school friends, but was suppressed by the army of Abū Dāwūd dispatched to Balkh by Abū Muslim. M. Sharon concludes that all the sympathizers with the anti-Abbasid movement were arrested and were also put to death.

After his flight from Khurasan, Ibrāhīm wandered around the deserts and the mountains of Iraq and Syria, participating voluntarily in raids (ghazwa) against Byzantine contingents. Abū Nu‘aym al-Iṣfahānī (d. 430/1038) describes wandering Ibrāhīm as follows:

I (Ibrāhīm) can not enjoy life outside Syria. I am wandering in the steep mountains with piety. Those who find me might regard me as an obsessed with delusion (muwaswas) or a porter (ḥammāl). However, it seems to me ·that those who value ḥajj or jihād are less important than those who value a loaf of bread (raghif).

Al-Bustī (d. 354/965), an Arabic literatus of Persian origin, relates that Ibrāhīm forced asceticism and piety on himself and practiced acts of devotion until he died at the land of Rūm and was buried there in 161/777-8. However, another accounts place his tomb variously in Şür (Tyre), Baghdad, al-Kūfa, Jerusalem, Damascus, and afterwards most often in Jabala on the Syrian coast. At present, the town of Jabala has an old mosque named Masjid al-Sultan Ibrāhīm b. Adham which covers his famous tomb in legend at the inner part.

Abū al-Qasim al-Junayd (d. 298/910), a celebrated Sufi from Baghdad, regarded Ibrāhīm b. Adham as “the key of the (mystical) sciences (mafāṭīḥ al-‘ulūm).” Later Syrian scholar, ibn ‘Asākir, also relates a legend that Ibrāhīm b. Adham resembles Ibrāhīm, Khalil Allāh. Western scholars also have studied the legends of Ibrāhīm since Nicholson’s introduction of his career in 1912. For example, A. J. Arberry relates the legend of Ibrāhīm’s conversion to austerity, which has often been compared with the story of Gautama Buddha. Furthermore, Arberry introduced another legend that Ibrāhīm fell in with Christian hermits, from whom he learned the true knowledge of God (ma’rifa). Arberry’s translation of Tadhkirat al-Awliyā’ by Farid al-Din ‘Aṭṭār (d. 627/1230), which contains the legends of Ibrāhīm, is also quite useful for evaluating him among the prominent early Sufis. We also find an ample collection of Ibrāhīm’s legends in Das Meer der Seele by H. Ritter and in the recently
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published book, *Alte Vorbilder des Sufitums*, by R. Gramlich\(^{14}\) other than the contemporary works in Arabic and Persian.\(^{15}\)

In these researches some legends have been regarded as what Ibrāhīm actually preached and practiced in his life time, but the process of his legend formation in history has been neglected by most of contemporary scholars. However, when we investigate the related sources chronologically, it is evident that Ibrāhīm’s legend was enlarged and formed gradually from the time of al-Bukhārī (d. 256/870) to that of Abū Nu‘aym al-Iṣfahānī (d. 430/1038). In this paper I intend to trace this enlargement process, focusing on the story of his conversion to austerity, based on my book entitled *The Legend of the Saint Ibrāhīm b. Adham* in Japanese (Tokyo, 2001).

II. The Origin of the “Ḥikāyat Ibrāhīm b. Adham”

As far as I know, the oldest information about Ibrāhīm b. Adham is the following account by al-Bukhārī:

Ibrāhīm b. Adham, named al-Balkhi, was from the Tamīm and resided at al-Kūfa. He learned the ḥadīth from al-Manṣūr (his grandfather), which does not hold full authenticity (mursal). It is also said that he was from the family of ‘Ījl and resided in Syria.\(^{16}\)

According to this account, Ibrāhīm resided in Iraq or Syria after he fled Balkh from Abū Muslim. It is noteworthy that al-Bukhārī says nothing about the story of his penitence for his luxurious life. The above-mentioned al-Bustī gave us a little more developed story on Ibrāhīm’s life:

Ibrāhīm b. Adham b. Manṣūr, Abū Ishāq, his birth place was Balkh. He migrated to Baḥdād and then to Syria seeking pure lawful things (ḥalāl). In Syria he spent his life as a ghāzī or murābiṭ and forced asceticism (zahāda), piety (wara‘) and abstinence (juḥd) on himself, practicing acts of devotion (‘ibāda) until he died at the land of Rūm and was buried there in 161/777-8.\(^{17}\)

Although al-Bustī talks about Ibrāhīm’s asceticism, piety and abstinence, he also does not say anything related to his conversion. Al-Kalābādī (d. 380/994) is the first to tell of his conversion to austerity when Ibrāhīm was enjoying the hunt:

Ibrāhīm b. Adham went out to hunt (ṣayd). Then, a voice said, “You
have not been created for such a thing. You have not been ordered to behave like this.” The same voice was repeated. Then the voice came from his saddle-bow (qarabūs). Consequently, he swore that he would not offend God from that day on.\textsuperscript{18}

The voice he heard was not directly from God. As Ibn ‘Asākir (d. 571/1176) and ‘Aṭṭār relate,\textsuperscript{19} it was from Khīdhr, who was granted the ability to transmit the voice of God to men. The warning, “You have not been created for such a thing. You have not been ordered to behave like this,” became a hackneyed expression in the later legends of Ibrāhīm. About al-Kalābādhi, we only know that he lived in Kalābād, a district of Bukhara, and died in the town of Bukhara, which indicates that the early legend of Ibrāhīm originated in the district of Bukhara during the latter half of the tenth century.

Following al-Kalābādhi, al-Sulāmi (d. 412/1021) relates a somewhat more developed legend:

Ibrāhīm b. Adham, Abū Ishaq, was from Balkh. He was a son of a lord (malik) and man of property (mūsir). One day he went out hunting, a voice (hātif) spoke to him, arousing him from error. He abandoned the path of worldly ostentation and returned to the path of asceticism (zuhd) and piety (wara‘). Then he went to Syria via Mecca, where he earned his daily bread by his own labor and died there.\textsuperscript{20}

Al-Sulāmi was born of the Arab family of ‘Azd at Nishapur, where he constructed a khānqāh for the indigenous Sufis. His legend contains a new account that Ibrāhīm was a son of a wealthy lord. Furthermore, al-Sulāmi puts particular stress on the fact that Ibrāhīm earned his daily bread by his own labor, which would be referred to repeatedly in later legends.

A generation after al-Sulāmi, al-Hujwiri (d. between 465-469/1072-77), who was born in Hujwīr, a suburb of Ghazna, wandered around Iraq and Lahore as a dervish Sufi and published the first Persian book on Sufism, entitled Kashf al-Ma‘ājīb, where he narrates the story of Ibrāhīm’s penitence:

Ibrāhīm was an amir of Balkh in his early days. One day he went out hunting and chased gazelle (āhū) apart from his comrades. Then, God ordered the gazelle to say, “Have you been created for such a thing? Have you been ordered to behave like this?” Hearing the voice, Ibrāhīm repented and entered a life of asceticism and piety, giving up
The story that İbrahim went out hunting is similar to that of al-Kalābādhi and al-Sulami, here, the voice of God was transmitted to him, quite vividly, through a gazelle, probably an embodiment of Khīḍr.

It was in this way that the legend of İbrahim’s penitence, which originated in the latter half of the tenth century, developed gradually into more complicated stories from the end of the tenth century to the beginning of the eleventh century. It was Abū Nu‘aym al-İṣfahānī (d. 430/1038) who rendered the legend into its final form before a modification which took place during the Ottoman period. Here is the legend in which İbrahim explains his own conversion to his servant, İbrahim b. Bashshār:

My father was from Balkh and one of the lords (malik) in Khurāsān. He was a man of property, and we were fond of hunting. One day I mounted horse and went out hunting with a dog. I galloped my horse when a rabbit or a fox jumped out.

Then I heard a voice (nidā’) from behind me. “You have not been created for such a thing. You have not been ordered to behave like this.” I stopped and looked around, but I saw nothing. I muttered, “God may curse Satan (Iblīs).” When I galloped my horse once again, I heard a louder voice. “İbrahim, you have not been created for such a thing. You have not been ordered to behave like this.” I stopped and looked around, but again I saw nothing. I said once again, “God may curse Satan.” When I galloped my horse again, I heard a voice from my saddle-bow. “İbrahim, you have not been created for such a thing. You have not been ordered to behave like this.”

I stopped and said, “I have been surprised, deeply surprised. I understand that a warning from the Lord of the World came to me. From today on I will not offend what God has prohibited.” Then I returned to my family. When I got off my horse, I went to my father’s shepherd to exchange shirts. Then I departed for Iraq.

We find almost the same legend in al-Risālat al-Qushayriyya by Abū al-Qāsim al-Qushayrī (d. 465/1072). However, Abū Nu‘aym adopted the unique style of relating the legend in the first person, and had the warning of God dramatically repeated three times.

The various legends of İbrahim collected by Abū Nu‘aym numbered nearly
two hundred, including the story of his penitence. The legends we find in the works of Ibn ‘Asākir, al-Maqrīzī (d. 845/1442) and Ibn Kathīr (d. 774/1373) have been extracted mostly from Ḥilyat al-Awliyā' by Abū Nu‘aym. To repeat, al-Bukhārī in the ninth century describes the career of Ibrāhīm with only a few lines. However, after a century and a half, huge legends collected by Abū Nu‘aym required almost ninety pages. This is evidently the result of the historical development of Sufism spreading from the intellectual elites to the common people during the tenth and the eleventh centuries. Common Muslims must have wished to have their own Sufi saints (wāli) suitable to their religious pursuits. We may call Ibrāhīm b. Adham as one such Sufi saint who appeared in the eastern part of the medieval Islamic world.

III. Pilgrimage to the Tomb of Ibrāhīm

As the legend of Ibrāhīm spread among the people, pilgrims from among them began to visit his tomb at Jabala. Abū al-Ḥasan al-Harawi (d. 611/1214) relates in his Kitāb al-Ishārat ilā Ma‘rifat al-Ziyārāt that the tomb (qabr) of Ibrāhīm b. Adham was located on the coast of Jabala. Ibn Shaddād (d. 684/1285) and Abū al-Fidā’ (d. 732/1331) also describe a shrine (mazār) at Jabala known as the tomb of Ibrāhīm b. Adham. Moreover, when Ibn Baṭṭūta visited Jabala travelling through the Syrian coastal towns in the summer of 1326, he relates:

By the tomb of Ibrāhīm b. Adham there is a fine religious house (zāwiya) with a water-pool and at which food is served to all comers. Its intendant is Ibrāhīm al-Jumāḥī, one of the most notable devotees. People come from all parts of Syria to visit this convent on the night of mid-Sha‘bān and stay there for three nights. A great fair (ṣūq) is held at this place (but outside the town), at which there is something of every kind. Poor brethren (faqīr) who have renounced the world come from all quarters to take part in this festival.

According to this account, at the beginning of the fourteenth century the town of Jabala had a fine convent (zāwiya) at the tomb of Ibrāhīm, to which Syrians customarily visited during mid-Sha‘bān every year, leading us to the conclusion that Jabala had already possessed the characteristics of the “town of ziyāra.”

However, as the account of Ibn Baṭṭūta indicates, he did not visit a mosque, but a religious house (zāwiya) in Jabala. Then, in which time does the present mosque of Sultan Ibrāhīm originate? We find an Arabic script preserved on the
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wall of the mosque in Jabala, which reads:

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. This celebrated place was completed in Dhū al-Qa‘da 743/April 1343 under the reign of our lord al-Ashraf.

According to this script, it is evident that the “celebrated place,” that is to say, the mosque or a part of it was constructed in April 1343, actually six months after the Mamluk Sultan al-Ashraf Kūjūk b. al-Nāṣir (reigned 1341-October 1342) abdicated the throne.

In 1477 the Mamluk Sultan Qayt Bay (1468-96) travelled to Syria for observing the northern territory adjacent to the Ottoman Empire. On 9 September he departed from Cairo to visit Ghazza, Şafad, Tripoli, Jabala, Aleppo, Ḥimṣ and came back to Cairo on 9 January the next year. On this travel seven amirs, twenty-five mamluks and about ten officials (arbāb al-waṣā’if) accompanied with him. Among them was included Ibn al-Ji‘ān (d.885/1480), a coptic Muslim (Muslimān al-Qibṭ), who compiled a travel account entitled al-Qawl al-Mustāzraf fī Safar Mawlānā al-Malik al-Ashraf for the sultan. As to the sultan’s visit to Jabala, he describes as follows:

On 26 Jumādā I/5 October, Saturday, the sultan arrived at Jabala via Ṭarsūs, Markab, Bāniyās-towns located on the coast. He visited the tomb of Shaykh Ibrāhīm b. Adham. However, Jabala is a small town located on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea and its inhabitants are similar to beasts.

It is noteworthy that the sultan Qayt Bay visited officially the tomb of the Sufi saint Ibrāhīm accompanied by amirs and mamluks. However, he probably wished to visit there personally too because he was widely known as a sultan who loved Sufis and built establishments for them.

Finally, let me introduce one thing. It was in the book by al-Darwish Ḥasan al-Rūmī (sixteenth century) during the early Ottoman rule that Ibrāhīm b. Adham was first called with the honorific title of “Sulṭān” following the titles of “Amīr” or “Malik” found in the former legends.

IV. Diffusion of the Legends of Sultan Ibrāhīm
The above-mentioned accounts indicate that the legends of Ibrāhīm had gradually diffused into Syria and other parts of the Arab world from the twelfth
century on. Let us first look at how the legend spread to Anatolia.  

Eşrefoğlu Rûmî (d. 873/1469), the Turkish poet and mystic, was the founder of the Eşrefigiya branch of the Qadiriya order at Iznik. He gave lectures at the local convent and compiled a practical manual of mystic life, entitled Muzakki al-Nufús. We find the story of İbrahim’s penitence in that manual:

İbrahim b. Adham was the pâdishâh of Balkh. [...] One day, when he sat at the council room in his palace, an Arab with a camel entered the palace. [...] İbrahim asked him, “Where are you from? And where are you going?” He replied, “I am a camel driver hoping to stay at this caravansary.” “What are you talking about? This is not a caravansary, but a palace!” The man asked, “Does it belong to you?” İbrahim replied, “Yes.” “To whom did it belong before you?” “It belonged to my father.” “To whom did it belong before him?” “It belonged to my grandfather.” “I understood, and where are they now?” “They all died and the palace belongs to me.” “İbrahim, did I not say this is not a palace but a caravansary? Those who have resided here died, and you also will die before long. After that I will reside here.” İbrahim understood that he would soon die and that kingship was also transient. He immediately abandoned the crown, the throne, the sultanate and its luxurious life, and accepted, in stead, the life of honest poverty.

The story is similar to the legend in Persian given by Farîd al-Dîn ‘Attâr. ‘Attâr relates that a man, who had looked for his camel on the roof at night, came to İbrahim and questioned him as to the nature of the palace or convent. Here İbrahim became penitent as a result of the dialogue with the man, who was an embodiment of Khiḍr. This similarity indicates a possibility that Eşrefoğlu narrated the story of İbrahim’s penitence based on the Persian version by ‘Attâr, who compiled his Tadhkîrat al-Awliyyâ’ in Nishapur during the end of the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth centuries. We may possibly conclude from this that the legend of İbrahim was transmitted from Iran to Anatolia during the time of the Mongol expansion into the Middle East.

The Il Khanid dynasty was established by Hûlegû in 1258 and accepted Islam during the reign of Ghazan Khan (694-703/1295-1304). In the Qipchaq Khanate, Berke (655-665/1257-67) was the first to convert to Islam, probably influenced by the activities of wandering Sufis. I. Vásáry introduces an interesting story at the time of Berke’s enthronement:
Berke refuses to ascend to the throne by referring to the example of Ibrahim Edhem, the Muslim legendary figure of Buddha, who too had rejected the throne and the crown. But the shaikh persuades him to go by arguing that the only goal of his sovereignty is to make the divine secrets and Muhammad’s wonders evident to everybody.36

Ibrahim b. Adham has been regarded as the Muslim legendary figure of Buddha based on the similarity between Ibrahim’s penitence and Buddha’s renunciation of the world. It is doubtful that the Buddhists who had lived in Balkh transmitted the Buddha’s story, which invented the legend of Ibrahim’s penitence among Muslims there.37 However, in the latter half of the thirteenth century there was an increase in the number of Mongol converts to Islam, who regarded Ibrahim’s penitence as influenced by the Buddha’s renunciation of the world. Be that as it may, it is noteworthy that the story of Ibrahim’s penitence was widely known among early Mongol Muslims in the Qipchaq steppe.

It was not until the beginning of the eighth century that Islam began to spread into the region of Māwarān-nahr (West Turkistan). The Turkic group of Oghuz migrated from the Mongol Heights westward and arrived at the surrounding areas of the Aral Sea around the tenth century. They encountered Muslim merchants and the Sufi shaykhs there. On the other hand, it was under the Qarakhanids that Islam came to the region east of Pamir (East Turkistan). We know that Mahmud al-Kashghari published Diwan Lughat al-Turk in Arabic around 1075 during that period.

However, as to West and East Turkistan before the fifteenth century, we do not have any exact information about the Hikayat Sultan Ibrahim there. The first source is the History of the Uwaysis published in Persian by Ahmad of Uzgen (around the sixteenth century). Uzgen is a small town of Ferghana to the west of Kashgar. According to J. Baldick, Ahmad, who felt deep devotion to Satuq Bughra Khan (d. 344/955), the first convert to Islam among the Turkic people in legend, compiled the above history and dedicated it to the late sovereign.38 Here is the story of Ibrahim and his wife Zuhra based on Baldick’s English translation:

Zuhra originally belonged to the Kalmuk people living to the west of Lake Baykal (in Siberia). The reason why she ended up in Egypt is as follows. The celebrated mystic Ibrahim b. Adham decided to travel from Egypt to China. On the way he was captured by a Kalmuk. He and his captor’s daughter, called Surunj, both dreamt that he was
converting her to Islam. When they woke up they secretly fulfilled the dream’s message. After Surunj’s father died, Ibrāhīm decided to leave for Egypt with her and changed her name to Zuhra (Venus). When Ibrāhīm returned to Egypt, he entrusted his wife to the care of his mother, who was herself a mystic. For twelve years Zuhra practiced her program of devotion as instructed by the mother-in-law. Even after the mother-in-law died, Zuhra conducted ascetic exercises for twenty more years, and she obtained the “theophany of light (tajallī-yi nūrī).”

This story suggests that Ibrāhīm was living in Egypt. However, it should be noted that we have only a few accounts which relate Ibrāhīm’s personal connection to Egypt. For example, Balkhī in the thirteenth century states that Ibrāhīm went to Egypt to visit the tomb of Rashdīn b. Sa‘d, while al-Maqrizi relates briefly that Ibrāhīm visited Alexandria for sight-seeing (siyāḥa). That is to say, according to the legends, Ibrāhīm visited Egypt temporally for ziyāra or siyāḥa. Accordingly, we may conclude that the legends of Ibrāhīm did not take root in medieval Egyptian society.

Turning to South and Southeast Asia, the north part of South Asia was Islamized gradually during the period of the Delhi Sultans (1206-1526) after the rule of the Ghurids (early eleventh century-1215). The Sufi orders of the Chishtis and the Suhrawardis were, in particular, most active in converting the Indian common people to Islam. While the Chishti order backed out of the state politics, the Suhrawardi order would not consent to the significance of honest poverty, and accepted willingly financial assistance from the government.

The shaykh who held the Chishti tradition of honest poverty was Muḥammad Gisū Darāz (1321-1422), a prominent mystic from Delhi. He refrained from keeping company with wealthy persons and persuaded his disciples to maintain a veil of secrecy around their mystical accomplishments. According to S. A. Abbas Rizvi, Gisū Darāz spoke against the Muslim governors as follows:

If they (the governors) really feel the urge to search for God, they should follow the example of Ibrāhīm b. Adham. If they are unable to do this, they should appoint a pious and honest ‘ālim of impeccable integrity to implement the law of the Shari‘a.

The sentence “they should follow the example of Ibrāhīm b. Adham” refers, of
course, to the story that Ibrahim abandoned the lordship of Balkh and returned to the path of piety. Gisii Daraz probably instructed the governors to abandon the ostentation of rulership and walk on the path of truth. The above story reveals that the story of Ibrahim’s penitence was widely known among the people in fourteenth century India and needed no further explanation. We find also a picture painted in Punch, a town of Kashmir, around 1760, illustrating the story of Saint Ibrahim written by Ilah-diya Chishti during the mid-seventeenth century.45

Finally, let us look at Southeast Asia. As the elaborate works of R. Jones clearly reveal, the legend of Ibrahim was transmitted to Malaysia during the latter half of the seventeenth century. Jones has translated two stories written in Jawi into English: 1. Hikayat Sultan Ibrahim (Leiden, 1983) and 2. Hikayat Sultan Ibrahim Ibn Adham (Berkeley, 1985). The first is a short story written after 1689, and the second a longer story was written during the latter half of the eighteenth century. Both stories are almost identical, but the postscript of the second reads, “This story was narrated by Shaykh Abii Bakr, a Hadhramaut man, and it was written in the year 1775.”46 This indicates that the story was not transmitted by either Meccan pilgrims or through India, but directly by Arab immigrants from Hadhramaut.

Here is a summary of the second story based on Jones’s English translation:

Sultan Ibrahim, king of Iraq, lived an ascetic life, and was famed for his just rule. One day he ordered the city wall to be reconstructed. After its completion he assembled all his subjects and asked them as to the defects of the wall. They all answered the wall had no defect, but an old man replied, “The raja’s wall is good, but it has flaws. Although the wall is high and strong, it will be destroyed in the end.”

Then Ibrahim understood the world was transient and abdicated his throne and started on a wandering journey. On the way he became hungry and thirsty. He went to the river where he drank the water and ate half of pomegranate floating there. But when he realized the pomegranate had an owner, he decided to apologize for his misdeed. Ibrahim went up to the orchard, but the owner had already died when he reached there. His daughter, named Siti Saliha, was strongly impressed with Ibrahim’s honesty and piety. When she proposed to marry him, Ibrahim consented to marry her. After he lived with her for forty days, he left his wife for Mecca.
Before long she gave birth to a child, and he was named Muhammad Tahir. When Tahir grew into a boy and heard that his father was in Mecca, he wished to see his father and went out alone for the sacred city. Ibrahim in Mecca was glad to see his son, but soon repented that he forgot God for a moment. Ibrahim instructed his son to go back to Iraq with a ring proving kingship. After he returned to Iraq, Tahir gave the ring to the wazir and lived in peace with his mother supported financially by the new king.

We find that the second paragraph of the above account is similar to the story given by Ibn Battuta. Both stories become almost identical if we replace Adham with Ibrahim, and apple with pomegranate. However, it is impossible to establish any relationship between these two stories at present, but may well be supposed that there was some kind of Ibrahim legend in the Arab world, one of which was transmitted to Malaysia by the Arab immigrants.

Notes

5 Sharon, Revolt, 175.
10 Ibn 'Asâkir, Ta'rikh Madinat Dimashq, VI, 289.

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41. al-Maqrizi, al-Muqaffa al-Kabir, I, 47.
44. Abbas Rizvi, A History of Sufism, I, 255.
45. W. G. Archer, Indian Painting in the Punjab Hills, London, 1952, 84 and 92. The author introduces the story by Ilah Diya as follows. "Ibrahim came to the bank of the Tigris. There he found a dervish to whom an angel used to bring every evening a plate of food. To Ibrahim, as he sat, ten plates were brought. The dervish was envious and complained that Ibrahim had only recently become a fakir and yet received ten plates, whereas he, the dervish, had been a fakir all..."
his life but received only one. A voice replied, ‘You were poor and always had difficulty in getting food. He was rich, yet threw away everything for love of me. Ten plates is but a small recompense’ (p. 92)”.