APPENDIX ONE

MANUSCRIPTS OF MINHĀJ AL-DUKKĀN

(a) The manuscript tradition of Minhāj al-dukkān

On beginning work on this book, I decided not to prepare a critical edition of the text of Minhāj al-dukkān. First, on the one hand this work is readily available (it can be ordered over the Internet for the price of eight dollars), yet at the same time there are so many manuscripts that examining each one would be a most time-consuming task, with possibly very little to show from it (see section (b) below). Second, my own interest was not so much in the text per se but in what the text can be made to reveal about pharmacy and pharmacists in Mamlūk Cairo (and possibly throughout the Mamlūk Empire). For this reason, I decided to examine a limited number of manuscripts and printed versions of Minhāj al-dukkān, in order to ensure that my implicit assumption that there was a ‘book’ called Minhāj al-dukkān was indeed correct—and not that I was relying on a chance compilation of recipes and practical advice, one of many that had been given the name Minhāj al-dukkān and attributed to al-Kūhīn al-ʿAtṭār.

I was able to examine the following manuscripts and printed editions:

British Library Or. 5786—dated 715/1315;¹
British Library Or. 3691—dated to the eleventh/seventeenth century;²
British Library Or. 4324—dated 1280/1864;³
New York, Jewish Theological Seminary 02649—dated to the fifteenth century (in microfilm F 28902 at the Institute for Microfilmed Manuscripts of the National Library, Jerusalem);
Cambridge University Library 1123 (Dd.5.10)—dated to 1056/1645;⁴

² Ibid., p. 181.
³ Ibid., p. 180.
I believe that these thirteen versions of Minhāj al-dukkān, covering the period from the eighth/fourteenth to the fourteenth/twentieth centuries, comprise a sufficient sample of the extant manuscripts for my findings to be conclusive.

I compared the following sections: beginning, ending, table of contents as appearing in the introduction (khutba), chapter four (on robs, rubūb), chapter eight (on pills, aqrās), chapter fourteen (on plasters, marāhim), chapter twenty (on substitute drugs, ʿabdāl), and the entry for a plant called ʿushar in chapter twenty-one (on synonyms, sharh asmāʾ al-adwiya). Not unexpectedly, I did find differences between the manuscripts. There are two major variant families (A: BL Or. 5786, WMS Ar. 52a, WMS Ar. 431; B: BL Or. 4324, JTS 2649, Cambridge 1123, WMS Ar. 52b) plus one very different work (BL Or. 3691). The printed versions, all of which are based on the first printing of Būlāq 1870, form yet another family.

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6 Ibid., p. 134.
7 Ibid., p. 135.
9 Ibid., pp. 223–232.
10 Abū ʿl-Munā al-Kūhin al-ʿAtṭār, Minhāj al-dukkān (Būlāq 1870).
11 Idem., (Cairo: n.p., 1940).