

The Corvinian Library History And Stock

[illegible]

the subject of this two volume publication is an inventory of manuscripts in the book treasury of the topkapı palace in istanbul commissioned by the ottoman sultan bayezid ii from his royal librarian atıf in the year 908 1502 3 and transcribed in a clean copy in 909 1503 4 this unicum inventory preserved in the oriental collection of the library of the hungarian academy of sciences magyar tudományok akadémiai könyvtára keleti gyűjteményi ms t. 1. r. 6. f. 59 records over 5 000 volumes and more than 7 000 titles on virtually every branch of human erudition at the time the ottoman palace library housed an unmatched encyclopedic collection of learning and literature hence the publication of this unique inventory opens a larger conversation about ottoman and islamic intellectual cultural history the very creation of such a systematically ordered inventory of books raises broad questions about knowledge production and practices of collecting readership librarianship and the arts of the book at the dawn of the sixteenth century the first volume contains twenty eight interpretative essays on this fascinating document authored by a team of scholars from diverse disciplines including islamic and ottoman history history of science arts of the book and codicology agriculture medicine astrology astronomy occultism mathematics philosophy theology law mysticism political thought ethics literature arabic persian turkish turkic philology and epistolary following the first three essays by the editors on implications of the library inventory as a whole the other essays focus on particular fields of knowledge under which books are catalogued in ms t. 1. r. 6. f. 59 each accompanied by annotated lists of entries the second volume presents a transliteration of the arabic manuscript which also features an ottoman turkish preface on method together with a reduced scale facsimile

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