Notions and belief systems concerning nature and the supernatural constitute a little-explored aspect of Ottoman culture. As far as it concerns other Islamicate cultures and especially in medieval times, the last decades have witnessed several scholarly studies on issues such as magic, occult sciences or marvelous geography. Apart from a few pioneering studies, we still know very little on the concepts and practices connected with magic or the supernatural in an Ottoman context. In this talk, Marinos Sariyannis will seek to set out an agenda for the study of this field, focusing on the possible categorizations of the “supernatural” by different social and intellectual groups. He will propose to see the field described as “supernatural” as an especially constructive vantage point to watch the interplay of different layers of culture representing varying social groups: as a working hypothesis, one may take the existence of a “popular” or folk culture, as well as a Sufi culture, both slanting more towards a “magical” worldview, while ulema circles would seek to interpret (or, alternatively, reject) such traditions within a very rational and strict framework of ontological hierarchy.

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Im Anschluss wird zu einem Glas Wein gebeten.

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