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### Bilingual Lecture Series on Iran

present

## From Jinns to Germs: A Genealogy of Pasteurian Islam



A lecture in English by **Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi**, Professor of History and Near & Middle Eastern Civilizations, University of Toronto

**Monday, November 9, 2015**

**2:00 PM**

**10383 Bunche Hall**

The equivalence of jinns with germs enabled early 20th-century Iranian physicians to offer detailed microbiological explanations for questions of “purity and filth” (*taharah va nijasat*), questions which had been conventionally elucidated by Shi’i mujtahids in their responsa (*tawzih al-masa’il* or *risalah ‘amaliyah*). The refiguration of jinns as microbes consolidated the transformation of the notion of “purity” (*taharat*) into “hygiene” (*nizafat*) and that of “impurity” (*nijasat*) to “dirty”/unhygienic (*kisafat*). It also contributed to the Pasteurization of Islam and the medicalization of Iran’s modern political imagination.

**Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi** is Professor of History and Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations at the University of Toronto. He has served as President of the International Society for Iranian Studies (2008-10), was the founding Chair of the Department of Historical Studies at the University of Toronto-Mississauga (2004-07), and was the Editor-in-Chief of *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* (2001-12), a Duke University Press journal. Since 2010 he has served as the Editor-in-Chief of *Iran Nameh* and is coeditor with Homa Katoouzian of the Iranian Studies book series, published by Routledge. In addition to numerous articles, he is the author of two books: *Refashioning Iran: Orientalism, Occidentalism and Historiography* (Palgrave, 2001) and *Tajaddud-i Bumi [Vernacular Modernity]* (Nashr-i Tarikh, 2003). He is currently completing a manuscript that explores the discursive transformation of modern Persian political language from biopolitics to spatial governance. It traces the shift from a restorative rhetoric of medical sciences to the constructional language of engineering.

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