

A Word From the Editor

www.7DORIM.com

By the late winter 2007, the Calendar page of our website www.7DORIM.com was launched, and it was warmly received by the visitors. Although to the Jewish people, the Hebrew calendar remains an important aspect of their culture, this choice alone did not seem sufficient as a cultural incentive in the age of the internet. Therefore, we also began taking pictures of the thousands of remaining individual gravestones in the Khavaran Beheshtieh “Jewish Cemetery” of Tehran, to allow our fellow Iranian Jews who lived away from their homeland to pay virtual visits to the graves of their departed ones via computers.

As it turned out, the Tehran phase of the Jewish cemeteries project alone would take more than a year to complete. It also required a dedicated budget and additional personnel. Thus, we decided that even as the Khavaran Jewish Cemetery project was under way, we should go ahead and rapidly prepare other cultural content related to the Jews of Iran and offer them on the 7DORIM website.

As such, we began to take pictures of the old Oudlajan neighborhood, once the Jewish “ghetto” of Tehran, the Sar-Chal area, and other historical locations across the city, including our synagogues and schools, the very active Dr. Rouhollah Sapir Hospital, the historic Keshvarieh Public Bath, and many other old sites which carried a symbolic meaning for Jews and signified their (not too distant) history. We then showcased them in dedicated galleries on our website with informative captions and documented commentaries.

Two years down the road, as the Khavaran Jewish Cemetery project was almost complete, we came to realize the far and long path that was ahead of us, since there were many other cities and towns besides Tehran whose history of a sizeable and vibrant Jewish life went back centuries if not millennia. They too deserved to be noticed on our website for their histories and cultures.

Thence, as time passed, with the cooperation of a number of erudite individuals and those with an interest in the Iranian Jewish history and culture, 7DORIM was expanded to include several new sections. Persistent efforts, and the larger space dedicated to Jewish oral history, helped the site gain far more extended dimensions in the world of internet, so far as today, the

7DORIM website has earned itself a special niche among many cultural institutions, and it's regarded as a credible research hub.

We believe, however, that despite our best efforts, the site is far from complete. There are shortcomings to be rectified, and there are many more projects dreamed of to be carried out, with divine providence, in the near future.

Let's bear in mind that any such cultural endeavor cannot be devoid of its own share of problems. So far, we have faced many ups and downs, each with a story of its own, an account of which would be out of the scope of this brief letter. However, on another occasion, an article about the memories of the formation of 7DORIM may offer its own charms to our readers.

Over the past year, even as the many sections of the website were further enriched and expanded, a new section was launched entitled The Digital Books. Moreover, photo galleries of several Iranian cities with a history of a significant Jewish population, such as Orumieh (Urmieh), Hamedan, Boroujerd, and others, were added to the sections dedicated to the Jews of other cities, covering their synagogues, old Jewish neighborhoods, mausoleums, etc.

We can only hope that our erudite literary figures and well-versed masters of culture shall join us with increased support and cooperation to further enrich the website and its many sections. Our beloved authors, in particular, could provide us with links to their digitally available publications, so that we could offer them in our Digital Books chamber to interested users.

Last but not least, pushed by our relentless friends and driven by repeated user requests, at long last, we are about to launch the English version of 7DORIM to an international audience.

We look forward to the long road ahead of us, and we hope that the financial and spiritual support of friends such as you will help us expedite our cultural services and bring this project to full fruition.

With the Kindest of Wishes,
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