



## A Rich Sefardic Legacy

■ SHIRA YEHUDIT DJALILMAND ■

Yehuda Azoulay started and heads the Sefardic Legacy Series, an [institute](#) that [preserves](#) and [promotes](#) the rich [heritage](#) of Sefardi Jewry. He grew up in Toronto and learned in yeshiva in Israel and in Lakewood, New Jersey. Now he lives with his wife and children in Toronto, where he teaches and does historical\* [research](#).

### What exactly is the Sephardic Legacy Series and what is its mission?

Our [mission](#) is to [educate](#) and [inspire](#) Jews about Sefardi Jewry. I started by putting out books.

### How and why did you start the Sephardic Legacy Series?

There are two [reasons](#). The first was

that when I was in yeshiva in Israel, I wanted to know more about my Sefardi heritage. But I couldn't find any books about Sefardi rabbis. The second reason was because of someone once told me that you can [count](#) on one hand the famous Sefardi rabbis in the last [century](#). This is not true. I wanted to do something about this. I wanted to tell people about our rich Sefardi heritage.

### What has the Series done so far?

So far, I've published four books - the two Legacy of Leaders books on Sefardi *rabbanim*. I also put out biographies\* of the Ben Ish Chai and the Chida. We do lots of research on Sefardi history. And I do everything I can to promote Sefardi heritage, both in the media\* and with [events](#).

## מורשת ספרדית עשירה

### Why do you think there aren't many Jewish books in English on Sefardi Jewry?

Until now, there has not been a great [demand](#). So there aren't many books on the subject. But now people want the next [generation](#) to know about its Sefardi heritage.

### What's coming up next?

A new book called *The Sephardi Journey*. It's about Sefardi Jewry's [role](#) in history. It's coming out soon. I've also been working for over ten years on a biography of Maran Harav Ovadia Yosef, *zt"l*. Because of his [passing](#), I'm putting out some of the biography now in a book, *The Legacy of Maran Chacham Ovadia*. Later, I will put out a much bigger biography, *Maran - The Life and*

Note: The word ספרדי in English can be written with an "f" or with "ph."



*Times of Chacham Ovadia Yosef.*

## How did you come to work on a biography of Rav Ovadia zt"l?

Ten years ago, when I was learning in yeshiva in Jerusalem, I started going to *Maran's shiurim* on *Motzaei Shabbat*. I saw what a special rabbi he was. I decided that if I was writing about Sefardi *rabbanim*, then I should be writing about him too.

I talked to the Rav many times, and I took my wife and children to him, too. I spent a week at his house so I could talk with him and with the people around him. The Rav knew about the book I was writing. But he didn't want it to be published while he was alive.

## Is it true that you are related to the Chida?

Yes, my family is related to the Chida – Harav Chaim Yosef David Azoulay, zt"l. We don't know exactly how, but

it's been known in our family for generations. My **ancestors** come from the same town in Morocco as the Chida.

## I understand that you are having an event in Washington to honor Sefardi Jewry.

Yes, on November 20th. The event will **honor** Sefardi Jewry's **contribution** to the US. It's the first time that the US **government** will have an event to honor Sefardi Jews. There will be many people from the government there. And of course there will be important Sefardi rabbis and a lot of media. I hope the event will help people to know more about Sefardi heritage.

## What is your hope for the future for Sephardi Jews?

Each Jew needs to **connect** to his own heritage, to who he is. I hope that by reconnecting to their heritage, Sefardi Jews reconnect to Hashem.

מכון	אינסטיטוט institute
משמר	פרזרבז preserves
מקדם	פרמואוטס promotes
המורשת	הריטג' heritage
מחקר	ריסרץ' research
יעד	מישן mission
לחנך	אדז'וקייט educate
לעורר השראה	אינספייאר inspire
סיבות	ריזנז reasons
למנות	קאוונט count
המאה	סנצ'רי century
אירועים	איבנטס events
ביקוש	דימנד demand
דור	ג'נריישן generation
תפקיד	רואול role
פטירה	פסינג passing
מיוחס	רילייטד related
אבותיי	אנססטורז ancestors
יכבד	אונר honor
תרומה	קונטרביישן contribution
ממשלת	גברמנט government
להתחבר	קנקט connect

