

The Krumholtz Prize for Holocaust Research

In memory of Augustina and Zwi Krumholtz

I would like to say a few words about my parents, the late Augustina and the late Zwi Krumholtz.

My name is Ronit Fisher and I have been a Holocaust researcher and lecturer for over 10 years in the Department of Jewish History at the University of Haifa. I am hereby honored to present the "Augustina and Zwi Kromholtz Prize for Holocaust Studies". The award is given in the name of my parents and in their memory, and it is important for me at this time to say a few words about them.

My parents were not "great people" - they were not leaders of organizations or political movements, they were not public activists, they were not brave warriors, nor famous intellectuals. My parents were ordinary, warm and person-loving people. In historical-social observation, it can be said that my parents represent the "ordinary people" of the generation of Holocaust survivors who built the State of Israel.

Both were born in Romania - in different regions: my mother, Augustina David, was born in the port city - Glatz (in the "Regat" territories - Old Romania) , and my father, Zvi (Heinrich) Kromholtz - was born in Czernowitz (today- Chernivtsi), the capital of Bukovina, a region that historically and culturally belonged to the Austro - Hungarian Empire, and was transferred to Romanian rule after the First World War. My father, like most of the Jews of Bukovina and Bessarabia, was sent with his family to Transnistria, where, in the "Region of Romania's Death Camp", he went through terrible hardships and torments.

Both my parents survived the Holocaust as children, who lost - not only their families, but also their childhood and adolescence. At the end of the war, in communist Romania, they joined the Zionist movement and their greatest ambition was to immigrate to Israel.

My father received a permit to leave Romania in 1950, when he was 20 and although he began his studies at the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Cluj, he left everything and immigrated to Israel. He enlisted in the artillery and served as a fighter on the Jordanian border. When he was released from the service, he moved to a small room in a "Maabara" - barracks in a transit camp in "Kfar Ata" near Haifa and began working as a goldsmith. A profession, which he acquired for himself in Romania, after the camps, from a worldview that a person, in order to survive - must have a profession, a craft, that he can build his life with his own hands.

My mother immigrated to Israel in 1952 only with her mother and stepfather (her father was murdered by the Romanian legionnaires, the fascists, in 1940 on his way to a forced labor camp on the eastern border of Romania), when her brother - Ben-Zion David, was already in Israel, (He came with *Aliyat Hanoar* (Youth Aliyah) in 1946, and was detained for almost two years in camps in Cyprus).

My mother was 14.5 years old when she immigrated to Israel, and although in Romania she was an excellent student (especially in mathematics), in Israel, they lived in a transit camp (*Maabara*) and because her mother and stepfather were too sick and old to work - she had to go to a factory in Haifa Bay.

My parents met in 1955, when my mother was 18 and my father was 25, on a bus that traveled from the transit camp in Kfar Ata to Haifa. It was an exciting love story of two young people, who chose life, joy, love. They traveled together to their working place in Haifa every morning. My mother to the factory and my father to the jewelry workshop he set up for himself in the downtown area. Within 9 months they got married, and Mom joined Dad's business.

My father started his jewelry making by melting his parents' 2 wedding rings - for gold, and making some smaller jewelry, which he sold. Thus, he actually started the business, which grew and became a jewelry manufacturing company; he was both the jeweler and the agent who rode Egged buses all over the country to sell jewelry stores from his works.

When I, their eldest daughter, was born, after 12 years of their marriage, they bought a store on one of the main streets in Hadar HaCarmel in Haifa. They did not yet own an apartment (but lived in a "key fee" apartment) but my father's motto was that thanks to hard work and business development - they would also be able to buy an apartment, and so it was. My father would go out every morning at 5 to work, in the workshop on the floor above the store, where he would design and manufacture jewelry to order, and then at 9 he would work with my mother in the store sale until the evening.

Both were very hardworking, honest, valued, generous and very dedicated people and managed to re-emerge after the anguish of the Holocaust and the difficult life they experienced in their youth while still in Europe, and also in their first years here in Israel. Despite all the losses, they established a family, home and business in the young state of Israel, and enabled - my younger brother, Mickey and me - a good life of abundance and comfort, and the ability to build a successful future for us and our child.

Along with the value of hard work and productivity, our parents instilled in us several other key values - the supreme value of family, the value of love of country, the significant value of contributing to society and giving and the value of studies and education.

My mother and father represent, to me, an entire generation of Holocaust survivors, whose highest value on the scale of values was patriotism for Israel: their desire for Zion (when they were still in Romania), and their love of the homeland - every day of their lives here in Israel.

My father was an instructor in the Zionist movement in Romania and was active there in the "Aliya B" organization. When he immigrated and enlisted in the IDF, he fought in all the Israeli wars until the Yom Kippur War as an artillery fighter. After that as a civilian, he served The Civilian Patrol unit, and for many years was among the patrols at night on the city streets with Carbine on his shoulder, after long days of hard work,

out of a sense of mission and the importance of protecting the civilian home front. My parents also volunteered at the Haifa Merchants' Organization. They volunteered also at my school's PTA – and in fundraising organizations for the humanitarian causes - such as refugees in Vietnam and Cambodia, etc.

But above all, my parents emphasized the value of the family and the high importance of quality and good education. It is probable that due to their immigration to Israel almost alone, as Holocaust survivors who began their lives here in the transit camps, that they gave my brother and me the highest quality education. They sent us to the Hebrew Reali School in Haifa, which was a private school with high demands from its students. They provided us with a broad education, whether in the study of musical instruments (piano, violin and flute) sports and dance classes, and of course very careful about our participation in the youth movement.

Their worldview, as someone who was robbed of so much during the Holocaust, was that the only thing that could not be robbed from a person was his education, or his professional expertise.

So now - about a year after my mother passed away and about a decade after my father passed away - I found it appropriate to perpetuate their memory by awarding a prize to encourage research on the Holocaust.

ROMANIA 1940-1941



Augustina (David) Krumholtz
1937 (Galati, Romania) –
2019 (Haifa, Israel)

Zwi (Heinrich) Krumholtz

1930 (Czerowitz, Romania) –
2009 (Haifa, Israel)

Augustina and Zwi – the first few years in Israel



Loving family – with my brother, Miki and me, Ronit. 1985



So happy with their Jewelry store in Haifa, "Tachshitai- Chen" 1990



**Augustina Krumholtz , 2010,
with the love of her 5
grandchildren:**

Maya and Elad Fisher

Or, Noga and Yahel Atzmon



**A statue in memory of my late
parents, made by my daughter
Maya Fisher, 2019**