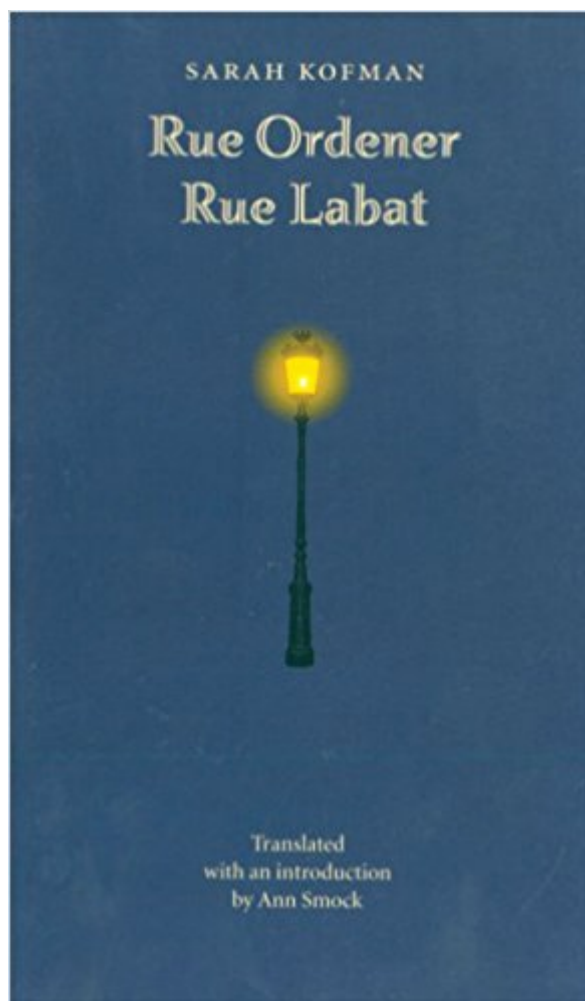




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Rue Ordener, Rue Labat (Stages)



Synopsis

Rue Ordener, Rue Labat is a moving memoir by the distinguished French philosopher Sarah Kofman. It opens with the horrifying moment in July 1942 when the author's father, the rabbi of a small synagogue, was dragged by police from the family home on Rue Ordener in Paris, then transported to Auschwitz "the place," writes Kofman, "where no eternal rest would or could ever be granted." It ends in the mid-1950s, when Kofman enrolled at the Sorbonne. The book is as eloquent as it is forthright. Kofman recalls her father and family in the years before the war, then turns to the terrors and confusions of her own childhood in Paris during the German occupation. Not long after her father's disappearance, Kofman and her mother took refuge in the apartment of a Christian woman on Rue Labat, where they remained until the Liberation. This bold woman, whom Kofman called Maman, undoubtedly saved the young girl and her mother from the death camps. But Kofman's close attachment to Maman also resulted in a rupture between mother and child that was never to be fully healed. This slender volume is distinguished by the author's clear prose, the carefully recounted horrors of her childhood, and the uncommon poise that came to her only with the passage of many years.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is a slim volume from a French philosopher writing of her childhood as a Jew in France during World War II. She writes from the perspective of an adult who clearly still is ill-at-ease with her

history, specifically her choosing of a Christian woman who help hide her over her mother; her violation of Jewish law taught her by her rabbi father. This volume does not speak to common experience, not even French Jewish experience; rather it is the experience of Sarah Kofman as seen in retrospect. What is most evident is the lack of resolution regarding her past - the reader appreciates the difficulty with which she apparently tells her story.

The book would have been much better if it was longer and followed a theme longer than just a couple of pages. The different selections started out very interestingly but since the material never was in any depth it was hard to follow. I will explore other books the author has written and see what they are like.

Short, graphic, not easy to put down.

Mildly inspiring

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