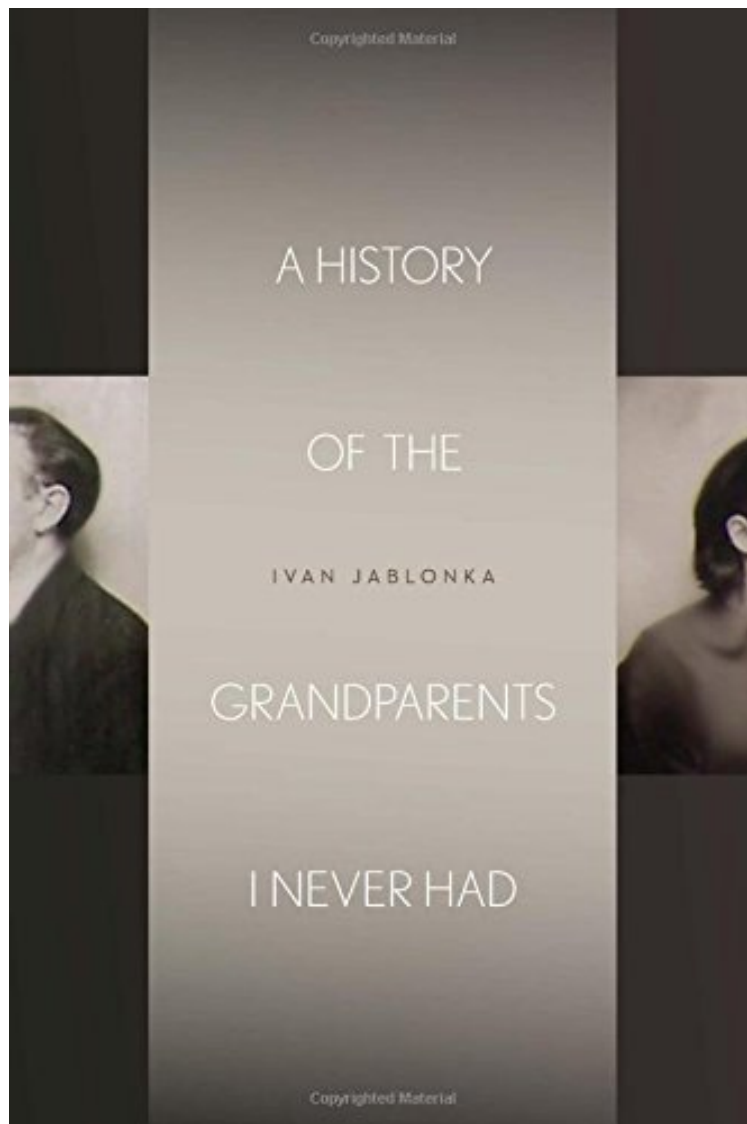


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A History of the Grandparents I Never Had (Stanford Studies in Jewish History and Culture)

Ivan Jablonka

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#911476 in Books Ivan Jablonka 2016-05-11Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.00 x 1.20 x 6.00l, .0 #File Name: 0804795444352 pagesA History of the Grandparents I Never Had Stanford Studies in Jewish History and Culture | File size: 43.Mb

Ivan Jablonka : A History of the Grandparents I Never Had (Stanford Studies in Jewish History and Culture) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A History of the Grandparents I Never Had (Stanford Studies in Jewish History and Culture):

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. A picture of lost grandparents. By Jill Meyer
Memoirs of the Holocaust are now being written by the second generation from the survivors or victims as that generation has been dying off. In his astounding book, "A History of the Grandparents I Never Had" French historian, Ivan Jablonka examines the lives...and deaths, of his paternal grandparents. He is the son of their baby son, who along with his toddler sister, were hidden and saved when the parents were arrested in February 1943, in Paris, and sent to their deaths at Auschwitz. Ivan Jablonka writes movingly about his Polish-born grandparents, Mates Jablonka and Idesa Korembaum. Born into large families in the Polish shtetl of Parczew, both were early believers in the Communist movement in the Soviet Union. While others in their families and the shtetl were more interested in Zionism, Mates and Idesa fought to bring Communism to 1920's and 30's Poland. They were part of a movement of young people who could not see a future in Poland. Mates was arrested several times; Idesa once. In the mid-1930's, many members of the family were able to emigrate to Israel and Argentina, while Mates fled to Paris in 1937. Idesa soon followed and the two eked out a precarious existence in Paris as undocumented immigrants, while continuing their political activities. The two bounced around Paris as they hid from the French authorities who seemed overwhelmed by the number of the undocumented in their city. In 1940, however, the Germans invaded France and Mates joined the French Foreign Legion and fought in western France at the Battle of Soissons. Before reading this book, I had no idea that a number of Jewish refugees in France fought the Germans. Ivan Jablonka finishes his grandparents' story by telling of their arrests and incarceration at Drancy camp and their removal to Auschwitz with 1000 other French Jews. He doesn't know exactly when his grandfather died, but assumes his grandmother was gassed upon arrival. But what of Mates and Idesa's two babies, Suzanne and Marcel? How were they saved? We know they were saved and Marcel's son, Ivan, gives the story of love and sacrifice on many people's parts. Ivan Jablonka's book is not the easiest book to read. The lives...and deaths are complicated to follow but Jablonka gives his grandparents the accounting they were denied in life. This is a beautifully written book, using historical documentation and personal interviews.
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Excellent Family History Research and Storytelling
By Walter S. Elias
A sensitive well-written family history combining genealogical research and detective work of the highest order. Highly recommended.

Ivan Jablonka's grandparents' lives ended long before his began: although Mats and Idesa Jablonka were his family, they were perfect strangers. When he set out to uncover their story, Jablonka had little to work with. Neither of them was the least bit famous, and they left little behind except their two orphaned children, a handful of letters, and a passport. Persecuted as communists in Poland, as refugees in France, and then as Jews under the Vichy regime, Mats and Idesa lived their short lives underground. They were overcome by the tragedies of the twentieth century: Stalinism, the mounting dangers in Europe during the 1930s, the Second World War, and the destruction of European Jews. Jablonka's challenge was, as a historian, to rigorously distance himself and yet, as family, to invest himself completely in their story. Imagined oppositions collapsed between scholarly research and personal commitment, between established facts and the passion of the one recording them, between history and the art of storytelling. To write this book, Jablonka traveled to three continents; met the handful of survivors of his grandparents' era, their descendants, and some of his far-flung cousins; and investigated twenty different archives. And in the process, he reflected on his own family and his responsibilities to his father, the orphaned son, and to his own children and the family wounds they all inherited. *A History of the Grandparents I Never Had* cannot bring Mats and Idesa to life, but Jablonka succeeds in bringing them, as he soberly puts it, to light. The result is a gripping story, a profound reflection, and an absolutely extraordinary history.

"Ivan Jablonka is a tremendous writer—compassionate and searching, intimate and ambitious—and *A History of the Grandparents I Never Had* is a painstakingly researched and profoundly heartfelt book that teaches us new and necessary things about family, history and the extraordinary power of storytelling. It's one of the most beautiful books I've read in years." (Molly Antopol author of *The UnAmericans*)
"Outstanding" (Caroline Brou France Culture)
Perhaps no moment in modern history has been written about as much as the Shoah. Historians and memoirists, in particular, have striven to re-create or retell this event. While the two genres are distinct, the dividing line between them—objectivity lying to one side, subjectivity to the other—is often breached. In the best of cases, such as Saul Friedlander's *When Memory Comes*, this brackish confluence makes for brilliance. To this select company we must now add Ivan Jablonka's *A History of the Grandparents I Never Had*." (Robert Zaretsky *The Forward*)
"This is history at its best, a combination of rigorous scholarship and impassioned autobiography. Meticulously retracing the lives and times of his Polish-Jewish grandparents, who fled to France in 1938 only to lose their lives under the Nazi regime, Ivan Jablonka miraculously resurrects for himself and for the reader the grandparents he never knew." (Irvin D. Yalom Stanford University, and author of *The Spinoza Problem*)
"A masterpiece" (Jean-Louis Jeannelle *Le Monde*)
"*A History of the Grandparents I Never Had* is an extraordinary book at once a breathtaking work of historical investigation and a deeply personal meditation on the possibilities and limits of historical knowledge. By uncovering the traces left behind by people who literally vanished into thin air, Ivan Jablonka sheds new light on the Holocaust as well as on our own

desire to grasp what cannot be grasped." (Maurice Samuels Yale University)"A beautiful, unforgettable book" (Gilles Heur Tlrama)"This book is a thriller, as compelling as any work of fiction...This book is both poignant and penetrating; gruesome and horrifying. We experience the extremes of human interactions. Recommended for all adult and senior high school Judaica collections." (Marion Stein Association of Jewish Libraries)About the AuthorIvan Jablonka is Professor of Contemporary History at the University Paris 13, France, and Editor-in-Chief ofLa Vie des idées/Books and Ideas. This book, first published in French, won the 2012Prix du Snat du livre d'histoire, Prix Guizot de l'Acadmie franaise, and thePrix Augustin-Thierry des Rendez-Vous de l'Histoire de Blois.