

Candidates for the 2016 Literary Prize :

At the Existentialist cafe: freedom, being and apricot cocktails, by Sarah Bakewell. Chatto & Windus. 440pp. £16.99. ISBN 9780701186586.

Tells the story of modern existentialism through the personal and philosophical relationships between its leading proponents, French and German.

Louis: the French prince who invaded England, by Catherine Hanley. Yale University Press. 279pp. £25. ISBN 9780300217452.

Tells the little-known story of Prince Louis of France, later King Louis VIII, who was invited to England by barons opposed to King John to come to England in an ultimately unsuccessful attempt to claim the throne.

The life of Louis XVI, by John Hardman. Yale University Press. 512pp. £25. ISBN 9780300220421.

A reassessment of the life and reign of a French king often maligned as either a stupid and weak despot or a cruel and treasonous tyrant.

The last Communard: Adrien Lejeune, the unexpected life of a revolutionary, by Gavin Bowd. Verso. 182pp. £14.99. ISBN 9781784782856.

The story of a Communard who escaped execution after 1871 and ended up in the USSR, where he was hailed as a revolutionary hero.

Les Parisiennes: how the women of Paris lived, loved and died in the 1940s, by Anne Sebba. Weidenfeld & Nicolson. 457pp. £20. ISBN 9780297787095.

Narrates the lives of women – Frenchwomen and foreigners, members of high and low society, collaborators and resisters – in Paris during the German

occupation and its aftermath, and the light this throws on the French experience of the Occupation.

The French revolution: from Enlightenment to Tyranny, by Ian Davidson.
Profile Books. 314pp. £25.00. ISBN 9781846685408.

Narrates the history of the French Revolution as the work of the enlightened bourgeoisie, and discusses how it degenerated from their idealistic actions to the Terror.

Existentialism and excess: the life and times of Jean-Paul Sartre, by Gary Cox.
Bloomsbury Academic. 338pp. £16.99. ISBN 9781474235334.

A study of the life, work and ideas of Jean-Paul Sartre in the context of the history he lived through and engaged with.

Churchill's legacy: two speeches to save the world, by Alan Watson.
Bloomsbury Academic. 204pp. £16.99. ISBN 9781408880210.

Discusses Churchill's two great speeches in 1946: his 'Iron Curtain' speech in Fulton, Missouri, and his Zurich speech advocating Franco-German partnership. Greatly controversial at the time, the speeches foresaw the development of American involvement in Europe and the growth of European unity in the face of the threat from Stalin's USSR.

No need for geniuses: revolutionary science in the age of the guillotine, by Steve Jones. Little, Brown. 353pp. £25.00. 9780349405452.

Describes the importance of science and scientists in pre-revolutionary France and in the revolution itself, and also the impact of the revolution on science and scientists; in the process it ranges somewhat discursively well before and after its stated period.

Power and glory: France's secret wars with Britain and America 1945 – 2016,
by R. T. Howard. Biteback Publishing. 344pp. £20.

The history of the often secret post-war political, diplomatic and military rivalry between France and its nominal allies Britain and the USA.