

Candidates for the 2017 Literary Prize:

Exile, imprisonment or death: the politics of disgrace in Bourbon France, 1610-1789, by Julian Swann. Oxford University Press. 521pp. £85. ISBN 9780198788690.

Describes how the ‘politics of disgrace’ was used by the Bourbon monarchs of France from Louis XIII onwards to establish the centralised absolute monarchy; how it was developed as part of the French political system, and was contested, changed and endured by its victims until the French Revolution.

The disappearance of Emile Zola: love, literature and the Dreyfus case, by Michael Rosen. Faber & Faber. 302pp. £16.99. ISBN 9780571312016.

Tells the story of Zola’s life in exile in London where he fled in July 1898 after his sentence for libel for his open letter *J’accuse*; describes the attitude to his writings and his flight in France and England, his (often unenthusiastic) reaction to English society, culture and cuisine, and his personal life in London divided between his wife and his mistress.

Arguing about Empire: imperial rhetoric in Britain and France, 1882-1956, by Martin Thomas and Richard Toye. Oxford University Press. 236 pp. £35. ISBN 9780198749196.

Describes the interwoven rivalries and co-operation between France and Britain in their imperial efforts between the North African crises of 1881-82 and the Suez crisis of 1956.

The Valentine house, by Emma Henderson. Sceptre. 338 pp. £17.99. ISBN 9781444704020.

A novel about five generations of British Alpinists in the Haute Savoie and their interaction with the local French.

Montmartre: a cultural history, by Nicholas Hewitt. 319 pp. £85. ISBN 9781786940230.

Starting with the 18th century development of Montmartre as an artistic and pleasure centre, this book describes its dominance of French popular and high culture from the Belle Epoque through the Great War, the inter-war years, the Occupation and its end-game contemporaneously with the end of the Fourth republic in the 1950s.

The French exception: Emmanuel Macron: the extraordinary rise and risk, by Adam Plowright. 373 pp. Icon Books. £12.99. ISBN 978178578.

Describes the career of Emmanuel Macron and how he has risen almost without trace from provincial Amiens to the presidency of France.