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978-0-521-38426-1 - Emile Zola: L'Assommoir  
David Baguley  
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*Landmarks of world literature*

**Emile Zola**

**L'ASSOMMOIR**

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EMILE ZOLA

# L'Assommoir

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## *Note on the text and abbreviations*

Page references for the actual text of *L'Assommoir* are taken from the standard edition of the novel by Henri Mitterand in Vol. II of *Les Rougon-Macquart* (Paris: Gallimard, 1961), which appears in the Bibliothèque de la Pléiade format; other references to this five-volume edition of Zola's series of novels are preceded by the abbreviation *RM* and the volume number. For other texts by Zola, references are taken from the fifteen-volume edition of his *Œuvres complètes* (Paris: Cercle du livre précieux, 1966–9), also established by Henri Mitterand, and are preceded by the abbreviation *OC* and the volume number. All translations from the French are my own. Further bibliographical details for short references appearing in the text are to be found in the 'Guide to further reading' at the end of the book.

## Chronology

### *Zola's life and works*

- 1840 2 April: birth of Emile Zola in Paris, the only child of Emilie Aubert and François Zola, an Italian engineer.
- 1843 Zola family moves to Aix-en-Provence.
- 1847 Death of Zola's father, leaving his family in financial difficulties and compelled frequently to move to ever more modest quarters.

1848

1849

1850

1851

- 1852 Zola a pupil at the Collège Bourbon in Aix. Friendship with Cézanne.

1853

1854–6

1857

- 1858 Returns to live in Paris. Writes reams of poetry during these years, most of which has been lost.

### *Literary and historical events*

Stendhal, *La Chartreuse de Parme*.

February Revolution. Fall of the July Monarchy; Second Republic declared. Louis Napoleon Bonaparte elected President.

Dickens, *David Copperfield*.

Death of Balzac.

2 December: *coup d'état*.

2 December: proclamation of the Second Empire.

Hugo, *Les Châtiments*. Marriage of Napoleon III with Eugénie de Montijo. Haussmann becomes Prefect of the Seine; beginning of the reconstruction of Paris.  
 Crimean War.

Baudelaire, *Les Fleurs du mal*. Flaubert, *Madame Bovary*.