



'Volpone' in Context

Biters Bitten and Fools Fooled

By Keith Linley

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'Volpone' in Jacobean context.

'Detailed and fascinating. Such clear and full explorations of its historical and cultural contexts will deeply enrich students' understanding of the play. Vital reading for anyone interested in how the affairs, interests and obsessions of early Jacobean England parallel those of our own world, and therefore make Volpone so important for us today.' —Ewan Craig, Head of English, Yarm School, United Kingdom

'Linley's book is lively, readable and illuminating; it draws you into Jonson's world and provides insight into the forces that shaped the tour de force that is Volpone. An essential guide.' —Wendy Ellis, OCR A Level English Literature Team Leader

What would a Jacobean audience have made of this grim exposure of human greed? This guide to the various contexts that situate 'Volpone' in its time, explains the Christian ethics, the contemporary socio-political scene, the literary atmosphere and requirements of comedy that inform the background of this dark play.

Readership

Detailed information and discussion of the cultural contexts for any student preparing for an examination or writing an assignment on 'Volpone'.

Contents

Introduction; About this book - What is a context? – Further Reading; Part I. The Inherited Past; Prologue: the setting; 1. The historical context; 2. The world order: from divinity to dust; 3. Sin, death and the prince of darkness; 4. The seven cardinal virtues; 5. Kingship; 6. Patriarchy, family authority and gender relationships; 7. Man in his place; 8. Images of disorder: the religious context; Part II. The Jacobean present; 9. Ben in context; 10. Literary context; 11. The political context; 12. The beast fable; 13. Transgressions and sins: the biters bit. 14. The venetian context: consumerism and cannibalism; Bibliography

About the Author(s) / Editor(s)

Poet, painter, teacher and academic, Keith Linley has lectured at university and given papers at conferences and book festivals on a range of literary subjects.

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