

- “The gold must be condemned as a positive danger, not a neutral substance”
- “Implicit condemnation [of Venetian lasciviousness] in every line”
- “Venetian justice, then, is not blind but purblind” - purblind, partially blind. Justice punishes when it becomes excessive, but it does not investigate or uncover, or act until it becomes obvious. In the play crime does lead to success immediately but it overflows and then it is punished. Similarly, virtue does not pay because it reaches its limits and good men are victimised by evil and taken advantage of.
- “Values reverse to the extent that pleasure may give pain, and pain pleasure”

## PRODUCTIONS

### *RSC performance*

- Gave Mosca a backplot of being an adopted orphan and thus indebted to Volpone. Also, familial bond not out of duty but genuine connection.
- In the round, dividing the stage with doors - see the transformation of Volpone by Mosca behind closed doors, which makes the audience complicit in their crimes as the visible suitor awaits outside unaware.
- The judges in the court scenes are played by the sexual deviants.

### *Ontario production*

- A whore crawls out Volpone's bed as Mosca wakes him. Shows immorality of play.
- Ralph Richardson and William Hutt - actors portraying Volpone as a bored aristocrat with contempt.

### *Zweig adaptation*

- Mosca ends up with Volpone's money. Modern socioeconomics before Elizabethan, Venetian norm.

## CONTEXT AO4

### *Commedia Dell'Arte*

- Pantalone: money-grabbing old man, top of the social hierarchy, Pantalone *is* money, employer and father, controls social structure; tries to hold on to power from the young and the Zannies, he is a defeated character, often with a phallic codpiece, old man stoop protecting his purse and penis which restricts the movement of his legs (perhaps reflected of it is as his downfall, barred by his monetary, social and sexual obsessions). He is Volpone.
- Il Dottore: Often cuckolded bachelor or widower (Corvino?); brags of travels (Sir Pol?)
- Zanny: the servant who overpowers the master, Pantalone. (Mosca).

### *Isle of the Dogs* - Jonson

- Scandalised the court, prompting the Privy Council to immediately close all London playhouses.

### *Sejenus* - Jonson

- Jonson appeared before court for “popery and treason”

### *The Alchemist* - Jonson

- Lovewit returns home and acts as a judge at the end of the play, and forgives the criminal, the butler. Reflecting Venetian court-corruption at the time.

### *The Epistle* - Jonson

Apologising for his works to the Church and universities.

- Claims he insulted only bad people who deserve it, i.e courts and greedy people.

Jonson had a classical education.

In the Quarto and Folio versions the running-title was *The Fox*.