

# The play "merchant of venice" by shakespeare

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



Alessandro Larosa How does Shakespeare present his ideas (themes, main points, the time, morality and reflection) within the merchant of Venice?

Introduction - The play, the merchant of Venice, was written by Shakespeare.

The play puts forward ideas and themes which are universal and relevant in today's life. He uses techniques, dramatic techniques and context to showcase these ideas which form the plot, climax and conclusion of this remarkable play. Body - Justice Point: In Venice, 1596, the economic stability was dependant on foreign businessmen like shylock.

The city has laws to protect their legal rights and it is how the two religions follow and obey these laws which separate them. Elaboration: In the context of Merchant of Venice, Jews believe in justice, and following the law and Christians are shown to have mercy. Shylock with his bond prepares to cut Antonio's heart, meanwhile the Christian court begs him and asks why he will not show mercy. Shylock replies saying he doesn't have a logical reason for why he hates Antonio but he insists on having his bond to for fill his revenge. Example: Shylock has a speech about the courts question. Quote: Tis mine and I will have it. If you deny me, fie upon your law— There is no force in the decrees of Venice. I stand for judgment. Answer, shall I have it? " Technique: Metaphor of the pound of flesh used: A pound of flesh is used as a metaphor for justice. Shylock has had his daughter taken away from him like a part of his flesh and he is simply getting it back, while filling his revenge he is also achieving justice within himself. Link: Shakespeare uses justice to make the play realistic; everything in life is controlled by laws. It is the scales of justice which separates the two religions. Wealth over love Point:

In Shakespeare's plays he always has involved love. But what could be valued more than love, money. Shakespeare brings forward Wealth over love theme to the play to create a sense that is the play about lovers and people having a happily ever after or about their personal wealth. Explanation: In the play Christians are noticed as being generous and selfless about their bank account whereas the Jewish people are portrayed as people who are uptight about their wealth and very protective of anything valuable to them. Quotes: Shylock has his daughter taken from him, as he sees it. She actually leaves to marry Lorenzo.

When he looks around to find that she has left for Belmont with all of his wealth, he screams. 'My daughter! O my ducats! O my daughter! Fled with a Christian! O my Christian ducats! Justice! the law! my ducats, and my daughter! Link: Shakespeare uses this quote to confuse us. Is Shylock more worried about losing his wealth or of his daughter? Through this quote, Shakespeare also has us thinking another situation. Is this any different from the way Bassanio goes after Portia for her money. In both cases Shakespeare shows that human relationships are hard to tell apart from wealth. Appearance vs. reality Point:

Another theme that is put forward by Shakespeare in the play is appearance vs. reality. This theme is symbolic of the most universal human problem in the context in The Merchant of Venice and in modern society. Explanation Shakespeare expresses this theme through a dead father of a living daughter Portia. There are three caskets, one gold, one silver and one bronze. The three of them are a game of chance, a gamble laid out in order to find the right suitor for Portia and her father's wealth. One of the three

contains a skull, a fool's head and the last Portia's picture. Example. The outside of the gold casket promises, "Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire." It sounds good but it is a trick. Once opened it contains a skull with a smug message, "All that glisters is not gold." The Gold casket and skull symbolise that appearances are often deceiving and human desire, such as wealth, can be dangerous. The inscription silver casket explains, "Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves." The inside contains a smiling face of an idiot and with a note that reads, "So be gone: you are sped." Whoever chooses the silver casket is a fool who'll get what he deserves (a picture of another fool). Finally, the lead chest.

The metal is used to symbolize inner beauty and modesty and contains a picture of Portia. The inscription is very significant, "Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath" The inscription is symbolic of marriage and reminds us of the fact that Bassanio's battle for Portia literally involves a man who must "hazard all he hath," in marriage. Also in relation to Antonio, who risks his life to loan his best friend the money to woo his wife to be. Technique Shakespeare uses juxtaposition with the gold and lead caskets to create a visual representation of Appearance vs. Reality. The lead casket is gold in disguise. Link

Shakespeare expresses the theme through the characters and techniques in the merchant of Venice. The theme is used to engage the audience as we are eager to look behind disguises and find the reality of the characters and the events. Conclusion - There are many different themes in The Merchant of Venice which are moral values. To show mercy, to think twice about a book with a glistening cover and to treasure human relationships over the

insignificance of wealth. Through the techniques and examples revealed in the Merchant of Venice Shakespeare displays ideas which are extremely significant from when it was first written to present.