

# The merchant of venice critique essay

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



he MMabelMartin Professor Valencic, Adam ENGL 200 Dec 16, 2012 Dear Prof. Valencic: In exploring "The Merchant of Venice" by William Shakespeare while trying to classify it, as it is a troublesome play to classify in the usual Shakespearean categories of comedy, history or tragedy, I came to the conclusion that the ultimate view of this drama is neither simply a comedy or a tragedy, but a combination of both.

In the book it was stated that, "Coinciding with the reduction in the stature of characters in tragedy has come a hybrid form that has come to be known as tragicomedy, that is, works of drama that combine the tragic and comic together" (277). With this in mind, after reading this troublesome play, I'd have to argue that it be considered a "Tragicomedy".

So now I ask professor, would this qualify as such, although originally this drama has been titled, The Comical History of the Merchant of Venice, or Otherwise Called the Jew of Venice, originally I did not see the comedy within it, but I can see some now, but I also wouldn't call it a complete tragedy, being that there was conflict, it ultimately never ended in a complete tragedy to call it that either. I appreciate any feedback to the matter, whether it still corresponds to the original question? Is my understanding of the term applied correctly in my opinion towards this drama?

I look forward to gaining more knowledge towards this assignment which I enjoyed analyzing. Sincerely, Mabel Martin MabelMartin Professor Valencic, Adam ENGL 200 Dec 16, 2012 The Merchant of Venice "The villainy you teach me I will execute, and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction" (324). When analyzing this line from "The Merchant of Venice", it does not

seem as though this drama would be considered a comedy, but rather a tragedy. We all have read and studied the variety of works of the great writer William Shakespeare, most of his plays can be categorized into comedy, history, or tragedy.

However, this specific plays full name is originally , The Comical History of the Merchant of Venice, or Otherwise Called the Jew of Venice, but although the title contemplates that it be considered a comedy, after reviewing and summarizing the complete drama, I disagree and view this plays classification to be different. Considering the above mentioned quote directly from the drama, one would assume it may then be a tragedy, which for a while, I almost believed it to be. But after discovering the final outcome, and looking at the drama as it whole, I would not even consider it a tragedy either.

Nevertheless, I found there to be direct correlation to both classifications within the play as a whole. Earlier through my studies of Drama throughout the chapter, however, I came across a new term; one that I believe would best suit the classification for this particular drama. “ Coinciding with the reduction in the stature of characters in tragedy has come a hybrid form that has come to be known as tragicomedy, that is, works of drama that combine the tragic and comic together” (277).

This definition led me to the conclusion that this is what I would base my classification for William Shakespeare’s “ The Merchant of Venice” This drama is not only a tragedy, because although a character does seem to express characteristics of those of a villain, “ The pound of flesh which I

demand of him is dearly bought, 'tis mine, and I will have it", there is more background to his experiences, (personal, psychological, emotional, social and even moral) which are explained, for why he is the way he is, and also the final outcome does not go as he had hoped as one would expect from a tragedy.

Although tragedies are not always followed with death, there are many other points that come across that are aspects of a comedy. As far as being a comedy, it also displays, not only laughing moments, which are not what a true comedy was actually based on in drama, it displayed for some a happy ending, where there are weddings, and another shot at living for Antonio.

This play even displays what I think to be to an extent, in a religious view, an anthropological approach, which honestly is a key factor in this play, where a main character, Shylock's, believes in religion, those of a Jew, compose a major role for the development in this play, to the point in the end he is even forced to convert into Christianity, which in turn the villain's tragic plot, becomes tragic for him as it turns back on him, and all else continue with their lives, to include his daughter, happy, in this complicated compilation of drama classifications that change throughout the story.

Ultimately, this intended comedy, is in fact a comedy, but can also be viewed as a tragedy, because of the villain, although the final tragedy ends over him. With this in mind, Shakespeare seems to want the reader to gain sympathy for the so called villain, as it has been his difficult life that has took led him there. Coming from that point of view, it is a tragedy, that he loses his daughter, his agreement misunderstanding, and ultimately his religion,

which is forced, and for anyone that would be tragic, to be treated as such all your life for your beliefs, and then ultimately forced to change them.

So depending on one's standpoint, and the relationship you develop with the characters, this story can be viewed differently, as either simply a comedy or for some, who may understand what that is like be seen as a tragedy. However, as it was defined earlier, I conclude that the best suited classification for this play overall would be tragicomedy. Works Cited Shakespeare, William. " The Merchant of Venice. " ENGL200: Composition and Literature. New York: McGraw-Hill 2011: 308-339. Web. 16 December 2012. ENGL200: Composition and Literature. New York: McGraw-Hill 2011: 275-289. Web. 30 November 2012.