



Srinivasan College of Arts and Science, Perambalur



(Affiliated to Bharathidasan University, Tiruchirappalli)

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WELCOME

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DRAMA FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

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TITLE: THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

SUBJECT CODE: 16ELCE3

CLASS: ALL II UG (EXCEPT HMCS)

The Merchant of Venice

SHAKESPEARE

“The quality of mercy is not strain'd, it droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven upon the place beneath.”

- Portia, Act IV, Scene 1

AUTHOR INTRODUCTION

BORN: Stratford-upon-Avon

26 April 1564

- Died: 23 April 1616(aged 52)
- Occupation: Playwright, Poet, Actor
- Spouse: Anne Hathway
- Children: Sussanna Hall,
Hamnet Shakespeare,
Judith Quiney
- Parents: John Shakespeare(father),
Mary Arden(mother)



Characters:

▶ Antonio

The merchant of Venice, a wealthy and generous man



▶ Bassanio

His closest friend, a poor nobleman

▶ Portia

His wife, a wealthy heiress



Characters (cont.)

- **Shylock**

Antonio's arch-rival,
a Jewish
moneylender known
for his selfishness



- **Jessica**

Shylock's daughter



Characters (cont.)

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- **Graziano**

A friend to Antonio and Bassanio

- **Nerissa**

His wife, Portia's maid

▶ **Duke of Venice**

The ruler of Venice

▶ **Lorenzo**

Antonio's friend

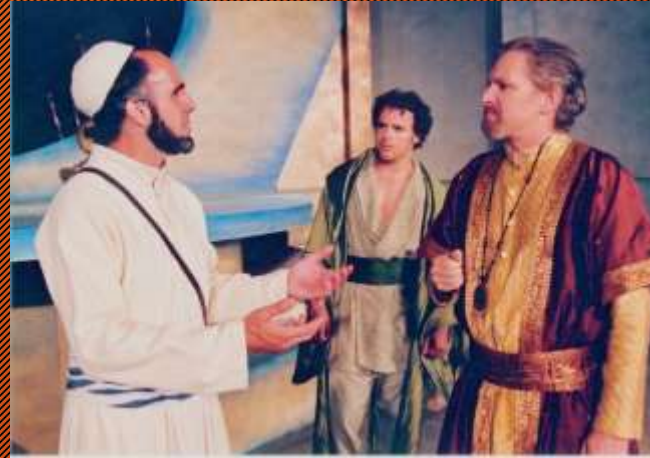
Bassanio needs money...

- He wants to marry the wealthy Portia, but he needs 3000 ducats
- He asks Antonio for aid
- Antonio is depressed for no reason, but he promises to help his friend



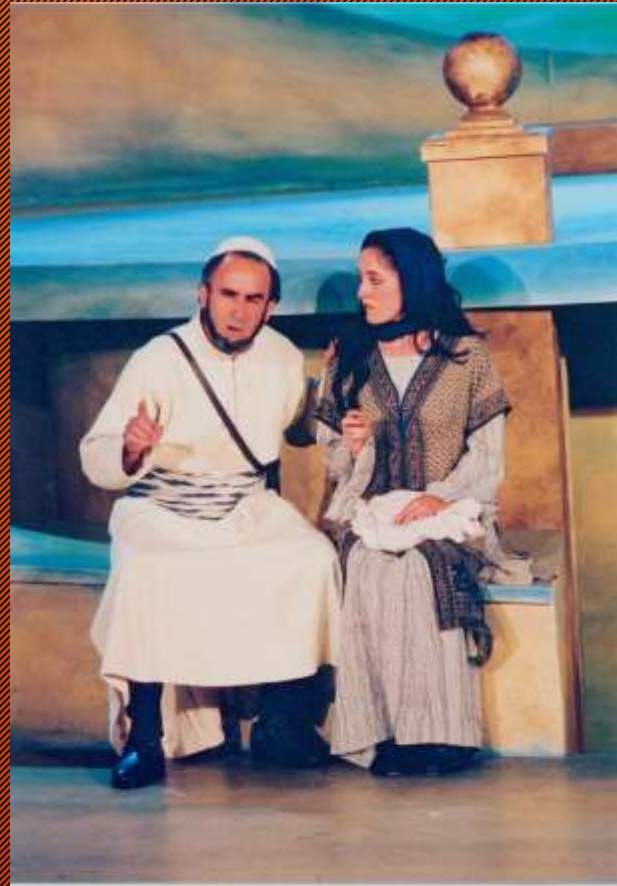
They go to Shylock

- Antonio's ships are at the sea
- They go to Shylock to borrow money
- Shylock hates Antonio, but allows him to borrow 3000 ducats
- They make a contract: Antonio will pay Shylock a pound of his flesh if he cannot return the money within 3 months
- Bassanio is worried, but Antonio agrees



Bassanio leaves with the money

- On the very same day, Shylock's daughter, Jessica, whom he loved a lot, ran away with Lorenzo, one of Antonio's friends, taking a bag of Shylock's jewels with her



- Shylock runs through the streets; he vows revenge
- He is later sad that his daughter sold away a jeweled ring he had given her for a monkey

Bassanio arrives...

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- Portia's father had set up a test for Portia's suitors
- Three boxes: gold, silver, and lead

- The Prince of Morocco and Prince of Aragon both fail the test
- Bassanio, however, succeeds because he knows that appearance hides what a thing truly is



Who chooses
me will get
what he desires.

All that glitters is not gold.



Who chooses
me shall gain
what many
men desire.

There are many fools covered in silver.



Who chooses
me will be ready
to lose all that
he has



Bassanio marries Portia

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- His wife gives him a ring and tells him to keep it
- Graziano marries Portia's maid, Nerissa, and she gives him a ring as well
- However, bad news from Venice arrives...

Antonio's ships have been lost!

- ▶ Antonio has been taken the court of Venice and has to give Shylock a pound of his flesh
- ▶ He wishes to see Bassanio one last time
- ▶ Bassanio rushes to Venice with 6000 ducats to save his friend



Portia decides to help

- ▶ She dresses herself in the clothes of a judge and follows her husband to Venice
- ▶ Shylock has refused the Bassanio's payment and calls for his 1 pound of flesh



Mercy!

- The Duke of Venice and Portia (as the judge) tell Shylock to have mercy on Antonio, but he says he will have nothing except his pound of flesh
- Portia tells Shylock:

*The quality of mercy is not strain'd,
it droppeth as the gentle rain
from heaven upon the place
beneath.*



- Shylock refuses to have mercy, and Portia grants him his pound of flesh
- Shylock sharpens his knife
- However, before he can cut Antonio, Portia stops him...



A pound of flesh

- ▶ The contract said a pound of *flesh*, Portia tells Shylock, you cannot shed any blood or you will forfeit your life
- ▶ Shylock then says he'll take the money, but Portia says it's too late
- ▶ She also tells Shylock that any person who threatens a Christian's life will be sentenced to death



Antonio shows mercy

- The Duke of Venice shows Shylock mercy and spares his life, but he has to become a Christian and give half of his money to the state, and half of his money to Antonio



- Antonio says he will give his share of the money back to Shylock if he would take Jessica back
- Shylock agrees and goes home, defeated

The price

- Bassanio wants to reward the young judge (who is actually his wife), but she asks for the ring she gave her



- Bassanio is reluctant but gives it to the judge because he is grateful
- Nerissa also asks for Graziano's ring; he follows Bassanio and gives it to her

Happiness complete

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- Bassanio takes Antonio to his home
- Portia asks for the ring, and Bassanio admits he has given it to the judge who saved his friend

- Portia pretends to be angry, but in the end confesses that she was the judge
- She tells Antonio that three of his ships had returned safely
- They go and celebrate

Themes

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- Prejudice (anti-Semitism)
- Appearance vs. worth
- Friendship
- Self-interest vs. love

Shylock - tragic villain?

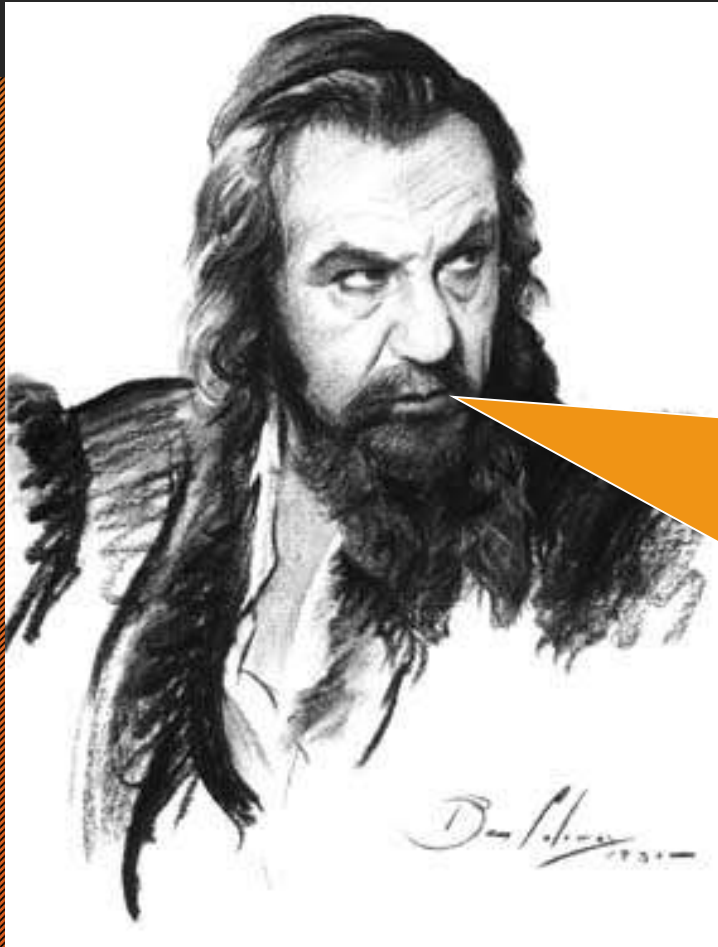
- Misunderstood - the victim of prejudice?
- Jews were looked down upon in Christian Europe



- Self-interest vs. love - he does not value money over feelings
- He loves his daughter
- Does that justify his evil intentions?

The most famous speech

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I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? if you tickle us, do we not laugh? if you poison us, do we not die? and if you wrong us, shall we not revenge?

Shylock – Act III, Scene 1

19-12-2022

Questions

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- Who is your favorite character?
- What is friendship?
- Did Shylock deserve what happened to him? Was his actions justified?

- Do people who don't show mercy deserve it?
- Why does prejudice exist?
- How would you judge a person?

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• THANK YOU

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