

says 'But mercy is above this sceptered sway' here Portia professes that mercy is the most important thing. Portia is shown as a merciful character as although she defeats Shylock, she saves Antonio who is a Christian character. Furthermore Shylock would have been the expected villain as he was a Jew, by Portia saving the Christian character shows her as a heroine. Portia is a compassionate character as she fought the trial so Antonio would win, she did not just save Antonio but also Bassanio, who would never have forgiven himself if Antonio had died.

I think that Shakespeare portrays Portia as a manipulative character, Portia manipulates people and situations in order to get her own way, for example throughout the trial scene she allows Shylock to think he has won. We suspect that Portia knew from the beginning that she could defeat Shylock, but she allowed him to think that he would have his bond, which is cruel. As well Portia is not a merciful character as although she demands that Shylock shows mercy however when the roles are reversed Portia shows Shylock no such mercy as she takes away half his possessions and then allows Antonio to decide if he dies or not.

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