

and emotions. In complete accord with Lang's pronouncements on these matters, the gesture of pleading (see Tamora) and that of submission (see Chiron and Demetrius) are presented iconically. The Queen of the Goths illustrates Lang's dictum: "*Wir flehen, indem beide Hände mit einander zugekehrten Handflächen entweder erhoben oder gesenkt oder ineinander verschränkt werden*" ("We plead by raising, lowering or folding both hands with the palms turned towards each other" Lang 1975, 186).

The specifically theatrical code which the (gestural) signs embodied in the Peacham sketch prove is present in it is ample evidence that we are dealing with a stage drawing produced on the occasion of an actual stage performance. The drawing is thus a genuine pictorial document of the Elizabethan stage. It is, in addition, able to provide information about the first actors to play Shakespearean roles.

A further important indication that Peacham's drawing was based on a contemporary production of the play is the fact that the part of Tamora – as was customary at the time – was played by a male actor. In the enlarged detail of the sketch (cf. fig. 3) the actor's Adam's apple is clearly discernible.

So if it can be regarded as certain that the drawing is based on a theatre performance and can provide insight into Elizabethan stage practice, the next step is to ask which contemporary actors may have been involved in the production. In this connection it is significant that actors of three companies altogether performed the play in the printed version of the Quarto edition of 1594, which was the text used on the stage. This, at any rate, is made quite clear by the subtitle ("*Titus Andronicus: As it was Plaide by the Right Honourable the Earle of Darbie, Earle of Pembroke, and Earle of Sussex their Seruants*"). It remains unclear, though, whether each group performed by itself or two or three groups together. The actors named first are those of the Earl of Derby (Ferdinando Stanley [1559?-1594]). They had previously been under the patronage of the Earl of Leicester. In Stanley's day they were known as Lord Strange's Company and after his death Henry Carey, the first Lord Hunsdon, a first cousin of Queen Elizabeth I, became their patron. Carey held the office of Lord Chamberlain from 1597 (as did his eldest son, George Carey, the second Lord Hunsdon, later on). His actors were consequently known as the Lord Chamberlain's Men.¹ In 1603, however, they came under the patronage of King James I and were renamed the King's Men. If – as the Quarto edition proves – Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* was also performed in 1594 (and possibly earlier) by the Earl of Derby's Company or this company participated in performances of the play, we can assume that Shakespeare himself and, particularly, Richard Burbage played leading roles. Burbage is known to have been the first to play the title roles in Shakespeare's great tragedies, written after the turn of the century. In autumn 1594, after the disintegration of theatrical life in the plague years of 1592, 1593 and part of 1594, he became leader of the Lord Chamberlain's Company, which subsequently turned out to be the most important group of actors in London. The company, which had been re-founded in summer 1594, had among its members Will Kempe and William Shakespeare (cf. Harrison, [1939] 1966), 106-7). Written evidence that Shakespeare – together with Kempe and Burbage – acted on stage as early as 1594 is provided by what is so far the oldest document that mentions the dramatist's name in connection with a stage appearance (fig. 2). The document in question is an accounting entry of Elizabeth I's

1 . See the entry "Stanley, Fernando" in the *Dictionary of National Biography*.