

chancellor of the exchequer dated 15 March 1595 and detailing a payment of £6. 13s. 6d. (per performance) plus a bonus (a royal gratuity) of £3. 6s. 8d. to William Kempe, William Shakespeare and Richard Burbage. The actors received the money for two performances at Greenwich Palace in the presence of the Queen, which took place at Christmas 1594. The play performed was in all probability Shakespeare's early work *The Comedy of Errors*. The entry is preserved at the Public Record Office in London and shows that the dramatist – like Kempe and Burbage – was a paid member of the Chamberlain's Men.¹ Although later on Shakespeare only played minor roles² in his own plays and those of other writers, in the early phase of his literary and acting career, to which *Titus Andronicus* belongs, he was – in all probability – to be seen in major roles as well, especially since at that time – as has already been mentioned – there was evidently a shortage of actors and Shakespeare, who had a wife and three children to support, needed the money urgently. In the 1616 complete edition of Ben Jonson's works the author mentions Shakespeare and Burbage in the first line of the list of "principall Comoedians" and places them at the top of the list of "principall Tragoedians". In addition, the actors John Heminges and Henry Condell, who were responsible for the first collected edition of the works of Shakespeare, the First Folio edition of 1623, prefaced it with a list of the "Principal Actors in all these Playes" that was headed by the dramatist himself. We thus have further evidence that the author of the most famous plays in world literature also appeared as an actor. The Lord Chamberlain's Men performed at the theatre built in Shoreditch by James Burbage, the father of Richard Burbage. However, on 5 and 12 June 1594 Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* was performed elsewhere – at the first theatre south of the Thames, in Newington Butts. It is possible that this was a joint production with the Admiral's Men (cf. Metz 1977, 155), a company formed only a few weeks earlier under Edward Alleyn, hitherto the most prominent Elizabethan actor (and Richard Burbage's mentor). These facts suggest that in June 1594, and probably in January and February 1594, both Shakespeare and Burbage were prominently involved in the production in question and appeared as actors on the stage, so that Peacham could have drawn them in their respective roles.

The individualized physiognomy of Tamora in Peacham's drawing has enabled me to make comparisons with contemporary portraits which have led me to conclude that this part was played by Richard Burbage. This has been confirmed by a forensic comparison of pictures carried out by Reinhardt Altmann, an identification expert at the BKA (= CID/FBI), in cooperation with Jörg Ballerstedt and Dietrich Neumann. An enlarged

1 . This entry (see fig. 3) was discovered by H-P [sic] in the Public Record Office in the nineteenth century and published in his *Illustrations of the life of Shakespeare* (1874). It is registered under "Public Record Office, Exchequer, Pipe Office, Declared Accounts, E. 351/542, f. 107v". A facsimile reproduction captioned "Shakespeare a Payee of the Chamberlain's Men, 15 March 1595" can be found in Schoenbaum (1975), 136. See also: Halliday (1956), 64-5 and 136. In Halliday (65) a view of Greenwich Palace in 1594 is reproduced below a facsimile of the accounting entry. However, the document in question does not rule out the possibility that Shakespeare had appeared as an actor before that.

2 . In his epigram "The Scourge of Folly", entered in the Stationers' Register on 8 October 1610, John Davies of Hereford, for example, speaks of "some Kingly parts" that Shakespeare played, but also of "a King among the meaner sort". Epigr. 159, 76-7. Quoted in: Schoenbaum (1975), 148. Shakespeare, of course, is known to have also appeared as an actor in Ben Jonson's first major play, *Every man in his humour*, which was given its first performance by the Lord Chamberlain's Men at the Curtain in 1598. He also acted in Jonson's first great tragedy, *Sejanus*, which his company performed at the Globe Theatre in 1603.