

- Forrest (1871): as he was dressed in scarlet and ermine, the theme of divestment was particularly important here to Lear's deterioration from king to old man. General trait of c.19th productions, including Garrick/Macready/Kean.
- Nunn (1968): theme of divestment taken further to include symbolism by ritual, both of which fell into chaos concurrent with Lear's growing insanity

Context

- Galenic medicine: Theory that the body is composed of four humours, which correspond to the four elements and, according to whichever is the dominant humour in a body, determine personality. These are blood (air, sanguine and cheerful), phlegm (water, imperturbable), choler (fire, angry and irritable), and melancholy (earth, prone to depression). An imbalance in these could lead to madness.
- Astrology/cosmology: Theory that whichever astral body was ascendant concurrent with a person's birth would determine their dominant humour. Saturn corresponded to melancholy, Jupiter to blood, Mars and the sun to choler, Venus and the moon to phlegm.
- Paracelsian medicine: Theory that the microcosm of man was intricately linked to the macrocosm of the universe, to the extent that a disturbance of elements causing a storm/earthquake could cause a mental/physical disturbance in a person.
- Greenblatt's theory of self-fashioning: a term to describe the process of building an identity/public attitude to fit contemporary societal standards, particularly evidenced in portraiture of the renaissance period and useful for the divestment theme

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