

## King's Double Body

Lear generates a whole host of problems in the first act when he decides to split his kingdom 'Know we have divided in our kingdom; and tis our fast intent'. At first glance it may appear as a unionist rhetoric because the underlying message may be not to go about dividing what should be kept whole because Britain in its entirety suffers. However when Lear gives power to both Goneril and Regan he does not follow the long held theory about the King's double body as he almost creates a second body to accommodate the sisters. Also King Lear does not die he relinquishes power so he loses his divine body which causes him to lose a part of his identity 'I am a fool thou art nothing' Act 1 Scene 4. When the fool says this to Lear it is a reminder of the loss of his divine identity and as he has no career outside of this title he has nothing but his natural body. The play at its entirety does not necessarily need to be interpreted as something that is against this theory because Lear himself suffers for relinquishing power before his death therefore dividing up the King's double body in a way it ought not to be. However it is curious that when Lear's flesh is finally exposed in the storm and the realisation that he has lost his divine body he has a sort of anagnorisis 'O I have ta'en too little care of this'. Suggesting that Lear's divine body was prohibiting from seeing reality, because it was consumed with the concept that he had all the worth in the world inside himself. The fool also points out that because his power came from no skill or ability it was made from 'nothing'.

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