

Is it possible, after all the friendship that I have shown you (and in the bottom of your heart you must be persuaded how much I love you), you are in doubt about doing a thing for which all the world will blame you, and which so ill accords with the feelings which you say you still have for me?

Written during the morning hours in his camp at Iseringhen, on the battlefields of what would be the last year of the Nine Years War, William III tried to persuade his childhood friend of thirty-three years – William Bentinck, Earl of Portland – not to retire from his services. Portland had been oscillating over whether to stay in the king’s inner circle for some time now. When William received Portland’s reply, its content, the king wrote, “had so much astonished me that I hardly know where I am”. In his letter, Portland disclosed the reasons for his decision to leave, which, he confessed, “made my life unbearable”. “It is your honour, Sir, which I have at heart,” Portland replied, “and the kindness which your Majesty has a for a young man, and the way in which you seem to authorize his liberties and impertinences make the world say things that I am ashamed to hear”. While Portland assured William that he thought the king “as far removed as any man in the world” from “these things”, he “was thunderstruck” when he discovered that this “malicious gossip” circulated around the Hague and in the army.<sup>1</sup>

What was the content of these rumours that drew such shame from Portland? One poem published that same year – “Advice to a Painter” (1697) – gives some indication of the type of “kindness” William “has for a young man” in his services. Framed as instructions for picturing the nation, the poem hesitates midway, suggesting that the painter give up before attempting to portray the inner workings of the royal cabinet, not for lack of skill but for moral decency:

Artist retire, 'twere Insolence too great  
T'expose the Secrets of the Cabinet;  
Or tell how they their looser Minutes spend,  
That guilty Scene would all chast Eyes offend.

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<sup>1</sup> This exchange is from Marion Grew, *William Bentinck and William III (Prince of Orange): The Life of Bentinck Earl of Portland From the Welbeck Correspondence* (London: John Murray, 1924), 279-280.

For should you pry into the close Alcove,  
And draw the Exercise of Royal Love,  
*K-pp-l* and He are *Ganymede* and *Jove*.<sup>2</sup>

Keppel and William are like Ganymede, the most beautiful of mortals, and Jove, who could not resist his love for Ganymede – a love, the poem suggests, that was sodomitical.<sup>3</sup> What did William make of these rumours regarding his favourite, the earl of Albemarle, Arnold van Keppel, who had grown increasingly close to the king? Instead of denying the gossip, William responded to Portland by questioning the interpretative context that would give rise to such illicit suggestions. “It seems to me”, William stated, “very extraordinary that it should be impossible to have esteem and regard for a young man without it being criminal”.<sup>4</sup>

In this paper, I explore how circulating rumours of the king’s sodomy became entangled with newly emerging conceptions of the *nation* and *nationalized space*. Putting to the side questions of William’s sexuality,<sup>5</sup> this essay investigates transformations to the discourse of sodomy accusations against the king and his favourites. I argue that at the turn of the eighteenth century, accusations of sodomy against the king increasingly mobilize spatial rather than theological understandings of sodomy’s danger. As such, by the turn of the century, accusations of the king’s sodomy move from a theological threat to the Christian kingdom to a national threat to the English nation. Focusing attention on the affective quality of these discourses, I demonstrate that the emergence of a nationalising discourse of sodomy seeks to generate affects of fear in order to realign attachments to the idea of the nation. That is, nationally invested charges of sodomy against the king aim to subvert the Royal Body in an attempt to turn subjects

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<sup>2</sup> Anonymous, “Advice to a Painter” *Poems On Affairs of State: Augustan Satirical Verse, 1660–1714, Volume 6: 1697-1704*, ed. Frank Ellis (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970), 17-18.

<sup>3</sup> On Ganymede as a figure of same-sex desire, see David Orvis, *Queer Subjectivities in Early Modern England* (PhD Diss., University of Arizona, 2008), 8-16.

<sup>4</sup> Henri van der Zee and Barbara van der Zee, *William and Mary* (London: Macmillan, 1973), 418-419.

<sup>5</sup> For debates on Williams III’s sexuality, see Montague Summers *The Playhouse of Pepys* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1935), 331; John van der Kiste, *William and Mary: Heroes of the Glorious Revolution*, (Stroud: Sutton Publishing Ltd), 201-8.

away from the kingly body and towards the national body politic. On the one hand the argument is historical: I reveal an emergent discourse of sodomy at the turn of the eighteenth century that mobilizes and circulates spatial markers of the nation in order to critique royal power. On the other hand the argument is theoretical: I argue that the discourse of sodomy invokes normative judgments about the appropriate relations between bodies, both human and political. In so doing, this discourse seeks to re-organize affective attachment to the body politic and helps constitute the nation-form.

In the first section, I outline a theory of affect underlying discourses of sodomy as a form of intensity capable of altering one's political attachments. In the second section, I argue that events of crisis renew the force and stickiness of affect and that the "Glorious Revolution" of 1688 enabled new possibilities of political attachment. In the third and main section, I survey the possible meanings of sodomy in the seventeenth century, outlining two discourses of sodomy. The first I call ungodly sodomy, which draws its affective power from association with *religious* signifiers of the beastly, the devilish, and the evil. Pre-dating William's reign, this genre of accusatory texts uses a theological discourse of sodomy to subvert the Royal Body of the protestant king. Having set out the characteristics of this discourse of ungodly sodomy, I go on to chart how a new discourse of sodomy surfaces in the aftermath of 1688. Foregoing religious signifiers, a series of texts mobilize markers of space to form what I call a *national* discourse of sodomy. This discourse attempts to use spatial markers to generate affects of fear in order to reconfigure William's sodomy as a threat to the nation. In so doing, I argue that the discourse of national sodomy plays a constitutive role in the formation of the English Nation, laying the groundwork for the future imbrication between heteronormativity and nationalism.

## **I. Affect and Attachment**

The recent turn to affect in the last few decades has reinvigorated scholars of nationalism to rethink the role of feeling as a constitutive force mediating attachments to the nation-state.<sup>6</sup> Within this terrain, a smaller subset of scholars working at the intersection of affect theory and queer theory, have elaborated the role of sexuality as formative for feelings of national belonging.<sup>7</sup> Drawing from these theoretical insights, this paper explores the affective power of sodomy accusations prior to the nation-state. I argue that the discourse of sodomy provides us with a fruitful resource to explore not only the force of sexuality in mediating feelings of national belonging, but also that an investigation that does not take the nation-state as historically given demonstrates how sodomy plays a formative role in the emergence of the nation itself.

To understand the potential of sodomy as a particularly affectively loaded discourse, consider the justification for publishing in 1699, almost seventy years after the event, the *Tryal and Condemnation of Mervin, Lord Audely of Castlehaven, at Westminster, April the 5<sup>th</sup> 1631*:

I thought it could not more oblige the Publick, than ... to publish it at this Juncture, that by Reading the Sin, so Tragically Delineated in its Horrid Shape, and ugly Visage, by the Grave and Learned Sages of the Law, and In the Death of a Noble Peer, other Men might be terrify'd, and fear'd from those Sins that are attended with nothing but Infamy and Death in this World, and Eternal Damnation in the next.<sup>8</sup>

Seeing that the “Sin of Buggery ... now Reign among our English Debauche’s”,<sup>9</sup> the anonymous author wishes to force public attention to the dangers of sodomy by “Reading the Sin” and tracking its consequences: “Death in this World, and Eternal Damnation in the next”. That this

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<sup>6</sup> The literature on feeling and political attachment has grown extensively in recent years. See Joseph Masco, *The Theater of Operations: National Security Affect from the Cold War to the War on Terror*, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014); Lauren Berlant, *The Anatomy of National Fantasy: Hawthorne, Utopia, and Everyday Life*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991); Lila Abu-Lughod, *Dramas of Nationhood: The Politics of Television in Egypt*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004); Lisa Wedeen, *Peripheral Visions: Publics, Power, and Performance in Yemen* (University of Chicago Press, 2008), 88–102.

<sup>7</sup> Lauren Berlant, *The Queen of America Goes to Washington City: Essays on Sex and Citizenship* (Duke University Press, 1997); Jasbir Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times* (Durham, NC Carolina: Duke University, 2007); Elizabeth Povinelli, *The Empire of Love: Toward a Theory of Intimacy, Genealogy, and Carnality* (Duke University Press, 2006).

<sup>8</sup> Lord Mervyn Audley, *Tryal and Condemnation of Mervin, Lord Audely of Castlehaven, at Westminster, April the 5<sup>th</sup> 1641* (London, 1699), Preface.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

reading might instil “fear” and “terrify” men into living differently demonstrates the belief in sodomy’s discursive power to alter one’s attachment to certain forms of life. Making use of the rhetorical power of sodomy, the author of the “Preface” indicates how publicity is suffused with feeling, such that, as Lauren Berlant puts it, “the public sphere is not rational; it is rhetorical”.<sup>10</sup> Far from simply propelling the English to live a less sinful less, the discourse of sodomy’s terror, I will argue, promises to alter *political* attachments and their attendant ways of living.

The suggestion that the idea of sodomy could have such power requires understanding the kind of affects that circulates around the word “sodomy”. While I will outline sodomy’s meanings below, I want to briefly sketch the theory of affect that runs throughout this paper. While theorists have articulated various and divergent understandings of affect, for the purposes of this essay, I take affect to mean the following:

Affect ... is the name we give to those forces – visceral forces beneath, alongside, or generally *other than* conscious knowing, vital forces insisting beyond emotion – that can serve to drive us toward movement, toward thought and extension, that can likewise suspend us ... or that can even leave us overwhelmed by the world’s intractability.<sup>11</sup>

Affect describes forms of intensity and force that move people. Indeed, affect describes the unnamed force that the author of the “Preface” wishes to generate when conjuring sodomy’s terror. Furthermore, as theorists of affect argue, affect is not simply ideational, but also material, both dependent upon and also modifying corporeality: “affect as potential: a body’s *capacity* to affect and to be affect ... affect is integral to a body’s perpetual *becoming*”.<sup>12</sup> In the context under discussion, sodomy invokes and provokes normative judgments about the relations between bodies. Analysis requires understanding how sodomy acquires its intelligible meaning and affective resonance not only from associated terms in a particular text, but also from a longer

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<sup>10</sup> Quoted in Staiger, Cvetkovich, and Reynold, “Introduction: Political Emotions and Public Feelings”, pg. 2.

<sup>11</sup> Melissa Gregg and Gregory Seigworth, “An Inventory of Shimmers” in *The Affect Theory Reader*, eds. Melissa Gregg and Gregory Seigworth, (North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2010), 1.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 2-3.

history of sodomitical terror.<sup>13</sup> In other words, given that “sodomy” is a mobile term, we must pay attention to the semiotic background that constitutes its intelligibility.<sup>14</sup> Thinking through affect thus enables us to understand the generative power of discourses of sodomy to transform political attachments and the organization of bodily relations.<sup>15</sup>

The discussion of bodies, however, should not be limited to human bodies but also include *political* bodies. This is not simply a metaphorical turn of phrase. The political imaginary of the seventeenth century viewed the king’s mortal body as intimately related to the body politic, the metaphysical and divine Royal Body subsuming but also dependent on the king’s mortal organic body.<sup>16</sup> In this, affect regulates and transforms relations between fleshly bodies and bodies politic. Indeed, as affect theorists demonstrate, states use technologies of affect “to manage and contain cultural anxiety and dissent”, and thus shore up obedience and attachment to particular regimes of power.<sup>17</sup> Media, print, music and other technologies interpellate humans as subjects of state regimes and point to an understanding of “affect as *capturable* life potential”.<sup>18</sup> Even as various apparatuses of power (e.g. authorized sermons, military processions, public gatherings, among other spectacles) aim to secure affective attachment to the state, capture is by no means guaranteed. As Sara Ahmed argues, affect “is what sticks, or what sustains or

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<sup>13</sup> In focusing on sodomy’s historical accumulation of meaning, this paper invites us to think of affect not as taking primacy over consciousness and rationality, but rather working dynamically alongside and beside rationality. See, Deborah Gould, “On Affect and Protest” in *Political Emotions. New Agendas in Communication*, ed. Janet Staiger, et al., (New York: Routledge, 2010) 27.

<sup>14</sup> For a similar approach to the study of sodomy, see Cameron McFarlane, *The Sodomite in Fiction and Satire 1660-1750*, (Columbia University Press, 1997).

<sup>15</sup> Or, at least what writers *believed* to be the generative power of sodomy’s threat. Whether these discourses actually succeeded in compelling people to live differently is a separate question from what they aimed to accomplish. See Lisa Wedeen, “Conceptualizing Culture: Possibilities for Political Science,” *American Political Science Review* 96, 4 (2002): 713-28.

<sup>16</sup> The classic account is Ernst Kantorowicz, *The King’s Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957)

<sup>17</sup> Janet Staiger, Ann Cvetkovich and Ann Reynold, “Introduction: Political Emotions and Public Feelings” in *Political Emotions: New Agendas in Communication*, ed. Janet Staiger, Ann Cvetkovich and Ann Reynold (New York: Routledge, 2011), 7.

<sup>18</sup> Brian Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation* (Drouham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002), 41.

preserves the connection between ideas, values, and objects”, without making these connections permanently stuck.<sup>19</sup> Thinking of affect as a material force that organizes bodily relations clarifies how technologies of power can shore up and mould without solidifying affective attachments to the certain political forms.

The discourse of sodomy and its textual circulation is thus one means of affective capture, but, as I will argue, one of particular significance. Scholars of English nationalism, however, have remained silent on accusations of sodomy against William III and his favourites. Of those historians who do note (often in passing) the accusations of sodomy, the debate turns on the question of sexual identity and whether the king really was a homosexual, i.e. whether he practiced some form of genital intimacy.<sup>20</sup> From the perspective of studies on sexuality, scholars have been more attentive to issues of nationalism, but none have focused on questions of bodily intimacy and sexual vice prior to the emergence of (homo)sexuality *as such*.<sup>21</sup> Sexuality may serve to maintain or bolster attachments to the nation, but we have yet to explore the importance of sodomy in the historical emergence of the nation form. A study of the relationship between the nation and sodomy before the age of homosexuality, therefore, would prove fruitful both to students of the “English nation” and nationalism more broadly and also to students of sexuality by putting into conversation two fields of study that rarely interact.

Scholarly debate on the question of the nation in the late seventeenth century – whether contemporaries understood the 1688 revolution primarily as a religious or nationalist affair –

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<sup>19</sup> Sara Ahmed, “Happy Objects” in *The Affect Theory Reader*, ed. Melissa Gregg and Gregory Seigworth, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 29.

<sup>20</sup> For example, Tony Claydon, Tony, *William III and the Godly Revolution*, (Cambridge University Press, 2004), 92, 132; William Speck, “William III and the Three Kingdoms” in *Redefining William III: The Impact of the King-Stadholder in International Context*, eds. Esther Mijers and David Onnekink (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2007) 46.

<sup>21</sup> On nationalism from the perspective of sexuality, see Jasbir Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages*; George Moss, *Nationalism and Sexuality: Respectability and Abnormal Sexuality in Modern Europe* (New York: Howard Fertig, 1985); *Nationalisms and Sexualities*, eds. Andrew Parker, Mary Russo, Doris Sommer, and Patricia Yaeger (New York: Routledge, 1992).

largely centres attention on Williamite propaganda. Focusing on accusations of sodomy, then, I uncover a nationalising discourse in anti-Williamite literature. In tracing the historical archive of anti-Williamite satire, it would be incorrect to reduce these texts to simple Jacobite propaganda. As Esther Mijers and David Onnekink point out in their review of Williamite historiography, “William’s enemies are still largely dismissed as ‘Jacobites’, without actually identifying or differentiating between the members of this group, and their arguments are considered simplistic and one-sided”.<sup>22</sup> A focus on the affective power of sodomy accusations will uncover how many critical texts do not laud James II or desire for his return, but even those that do may establish affective attachments to the nation contrary to their explicit claims of supporting James’s dynastic regime. My interpretation of these texts is limited in that I do not substantially deal with their popular reception. To diminish some of these problems, I focus on texts that *explicitly* accuse rather than hint at or suggest sodomy.<sup>23</sup> Consequently, the question is not whether we can read a particular text as being sexually suggestive, but what the accusation of sodomy intends, what sodomy itself means in these texts, and what affects it may produce.

Given that sodomy was believed to be both a sign and cause of disorder, charges and accusations of sodomy were particularly prevalent, Alan Bray suggests, in times of social disturbance.<sup>24</sup> In this sense, I attempt to take earnestly Rogers Brubaker’s recommendation to explore “nationness as an event, as something that suddenly crystallizes rather than gradually develops, as a contingent, conjuncturally fluctuating, and precarious frame of vision and basis for individual and collective action”.<sup>25</sup> It is in such events of emergency that affective attachments to

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<sup>22</sup> David Onnekink and Esther Mijers, “Introduction” in *Redefining William III*, 11.

<sup>23</sup> That said, even in focusing on explicit accusations, there remains a gap between the feelings these texts *could* produce and what they did in fact produce. On the hermeneutic problem of sodomy accusations in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, see Paul Hammond, *Figuring Sex Between Men: Shakespeare to Rochester*, (Oxford University Press, 2002), 5-38.

<sup>24</sup> Alan Bray, *Homosexuality in Renaissance England* (London: Gay Men’s Press, 1982), 72.

<sup>25</sup> Rogers Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe*, (Cambridge University Press, 1996), 19.



certain political forms (dynastic vs. national) become liable to shift. A focus on sodomy in times of political crisis can illuminate, then, the productive potentials of sodomy accusations when affect is freshly sticky and can be newly oriented. It is to this event of crisis that I now turn.

## II. The Event of 1688

In November 1688, William III landed in England, ousted James II from his seat of power, and soon thereafter installed as a joint sovereign with his wife Mary. The reign of absolutist and hereditary monarchs seemed at an end, as parliament *consciously* broke with principles of hereditary succession by electing a joint monarchy.<sup>26</sup> The “Glorious Revolution” illustrates an event of disjuncture, where affective attachments to the principle of hereditary succession split apart from the foundations of governmental power.<sup>27</sup> Consider, for instance, parliamentary debates about the correct verb to use when making sense of James II’s throne: was it ‘abdicated’ or ‘usurped’?<sup>28</sup> If James abdicated the throne, then a new monarch had to fill the empty seat of power. In deciding who should be king, however, it was not William III who occupied political power so much as parliament: whereas previous monarchs swore to rule according to an ancestral law, “William and Mary swore to rule according to ‘the statutes in Parliament agreed upon and the laws and customs of the same’”.<sup>29</sup> As one circulating broadside puts it, in electing a new monarch, Parliament (sexually) violated the body politic: “And made a

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<sup>26</sup> I emphasise “conscious” because the restoration parliament following Cromwell’s reign attempted to erase this embarrassing aberration of hereditary succession by proclaiming that King Charles II had been the lawful monarch since the execution of Charles I. See, “House of Commons Journal Volume 8: 8 May 1660” in *Journal of the House of Commons: Volume 8, 1660-1667* (London, 1802), 6-18. <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/commons-jrnl/vol8/pp16-18> [accessed 4 April 2019].

<sup>27</sup> On debates about the legitimacy of the new king, see Mark Goldie, “The Political Thought of the Anglican Revolution” in *The Revolution of 1688*, ed. Robert Beddard (Oxford University Press, 1991), 103-36; Charles-Edouard Levillain, “Cromwell Redivivus? William as Military Dictator: Myth and Reality” in *Redefining William III*, 160-66.

<sup>28</sup> Richard S. Kay, *The Glorious Revolution and the Continuity of Law* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2014), 55-124.

<sup>29</sup> Van der Kiste, *William and Mary*, 117.

mere whore, by a vote of our state / ‘Cause she freely her maidenhead did abdicate’.<sup>30</sup> The language of voting, coded in sexual terms as rape,<sup>31</sup> emphasizes the dramatic concerns over regime succession: whether hereditary or democratic.<sup>32</sup> The revolution meant not simply a change of king, but a fundamental alteration and thus crisis in the principles of government.

This disruption to feelings of attachment to the hereditary principles of monarchy provides an opportunity for rethinking the principles of political rule: crisis “open[s] up a space for affect again, which in turn leads to a revival of cognition”.<sup>33</sup> Consequently, there emerges in the event of 1688 different visions of political power, which vie to capture the flows of feeling and ties of allegiance. In this, there were not simply competing accounts of who should be sovereign (James or William) but also conflicting visions of how to conceive of sovereignty (theological-universal or national-bounded). As historians have demonstrated, within the terrain of Williamite propaganda, there developed on the one hand a discourse that figured the Glorious Revolution as part of an international Protestant crusade, with William as God’s warrior in a religious battle against Catholic tyranny.<sup>34</sup> On the other hand, there also emerged a discourse that portrayed the revolution as a nationalist event, with William as the protector of the English nation.<sup>35</sup> Despite their differences, however, both these discourses portray 1688 as a battleground

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<sup>30</sup> “The Relfection” in *Poems on Affairs of State: Augustan Satirical Verse, 1660-1714*, vol. 5, ed. William J. Cameron (Yale University Press, 1971), 59.

<sup>31</sup> On imagery of rape in the aftermath of 1688, see Jennifer Airy, *The Politics of Rape: Sexual Atrocity, Propaganda Wars, and the Restoration Stage*, (Newark, DE: University of Delaware, 2012), 189-216.

<sup>32</sup> On the democratic principles underlying the revolutionary theories justifying William’s III position, see Richard Ashcraft, Richard, *Revolutionary Politics and Locke’s Two Treatises of Government*, (Princeton University Press, 1986); Martin van Gelderen, “In Defence of William III: Eric Walter and the Justification of the Glorious Revolution” in *Redefining William III*, 143-156.

<sup>33</sup> Jon Beasley-Murray, *Posthegemony: Political Theory and Latin America* (University of Minnesota Press, 2011), 205.

<sup>34</sup> Claydon, *The Godly Revoltuion*; Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837*, (Yale University Press, 1992), ch. 1; Craig Rose, *England in the 1690s: Revolution, Religion, and War* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1999), ch. 2; van der Kiste, *William and Mary*, p. 147.

<sup>35</sup> Steven Pincus, “‘To Protect English Liberties’: The English Nationalist Revolution of 1688-1689” in *Protestantism and National Identity: Britain and Ireland*, eds. Tony. Claydon and Ian McBride (Cambridge University Press, 1998), Steven Pincus, “Nationalism, Universal Monarch, and the Glorious Revolution” in

between monarchs, whether a protestant crusade against popery or a nationalist fight for English liberties.

Alongside a vision of 1688 as a struggle between monarchs, there also existed attempts to figure the Glorious Revolution as a conflict between different sources of sovereignty, that is, between parliament and monarch. As *The State of Parties* (1692) succinctly articulates:

the purpose of this government ... [is] the rescuing *us* from the power in the crown ... to be superior to all *our* laws; to secure *us* from such an insatiableness of prerogative as would swallow liberty and property, ... to free us even from such a disposition of a court *as could not but tend to this effect*.<sup>36</sup>

The text mobilizes a language of “us” opposed to the king, figuring the court as inherently disposed against “us”. Sovereignty becomes vested in parliament, which stands opposed to the royal court itself. In a similar vein existed the phenomenon of Whig Jacobitism, which embraced “a populist programme for the devolution of executive power and the restoration of what they perceived to be England’s tradition of local self-government”.<sup>37</sup> The aftermath of 1688 then was not simply a battle of how to imagine the monarch’s relation to his realm, but also a fight over the form governance (local, regional, and/or national) against the king.

It is not simply that these texts attempt to organize feelings of collective belonging, but that some of them specifically attempt to generate feelings of *national* belonging. While some theorists deny the possibility of nationalism in late 17<sup>th</sup> century England,<sup>38</sup> students of English nationalism have pushed back against this claim, as conditions for the emergence of nationalism

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*State/Culture: State-Formation After the Cultural Turn*, ed. George Steinmetz (Cornell University Press, 1999), 182-210.

<sup>36</sup> “State of the Parties” in *Poems on Affairs of State: Augustan Satirical Verse, 1660-1714*, vol. 5, ed. William J. Cameron (Yale University Press, 1971), 160, emphasis added.

<sup>37</sup> Mark Goldie and Clare Jackson, “Williamite Tyranny and the Whig Jacobites” in *Redefining William III: The Impact of the King-Stadholder in International Context*, eds. Esther Mijers and David Onnekink, (Burlington, VT.: Ashgate Publishing, 2007), 194. On Jacobitism as an ambiguous category capturing a range of political attitudes, see Toni Bowers, “Jacobite Difference and the Poetry of Jane Barker”, *English Literary History* 64, 4 (1997): 857-69.

<sup>38</sup> For instance, Brubaker claims that “Europe was the birthplace of the nation-state and modern nationalism at the end of the eighteenth century” (Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, 1). See also Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (New York: Verso, 1983), 4.

seem potent in this period.<sup>39</sup> For instance, the lapse of the Licensing Act in 1679 regulating the printing industry allowed for the “almost unrestricted circulation of printed material”, such that in the closing decades of the century, “the newspaper press flourished” alongside a wide circulation of religious and political pamphlets.<sup>40</sup> This literature was read and debated in the emerging public sphere of England’s coffeehouses, where rumours and gossip of William’s sodomy circulated.<sup>41</sup> These conditions made possible the imagination of a collectivity within a space perceived as bounded and limited. The anonymity of much of this critical literature amplified feelings of collectivity by implying a communal voice rather than a personal complaint.<sup>42</sup> While theorists contest the ingredients of what constitute a nation, I take it that a significant part of what comprises the nation-form is a distinct and bounded territorialized community marked off from other distinct and bounded territorialized communities.<sup>43</sup>

The emergence of a public sphere, therefore, provided the conditions for rethinking principles of political power in the aftermath of 1688. Far from simply a battle between monarchs, defenders of parliamentary sovereignty contested allegiance to the dynastic form of political power. In so doing, they constituted a political imaginary that framed parliament as the

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<sup>39</sup> For a review of this early scholarship, see Roy Porter, “The New Eighteenth-Century Social History” in *Culture and Society In Britain, 1660-1800*, ed. J. Black, (Manchester University Press, 1997), 29-50. While industrial conditions did not exist in the 17<sup>th</sup> century to mobilize the type of labor force scholars such as Ernest Gellner see as necessary for nationalism (*Nations and Nationalism*, Cornell University Press, 1983), Anthony Smith argues that the 17<sup>th</sup> century market economy was a sufficient economic precondition for nationalism. See Anthony Smith, *National Identity* (University of Nevada Press, 1991), 60.

<sup>40</sup> Paul Hammond, “Titus Oates and ‘Sodomy’”, in *Culture and Society In Britain, 1660-1800*, ed. J. Black (Manchester University Press, 1997), 86; John Feather, “The Power of Print: Word and Image in Eighteenth-Century England” in *Culture and Society In Britain, 1660-1800*, 53.

<sup>41</sup> The classic argument of the coffeehouses’ role in the formation of a public sphere is Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (MIT Press, 1989); see also, Porter, “The New Eighteenth-Century Social History”, 35; Steve Pincus, “‘Coffee Politicians Does Create’: Coffeehouses and Restoration Political Culture”, *Journal of Modern History* 67, 4 (1995): 807-34; Brian Cowan, *The Social Life of Coffee: The Emergence of the British Coffeehouse* (Yale University Press, 2005); Peter Lake and Steve Pincus. “Rethinking the Public Sphere in Early Modern England,” *Journal of British Studies* 45, 2 (2006): 270-292

<sup>42</sup> Paul Hammond, “Anonymity in Restoration Poetry,” *The Seventeenth Century* 8 (1993): 123-42. On the importance of print capitalism for nationalism, see Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, ch. 3.

<sup>43</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 7; David Miller, *On Nationality* (Oxford, 1997), 27.

representative of the English nation defending the English people against threats from the royal court. It is in terrain of conflict that political actors mobilized the discourse of sodomy to help bolster attachment to the nation, and in so doing, helped constitute the idea of the English nation as a bounded and distinct territorialized space.

### III. From Ungodly to National Sodomy

Before embarking on an investigation of accusations of the king's sodomy, it should be clear that we cannot understand these as indictments of "homosexuality", a word that did not exist in the seventeenth century. "Sodomy" – that "utterly confused category" as Foucault famously remarked – does not signify homosexuality, with its psychological, essentialist, lifestyle-oriented, identity-conscious, and communitarian elements.<sup>44</sup> Terms such as "buggery" or "sodomy" could apply to bestiality and various forms of non-reproductively oriented sex (anal, oral, incestuous, adulterous, general sexual excess, and prostitution) and sodomy's terror was religious, a sin that all could possibly commit due to humanity's corrupt nature.<sup>45</sup>

Intimately connected with the state, religious violations entailed transgressions against a political protestant order. English Protestants understood their differentiation from the Catholic Church through an "emotional distinction, based on the behaviour of the godly and especially of their enemies".<sup>46</sup> Herein, sodomy accrued acutely loaded political and religious meaning, as early Protestant attempts to break from the Catholic Church substantiated their stress on moral

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<sup>44</sup> Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1: An Introduction* (New York: Random House, 1978), 101. While historians of sexuality in England have pushed back Foucault's dating of the emergence of the homosexual in the 19<sup>th</sup> century as a result of increased attention to the figure of the molly, this scholarship focuses on the early-to-mid eighteenth century. The texts under exploration are clustered around the late seventeenth and turn of the eighteenth century, and as such, more be considered part of the early transformation to the figure of the sodomite. See Charles Upchurch, "Liberal Exclusions and Sex Between Men in the Modern Era: Speculations on a Framework", *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 19, 3 (2010): 409-431.

<sup>45</sup> Bray, *Homosexuality in Renaissance England*, 14–8; Caroline Blingham, "Seventeenth-Century Attitudes Toward Deviant Sex," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 1,3 (1971): 447-468. Hammond, *Figuring Sex Between Men*, 8-9.

<sup>46</sup> Tony Claydon, "'Protestantism, Universal Monarchy and Christendom in William's War Propaganda, 1688-1697'" in *Redefining William III: The Impact of the King-Stadholder in International Context*, ed. Mijers and David Onnekink (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2007), 135.

reform with legislation against vice, specifically against sodomy.<sup>47</sup> As Sir Edward Coke put it in 1644, sodomy is a treasonous crime against both the heavenly and earthly king.<sup>48</sup> Consequently, in the figure of the sodomite was that of the papist, as well as the beast, devil, and witch: otherworldly threats to the overlapping moral, religious, and political order.<sup>49</sup> Simultaneously a conduit and a sign of danger, sodomy's presence ensured that social disorder lurked just around the corner. Accordingly, sodomy had a particularly weighty affective significance as a form of politico-religious transgression.

Given sodomy's disorderly symbolism, accusations of William's supposed sodomy, along with the court's general sexual debauchery, represented a common topic for critics.<sup>50</sup> In many poems against the king, sodomy played not only a central plot role but was also inserted to produce fright, shock, and terror in readers.<sup>51</sup> The first genre of accusatory texts I now turn to explore is what I call *ungodly sodomy*, neatly captured by the "Coronation Ballad, 11<sup>th</sup> April 1689".<sup>52</sup> A response to the monarchs' coronation, the "Ballad" openly accuses William of sodomy in his intimate relationship with William Bentinck, Earl of Portland: "buggering of Benting doth please to the life".<sup>53</sup> Immediately before the accusation of buggery the poem reads: "He is not qualified for his wife, / Because of the cruel midwife's knife". Narrowly read, we can see the suggestion of castration and impotence as attempting to evacuate William of political

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<sup>47</sup> Louis Crompton, *Homosexuality and Civilization* (Harvard University Press, 2003), 361-2; Claydon, *William III and the Godly Revolution*, 38-9.

<sup>48</sup> "Sodomie est crime de majesty, vers le roi celestre". See, Sir Edward Coke, *The Third Part of the Institutes of the Laws of England* (London, 1644), 58.

<sup>49</sup> Hammond, *Figuring Sex*, 22; Bray, *Homosexuality in Renaissance England*, 19-20; Blingham, "Seventeenth-Century Attitudes", 465; George Rousseau, "The Pursuit of Homosexuality" in *Perilous Enlightenment: Pre- and Post-Modern Discourses, Sexual, Historical* (Manchester University Press, 1991), 7.

<sup>50</sup> Rousseau, "The Pursuit of Homosexuality", 24.

<sup>51</sup> That said, sometimes one encounters a poem where sodomy was thrown in for descriptive and humorous effect. See, for instance, "The Shash" (1690) in *Poems on Affairs of State*, vol. 5, 152-155.

<sup>52</sup> "Coronation Ballad, 11<sup>th</sup> April 1689" in *Poems on Affairs of State*, vol. 5, 41-44.

<sup>53</sup> Dennis Rubini claims that "Benting" is a *double entendre* on Bentinck and the English word "bent" as an indicator of unnatural sexual proclivities. Dennis Rubini, "Sexuality and Augustan England: Sodomy, Politics, Elite Circles and Society", in *The Pursuit of Sodomy: Male Homosexuality in Renaissance and Enlightenment Europe*, ed. K. Gerd and G. Hekma (Bingham, NY: Harrington Park Press, 1989), 365.

virility. However, alongside the imagery of buggery and impotency, the poem figures William as a deformed man: “A carcass supported by a rotten stump”. He is reduced to his basest biological functions: “they smelt out his laxative plight”; “At Crowning the Orange the juice flew out. / They that like not the smell, let them hold their snout”. In so doing, the poem reduces the Royal Body to a base human body. In the context of the logic of the king’s two bodies, where jurists viewed the king’s body politic as devoid of natural defects, the poem’s exaggeration of the biological body’s failures portrays the natural body as overriding the Kingly Political Body. In so doing, the dirty and deformed natural body undermines the pure sacred body of the king upholding the political order.

The poem does not stop at a human reduction, however. “He has gotten in part the shape of a man / But more of a monkey deny it who can; / He has the head of a goose and the legs of a swan”. In making William “an unnatural beast”, the poem depicts his arrival as a “monster’s invasion”, and ends with a call “to bring back great James as loyalty taught us” in order to put a stop to the “confusion they [William and Mary] hither have brought us”. From Royal Body to a part-human part-animal body, the Jacobite poem depicts William as the inversion of the natural theological order. Sodomy gains its meanings from these beastly and inhuman attributes in order to redirect any affective ties away from William and toward James.

These elements of ungodly sodomy – the beastilization, debasement, and making-hellish the Royal Body of the king – find expression in a series of other poems following William’s coronation.<sup>54</sup> Monstrous, disgusting, and sinful, William’s natural body is elevated over and above his Kingly Body, inverting the body politic through his sodomitical body. Though opposed to William, the discourse of ungodly sodomy shares the same fundamental religious

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<sup>54</sup> See *The Disappointed Marriage, or an Hue and Cry after an Outlandish Monster* (London: Printed for S. Gardiner, 1733); “The Rivalls” in Hammond, *Figuring Sex*, 174; “Jenny Cromwell’s Complaint Against Sodomy” in Rubini, “Sexuality and Augustan England”, 381.

framework of dominant Williamite propaganda. Official texts and sermons praised William's invasion as God's will and his subsequent rule as helping to strike a blow against Protestantism's satanic foe, the Catholic faith.<sup>55</sup> Here existed a religious battle between Protestant and Catholic forces. Both Williamite and anti-Williamite discourses equated religious sin with treason, whether James's profane support of Catholics in England or William's usurpation of the divine hereditary throne.<sup>56</sup> Accordingly, both discourses mobilize a politico-theological critique of sin and view loyalty to the regime as a question of loyalty to God.

The discourse I am calling ungodly sodomy was not unique to William's reign, but relied on older religious conventions that figured the sodomite as a disfigured human, nonhuman, papist, and/or otherworldly.<sup>57</sup> Consider the following satire, *A Hue and a Cry After Dr. T. O.*, circulated less than a decade before the "Coronation Ballad":

His marks are as followeth; The off Leg behind something shorter than the other, and cloven Foot on the nether side;... He has a natural Bob-tail, because he was never dock'd nor gelded; He seldom frequents the Company of Women, but keeps private Communication with four *Bums*, to make good the old Proverb, *Lying together makes Swine to love*; ... He is one that has sworn it to be his duty to the Devil to make the K—to prosecute the Qu—, and to dis-inherit his Royal Brother, and to make the Son rebel against the Father...<sup>58</sup>

These remarks targeted Titus Oates, considered the originator of the myth of the Popish Plot to assassinate Charles II and install his Catholic brother, James II.<sup>59</sup> Once again we witness the same degradation of the human body (ill-proportioned legs) to a nonhuman body (bob-tail and cloven foot) as the signs of a sodomite, whose sodomy threatens social order and principles of hereditary succession ("dis-inherit his Royal Brother"). As with charges of sodomy against

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<sup>55</sup> Claydon, *William III and Godly Revolution*, 47-50, 130-134.

<sup>56</sup> On the equivalence of sin as treason as a discursive strategy for nationalizing William into an English patriot, see Claydon, *William III and the Godly Revolution*, 131-3.

<sup>57</sup> Bray, *Homosexuality in Renaissance England*, 13-33.

<sup>58</sup> Roger L'Estrange, *A Hue and Cry After Dr. T. O.* (London: Printed for Alex. Banks, 1681).

<sup>59</sup> For an overview, see John Kenyon, *The Popish Plot* (Harmondsworth: Phoenix Press, 1974).



William, “Oates’s body”, explains Paul Hammond, “is being co-opted ... to suggest that he and his cause are a perverted parody of, and threat to, the body politic, a grotesque antithesis of the sacred body of the king”.<sup>60</sup>

Scandals of promiscuity and sodomy that displaced the sodomite into the realm of the unearthly, beastly, and disfigured represent common themes of court satire: Edward II’s “masculine Affection” is explained by “Witchcraft”; Piers Gaveston (Edward’s favourite) is a “Centaure, halfe a man and halfe a Best [sic.]”, “a loathsome witch”; James I is “a Sodamite of Hell”.<sup>61</sup> Following this literary tradition, the accusation of sodomy against William attempts to disconnect political allegiance from William’s reign by calling forth the terrifying affects of sodomy sourced from religious conventions. These poems mark William as otherworldly, beastly, and other-than-human, yet none mark him as nationally foreign, that is, non-English or more specifically Dutch. Scholars are right to point out that in anti-Williamite satire the accusations of sodomy rested on the belief that “sodomy brought in Catholicism ... associated in the English mind with absolutism”.<sup>62</sup> However, they overlook the emergence of a new discourse of sodomy – what I call *national* sodomy – that foregoes references to devils, witches, beasts, and debased bodies and configures William’s sodomy as explicitly *Dutch*. Herein, sodomy threatened not a theological order so much as a national order.

Take, for example, “A Litany For the Reducing of Ireland” (1690), which explicitly links the court’s sexual illicitness to national markers:

In a Court full of vice may Shrewsbury lay Molly on,  
Whilst Nanny enjoys her episcopal stallion  
And Billy with Benting does play the Italian  
We beseech thee to hear us  
‘Mist such blessed pairs, succession prevails,

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<sup>60</sup> Hammond, “Titus Oates and ‘Sodomy’”, 86.

<sup>61</sup> Quoted in Hammond, *Figuring Sex Between Men*, 119, 127, 132; Rubini, “Sexuality and Augustan England”, 350.

<sup>62</sup> Rubini, “Sexuality and Augustan England”, 353.

and if Nan of Denmark or Dutch Molly fails  
May pregnant Mynheer spawn a true Prince of Wales  
We beseech thee to hear us.<sup>63</sup>

The stanza begins with a list of sexual sins: Mary's ("Molly") infidelity with Shrewsbury, Princess Anne's ("Nanny") inverting of sex from its properly reproductive role by "enjoy[ing]" it, and William's sodomy with Portland ("Playing the Italian" = practicing sodomy).<sup>64</sup> The remarkable line "Nan of Denmark or Dutch Molly" figures sexual excess in general as foreign. Both Mary and Anne were born in London and grew up in England, but the poem represents them as Dutch. The poem also nationalizes sodomy in the stanza's climactic line when it suggests the image of Portland spawning an heir. There are a number of noteworthy facts about this line's construction. First, Portland is called "Mynheer", which is a form of address to a Dutchman, equivalent to "Sir".<sup>65</sup> In using this term, the author nationalizes Portland's character as a Dutchman. Second, that the poem does not state "Mynheer Benting" and using "Mynheer" alone as an anonymous collective address suggests that there exists something sodomitical about Dutchness as such rather than Portland in particular. Third, the "Prince of Wales" is James II's son and the adjective "true" seems to refer to the scandal surrounding the purported legitimacy of his son's birth.<sup>66</sup> That the poem suggests that sodomy with a Dutchman will birth a "true" successor implies that the royal succession itself will be truly Dutch and sodomitical, in line with the "true" nature of William's reign.

The poem further reinforces the nationalization of its primary characters (William, Portland, Mary, and Anne) by coding the regime's military as foreign. Earlier in the poem, when

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<sup>63</sup> "A Litany For the Reducing of Ireland" in *Poems on Affairs of State*, vol. 5, 221.

<sup>64</sup> Williams, *A Dictionary of Sexual Language and Imagery in Shakespearean and Stuart Literature*, II, 720-2. I will return to the question of Italy below.

<sup>65</sup> "mynheer, n.". OED Online. March 2019. Oxford University Press.

<http://www.oed.com.proxy.uchicago.edu/view/Entry/124492?redirectedFrom=mynheer> (accessed April 05, 2019).

<sup>66</sup> It was rumored that the child was an impostor baby, smuggled into the royal birth chamber in a warming pan. See, Rachel Weil, *Political Passions: Gender, the Family, and Political Argument in England, 1680-1714*, (Manchester University Press, 1999), 86-105.

listing a series of “unnatural rebellion[s]”, the author alludes to the armies that defected to William: “From an army that lost England for want of fighting”.<sup>67</sup> The defecting army, aligned with William, did not simply forego loyalty to James and lose the battle for hereditary succession. No longer English since they “lost England”, the army is now part of a non-English Dutch regime.<sup>68</sup> With this, the poem portrays the battle of 1688 as not simply a clash between monarchs but rather between nations. As the Whig Sir Peter Colleton aptly stated a year later:

I think it is not consistent with the interest of this kingdom for [sic.] to have foreign officers over an English army when we have so many brave, courageous men amongst us. The Englishman can have no interest but the good of his own country; what foreigners may have I cannot tell.<sup>69</sup>

Loyalty is no longer figured as tied specifically to the monarch, but rather to some imagined community called England.

Associations with other forms of sexual violence intensified national inflections of sodomy. One poet describes William’s reign as follows:

If a wily Dutch boor for a rape of a girl  
Was hanged by the law’s approbation,  
Then what does he merit that Buggers an Earl  
And ravishes the whole nation?<sup>70</sup>

On one reading, the “Dutch boor” is separate from William. If this boor died for rape, then given that William’s buggery is equivalent to or perhaps worse than rape, the poem suggests that William deserves a similar or worse fate. On this reading, the reference to the boor’s *Dutchness* is striking, given that the law did not grant English men clemency for rape. The poem thus seems to state that we can read the rape as significantly linked to the boor being Dutch. On another reading, the language of “ravishes” hints at a sexual relationship between William and “the

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<sup>67</sup> “A Litany For the Reducing of Ireland” in *Poems on Affairs of State*, vol. 5, 219, 220.

<sup>68</sup> On the relationship between the military and sodomy, see Rubini, “Sexuality and Augustan England”, 355-6.

<sup>69</sup> Quoted in Rose, *England in the 1690s*, 40.

<sup>70</sup> Quoted in *Poems on Affairs of State*, vol. 5, 59.

whole nation”. Here, William is the “Dutch boor”, who rapes the nation, figured as feminine and *not*-Dutch. Like the first reading, the poem suggests hanging as the appropriate response and in both readings, the poem links William’s Dutchness to sodomy and rape.

In addition to satire that targets William directly, the representation of William as Dutch and outside the nationalized space of England also occurs through poetry targeting his advisor, friend, and sodomitical partner, the earl of Portland.<sup>71</sup> In “Satire on Bent[in]g” (1689),<sup>72</sup> the narrator describes Portland as “that topping favorite at Court / (The King, though, has some private reasons for’t), / To whom all for preferment now resort”. A few lines later the poem reveals the king’s reasons for Bentinck’s favour when the author claims that it would be “fitter” to send Portland to the land of sodomy, that is, “To Italy with Villiers and Kildare[,] / Than nose his master with his buttocks here”.<sup>73</sup> Portland is neither marked as beastly or otherworldly nor is he figured as an exclusive sodomite (“Sue Willis has this darling’s heart secured”). Portland is, however, too close to the king, enticing William with his “buttocks” in order to get his “nose” in royal affairs. What links Portland’s bodily intimacy with his political intimacy to the king? What kind of undesirable advice does this favourite provide? Portland, “like a coxcomb, made blunt Grafton wait / To show’s Dutch breeding in his English state”. The Duke of Grafton, illegitimate son of King Charles II, joined William in the 1688 revolution. The poem suggests that Portland deceived Grafton and by extension English supporters of the revolution who are part of “his [Grafton’s] English state”.<sup>74</sup> The satire signals Portland’s deception nationally, as

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<sup>71</sup> Critiques of the king commonly occurred through sexualized attacks on the favourite. See David Onnekink, *The Anglo-Dutch Favourite: The Career of Hans Willem Bentinck, 1st Earl of Portland, 1649-1709* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 175-197.

<sup>72</sup> Anonymous, “Satire on Bent[in]g” in *Court Satires of the Restoration*, ed. John Harold Wilson (Ohio State University Press, 1976), 218.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> It does not seem that the poem represents Grafton in a royal guise, since he was not part of debates over royal succession. Consequently, the poem suggests that “his English state” is not his through dynastic linkages but possibly national ties.

Portland did not show his “Dutch breeding” till after William secured the crown. Portland’s sodomy, which marks him out as dangerous to royal affairs, is thus understood spatially, through national markers opposed to the English nation.<sup>75</sup> In other words, readers understand that Portland is a danger because he is a sodomite, and it is his Dutchness that illuminates the specificity of this danger.

In these texts, two noteworthy features differentiate them from the discourse of ungodly sodomy. First, these texts display a distinct lack of imagery that disfigures or animalizes the king’s sodomitical body, associating it with witchcraft or devilry. Rather, these texts depict the king’s sodomitical body as a foreign national body.<sup>76</sup> This is the second notable feature, namely, that these poems represent the king’s sodomy through his nationality. These texts attempt to convey and produce in their readers an understanding and fear of the dangers of having sodomitical foreigners and foreign sodomites as rulers. Accordingly, these texts simultaneously articulate and construct a violation of the nationalist principle that “the rulers of the political unit belong to a nation other than that of the majority of the ruled”.<sup>77</sup> With this transition to national understandings of sodomy, we seem to witness Anderson’s observation, though earlier than he posits, that in Western Europe the dawn of the age of nations was accompanied by “the dusk of religious modes of thought”.<sup>78</sup> Space now modifies the Royal Body as a sodomitical body, where sodomy’s affective terror becomes tied primarily to national rather than religious signifiers.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Consider the parallel anxiety with French women and their dangerously intimate embrace of Charles II. See, Pincus, “Nationalism, Universal Monarchy, and the Glorious Revolution”, 191.

<sup>76</sup> On the general decline in the use of apocalyptic language after 1660, see J. G. A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition*, (Princeton University Press, 1975), 403; Pincus, “Nationalism, Universal Monarchy, and the Glorious Revolution”, 199.

<sup>77</sup> Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 1.

<sup>78</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 11. Of course, these texts are not completely devoid of religious imagery. For instance, “A Litany for the Reducing of Ireland” is a *litany*.

<sup>79</sup> Occasionally in the archive, one crosses texts that use both the older conventions of ungodly sodomy and also the newer forms of national sodomy. See, for instance, “The Reflection” (1689) in *Poems on Affairs of State*, vol. 5, 60.

My argument relies on placing emphasis on the language of “Dutchness”, which signifies new and different understandings of sodomy that channel affective allegiance away from dynastic regimes towards national ones. However, some of the texts cited above reference another foreign place – Italy. For instance, “A Litany” states, “Billy with Benting does play the Italian”, and the “Satire on Bent[in]g” recommends that Portland be sent “To Italy”. As historians of sexuality have demonstrated, Italy’s association with Catholicism meant that it conceptually signified the religious space of popery and thus the sin of sodomy.<sup>80</sup> For instance, in William Perkins’s argument against image-worshiping, he uses Roman Catholic Italy to situate this profane act and its sodomitical consequences: “When the Israelites fell from God to idols ... oftentimes they fell to Sodomie. In Italie for their Idolatries are left to themselves to permit the Stewes and to abound (as the fame is) in whoredoms and fornications”.<sup>81</sup> Perkins, like other Renaissance writers, saw Italy in religious terms, as the home of Rome, the pope, Catholicism, and all its associated evils.<sup>82</sup> Much like references to Turkish sodomy, which figures sodomy as outside of Christendom,<sup>83</sup> Italian sodomy was seen as inside Christendom, but outside of the morally true universe of Protestantism.

This understanding of Italy and Turkey as religious rather than national sites of transgression helps clarify how “The Ladys complaint”<sup>84</sup> uses these ungodly spaces of an older convention to transform William into a *national* sodomite:

since Ladys were Ladys, I dare boldly say,  
they ne’re had more reason to fast & to pray,

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<sup>80</sup> Hammond, *Figuring Sex Between Men*, 38-9; Crompton, *Homosexuality and Civilization*, 365; Terrence Sidney Johnson, *Representation of Male Homosexuality: On the English Restoration Stage* (PhD Diss., University of California Los Angeles, 1992), 50.

<sup>81</sup> Williams Perkins, *A Warning Against the Idolatrie of the Last Times* (Cambridge, 1601), 91.

<sup>82</sup> Huston Diehl, “Bewhored Images and Imagined Whores: Iconophobia and Gynophobia in Stuart Love Tragedies”, *English Literary Renaissance* 26 (1996): 131.

<sup>83</sup> Anna Suranyi, *The Genius of the English Nation: Travel Writing and National Identity in Early Modern England* (University of Delaware, 2008), 161-3; Hammond, *Figuring Sex Between Men*, 23–28.

<sup>84</sup> Quoted in Hammond, *Figuring Sex Between Men*, 180-181.

for our Holland Reformer to perfect the work  
makes love like Italians, as He rules like a Turk.

Beginning with this religious imagery, the poem suggests recourse to an older discourse of ungodly sodomy. However, as the poem continues, the author nationalizes William's reign as sodomitical by transfiguring the language of ungodly Italy into national markers of Dutchness.

Ah! who wou'd have thought a low country Stallion  
And a protestant Prince shou'd prove an Italian.  
In love to his Minions, He partiall, & rash is  
makes statesmen of blockheads, & Earls of bardashes

...  
Butt the loss of our auncient & laudable fasshion  
has lost our good King one halfe of the Nation  
letts pray for the good of our State, & his soule  
that He'd putt his finger into the right hole,  
for the case Sir is such  
the people think much  
That your love is Italian, & Government Dutch.

Responding to the discourse of William as the Godly warrior king, the poem expresses shock that a protestant prince would be a sodomite ("Ah! who wou'd have thought"). Protestantism is no longer an assurance against sodomy, the poem suggests, which had been figured as a Catholic vice. Dislocated from religious markers, William's sodomy is nationalized by signifiers that mark him as outside of England but still in the terrestrial world: he is the "Holland Reformer" from the "low country".<sup>85</sup> Yet, it is not just William who is nationally outside England but also his whole government, which is filled with "blockheads" and "Bardashes" (meaning catamite).<sup>86</sup> The poem emphasizes this point in the last line by juxtaposing William's political body ("Government Dutch") to his sexual body ("Italian love"). Much like other competing definitions

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<sup>85</sup> "Low Country" refers to "A low-lying region of north-western Europe, now comprising the kingdoms of the Netherlands and Belgium, and the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg". "low country, n. and adj." *OED Online*. Oxford University Press, April 2019.

<sup>86</sup> Gordon Williams, *A Dictionary of Sexual Language and Imagery in Shakespearean and Stuart Literature*, vol. I (London: The Athlone Press, 2001), 70-71.

of popery as an explicitly political rather than religious threat at the time,<sup>87</sup> the poem simultaneously relies on and reconfigures the fears of popery underlying Italian love from a theological into a national problem. “The Ladys complaint” ultimately links sodomy to a corrupt government by infusing sodomy with the spatial markers of Dutchness.

It seems appropriate at this point in the account to respond to what may be a nagging objection: surely this is not a new discourse of national sodomy, but rather one that takes opportunistic advantage of the fact that William and Portland were indeed foreign. On the one hand, a shift in literary devices, from ungodly images to spatial signifiers, belies any simple opportunism. Otherwise, religious imagery would have subsumed any possible national identifiers. On the other hand, we can understand this discourse of national sodomy as newly emergent by comparing it to older accounts of “non-English” people accused of sodomy. Historical evidence is sparse on the subject of the origins of sodomites, a noteworthy point in and of itself. That said, there are a few cases where we can be sure the subjects accused did not originate from England and yet their accusations lack any spatial signifiers.

In the mid-16<sup>th</sup> Century, Casiodoro de Reina, a Spanish protestant, travelled to London in 1559, where he served as a pastor to refugees. In 1563, alongside dishonesty, embezzlement, and indiscreet conduct with female members of his congregation, he was charged with sodomy with his seventeen-year-old servant. Not only can one not find any historical evidence of anyone pointing to his place of origin as of significance to the charge of sodomy, but of the six bishops appointed as commissioners of the case (sodomy was an ecclesiastical offence), only two were English.<sup>88</sup> An entry in the *Order Book* of the western assizes in 1647 presents a second case for

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<sup>87</sup> Pincus, “Nationalism, Universal Monarch, and the Glorious Revolution”, 196-7.

<sup>88</sup> Arthur Gordon Kinder, *Casiodoro de Reina: Spanish Reformer of the Sixteenth Century* (London: Tamesis Books, 1975), 27-36.



consideration: “Domingo Cassedon Drago” is “to be tried ... for a buggery committed by him”.<sup>89</sup> While his name suggests Spanish origins, the *Order Book* does not mark him out as such. Rather, the entry highlights race as the crucial identity: Domingo, it states three different times, is “a negro”.<sup>90</sup> Lastly, seventeenth century accounts of Piers Gaveston, Edward II’s favourite, construct him as Italian rather than as of Gascon origin, although he spent more than half his life in Gascony.<sup>91</sup> Historical evidence suggests Gaveston did not venture to Italy and so references to Italy in the context of sodomy must rely on the historical construction of Italy as the religious place of Catholicism, as indicated above. These three cases of sodomy include men originating from and living a large part of their lives outside of England and yet their accusations do not place any significance on space, nationality, or foreignness.

If it is the case that space, understood not as the religious otherworldly but rather as nationally distinct territories, did not gain significance until the late seventeenth century, what accounts for this shift? After all, a problem with the objection above is the assumption that foreignness functions as a relevant marker of difference.<sup>92</sup> While I am not able to provide an account for the emergence of the nation-form, I believe that the discourse of national sodomy provides some clues. At the turn of the century, understandings of sodomy started to change drastically with the emergence and subsequent prosecution of sodomite clubs, known as Molly Houses.<sup>93</sup> While these changes certainly contributed to the conditions for nationally inflected

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<sup>89</sup> Quoted in Bray, *Homosexuality in Renaissance England*, 40.

<sup>90</sup> For difficulties in interpreting these documents, see Bray, *Homosexuality in Renaissance England*, 38-41.

<sup>91</sup> Hammond, *Figuring Sex Between Men*, 120. On Gaveston, P. Chaplais, *Piers Gaveston: Edward II's Adoptive Brother* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994).

<sup>92</sup> In this, scholars have simply taken for granted that Jacobites “exploited English xenophobia” without taking into account what made national difference salient (Claydon, *William III and the Godly Revolution*, 122).

<sup>93</sup> There have been various attempts to trace this transformation. See George Rousseau, “Discourses of Sexual Difference” in Rousseau, *Perilous Enlightenment: Pre- and Post-Modern Discourses, Sexual, Historical*, ed. (Manchester University Press, 1991), 139-142; Randolph Trumbach, “The Birth of the Queen: Sodomy and the Emergence of Gender Equality Modern Culture, 1660-1750” in *Hidden from History: Reclaiming the Gay and Lesbian Past*, ed. Martin. Duberman, M. Vicinus, and George. Chauncey, (New York: New American Library,

understandings of sodomy by making sodomites concrete, particular, and identifiable beings with their own gestures, clothing and spaces,<sup>94</sup> these changes themselves do not explain why the nation-form became a pertinent marker for sodomy.

A significant part of the answer seems to be parliament's increasing power in the late seventeenth century over domains traditionally reserved for the king. As historians have documented, from around mid-century, the position of minister-favourites waned as focus increasingly turned to parliament rather than the court.<sup>95</sup> Not only did parliament assert more authority after 1660 by granting and approving all the crown's major revenues, but also the century witnessed the growth of the bureaucratic state with the expansion of the revenue administration.<sup>96</sup> By 1694, the Bank of England was established to meet the fiscal demands of a massively expanded state. Parliamentary control also extended to the military. The 1689 Bill of Rights prohibited the king to keep a standing army *in England* without explicit parliamentary approval. By the late 1690s, parliament moved to reduce the king's standing army to its lowest possible size and insisted that every soldier be a native-born Englishman.<sup>97</sup> This general increase of parliamentary power over land, military, and wealth tracks alongside the increasingly dominant view of parliament as a national assembly existing to serve the nation.<sup>98</sup>

Parliamentary control over resources increasingly considered in national terms entailed denying access to these resources for those deemed non-English, as indicated in the case of

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1989), 129-40; Rictor Norton, *Mother Clap's Molly House: The Gay Subculture in England 1700-1830* (London: Heretic Books, 1992); Bray, *Homosexuality in Renaissance England*, 81-115.

<sup>94</sup> Bray, *Homosexuality in Renaissance England*, 92.

<sup>95</sup> Linda Peck, "Monopolizing Favour: Structures of Power in the Early Seventeenth-Century English Court" in *The World of the Favourite*, ed. J. Elliot and L.W.B. Brockliss, (Yale, 1999), 66-7; David Onnekink, "'Mynheer Benting now rules over us': The 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Portland and the Re-emergence of the English Favourite, 1689-99," *English Historical Review* 492 (2006): 693-713.

<sup>96</sup> John Miller, *The Glorious Revolution* (New York: Routledge, 1983).

<sup>97</sup> Rubini, "Sexuality and Augustan England", 355; van der Kiste, *William and Mary*, 228.

<sup>98</sup> Pincus, "Nationalism, Universal Monarchy, and the Glorious Revolution", 200; van der Kiste, *William and Mary*, 195.

Portland. Already in 1689, suspicions surrounded Portland's source of wealth,<sup>99</sup> and by 1700 Portland's name was included in a list of ministers for impeachment.<sup>100</sup> In the early 1690s, William gave tracts of land in Ireland and Wales to his favourites, Portland and Albemarle, instead of selling them for public good, as MPs expected.<sup>101</sup> Furious, the MPs commissioned inquiries into these gifts. As part of this hostility to the land grants, one pamphleteer feared that England now had a "Dutch Prince of Wales": "The Kings of England always Reigned best, when they had the Affections of their Subjects, and of that they were secure, when the People were sensible, that the King was intirely in their Interest, and loved the *English* Soil as well as the Peoples Money".<sup>102</sup> The Commons subsequently passed a bill stating that land could only be given away by an act of parliament and in 1700 voted to re-appropriate the (Irish) land grants.<sup>103</sup>

It is within this context of shifting meanings to land and money, increasingly conceived of as national resources, that we can make sense of poems accusing both Portland and Albermarle of sodomy. John Tutchin's "The Foreigners" (1700), referring to the "Lavish grants" William gifted Portland, explains that what he got the "Nation lost".<sup>104</sup> Why, the poet asks, should the Dutch "our Land engross, / And aggrandize their fortunes with our loss?"<sup>105</sup> As with Portland's rise to power and theft of national resources, the poem goes on to say of Albemarle:

Mounted to Grandeur by the usual Course  
of Whoring, Pimping, or a Crime that's worse;  
of Foreign Birth, and undescended too,  
Yet he, like *Bentir*, mighty feats can do.  
He robs our Treasure, to augment his State.

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<sup>99</sup> Onnekink, *The Anglo-Dutch Favourite*, 184

<sup>100</sup> Van der Kiste, *William and Mary*, 241. Rubini connects this affair with the re-publication of *Tryal and Condemnation of Mervin, Lord Audely of Castlehaven*. See his "Sexuality and Augustan England", 360.

<sup>101</sup> Rose, *England in the 1690s*, 54-55.

<sup>102</sup> Robert Price, *Gloria Cambriae; or the speech of a bold Britain in Parliament, against a Dutch prince of Wales* (London, 1702).

<sup>103</sup> Van der Kiste, *William and Mary*, 192, 234.

<sup>104</sup> John Tutchin, "The Foreigners (6 August 1700)" in *Poems on Affairs of State: Augustan Satirical Verse, 1660-1714*, vol. 6, ed. Frank H. Ellis (Yale University Press, 1970), 238, 236.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, 238.

...  
Was e'er a prudent People thus befool'd  
By upstart Foreigners thus basely gull'd?<sup>106</sup>

Albemarle is not only foreign but lacks noble lineage, which moulds the reader's understanding of his sodomy. The danger of this sodomy is not sinful transgression, but that it enables him, like Portland, to rob England of "our Treasure" and "our Land", which is "our loss" and thus what the "Nation lost". The use of the word "our" excludes Albemarle, Portland, and through them the dynastic court, from the anonymous "us" – the imaginary community figured here as the nation. Claims about their sexual propriety thus exclude them from proprietary claims. Significantly, the poem does not state that Albemarle and Portland deserve death for their crimes, but rather argues that they should leave England: "Let them in foreign States proudly command, / They have no Portion in the Promis'd Land".<sup>107</sup> The bounded form of the nation requires not the eradication of the sodomite (as in the universalist vision of sin) but rather exclusion from its borders.

The significance of sodomy as enabling the thievery of national resources is also the topic of "Advice to a painter" (1697), which depicts Portland as the nation's enemy:

To black designs and Lust let him remain  
A servile Favorite and Grants obtain  
While antient Honours sacred to the Crown  
Are lavishe'd to support the Minion.  
Pale Envy rages in his canker'd Breast  
And to the *British* Name a Foe profest.<sup>108</sup>

The Crown's "antient Honours", which the poem figures as land in the previous line ("Grants"), are not the honours of the king but the nation: Portland is described as a "Foe" to the "*British*" as such. The poem goes on to argue that the artist should "retire" before even thinking about attempting to "draw the Exercise of Royal Love, / *Keppel* and He [William] are *Ganymede and*

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid., 244-246.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., 238.

<sup>108</sup> "Advice to a Painter (11-26 December 1697)" in *Poems on Affairs of State: Augustan Satirical Verse, 1660-1714*, vol. 6, ed. Frank H. Ellis (Yale University Press, 1970), 17.

*Jove*. / Avert the Omen, Heaven! O May I ne'er / Purchase a Title at a Rate so dear".<sup>109</sup> As in "The Foreigners", Keppel uses sodomy not only to become the "Darling of the Throne" but also to gain access to the "Secrets of the Cabinet".<sup>110</sup> This charge mirrors that in the "Satire on Bent[in]g", which describes Portland enticing William with his "buttocks" in order to get his "nose" in royal affairs.<sup>111</sup> The poem goes on to ensure its readers that this sodomy is a national threat. Reflecting William through his favourites in a sodomitical guise, the poet states: "Let *English* Rights all gasping round him lie, / And native Freedom thrown neglected by".<sup>112</sup>

Beyond mere poetical musing, the articulation of sodomy as a concern associated with foreigners and threatening the nation's military and financial power impacted parliamentary decisions. In 1701, parliament passed the momentous Act of Settlement, which included the following prohibitions:

No person born out of the Kingdom of England, Scotland, or Ireland, or the Dominions thereunto (although he be naturalised or made a denizen, except such as are born of English parents) shall be capable to be of the Privy Council, or a member of either House of Parliament, or to enjoy any office or place of trust either civil or military, or to have any grant of lands, tenements, or hereditament from the crown.<sup>113</sup>

The Act barred foreigners (outside of the British Kingdom), even those who *became* part of the kingdom ("naturalised"), from holding any political office, sitting in parliament or the privy council, or receiving land from the crown. Herein is contained an idea of the nation as distinct from the dynastic and connected to an understanding of place as the wellspring of loyalty.<sup>114</sup>

To understand the Act's motivating context, we should place attention on Portland and Albemarle. As we've seen, both men were topics of land disputes, having received grants of land

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<sup>109</sup> Ibid., 18.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., 17-18.

<sup>111</sup> Anonymous, "Satire on Bent[in]", 218.

<sup>112</sup> "Advice to a Painter (11-26 December 1697)" in *Poems on Affairs of State*, vol. 6, 16, emphasis included.

<sup>113</sup> William Howitt, *John Cassell's Illustrated History of England*, vol. iv (London: 1860), 147.

<sup>114</sup> The inclusion of "dominions" suggests that we are not yet in a vision of national belonging that views colonial subjects as a distinct people, as in the popular nationalisms of creole communities in the Americas. See, Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 53-65.

from William. In addition, only Portland (along with one other Dutch man) held political offices attending to the king's personal needs. He was the only Dutch man elevated into peerage in 1689 and several years later William only made Albemarle and two other Dutch men peers, enabling them to take seats in the House of Lords.<sup>115</sup> The Act's exclusion of foreigners from receiving land grants and sitting in the Privy Council or parliament appears primarily motivated by parliamentary distress with William's Dutch favourites – an anxiety generated and channelled by the discourse of national sodomy. Where the law once enabled the king to seize the lands of those charged with sodomy,<sup>116</sup> the 1701 Act of Settlement granted parliament the power to expropriate the lands of those it designated sodomites and bar foreigners from political power.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

In this paper I demonstrated the emergence of a *nationalising* discourse of sodomy that sought to generate affects of fear in order to realign political attachment to the idea of the English nation. Mobilizing a framework of affect, I argued that seventeenth century authors believed that the discourse of sodomy contained the affective power to alter one's political attachments and forms of life. The need to organize relations of feeling becomes all the more important during events of crisis, which renew the stickiness of affective attachments. The crisis of 1688 newly opened up questions of allegiance and attachment to the body politic: not only what *kind* of political body – kingly or parliamentary – but also its *form* – religious or national?

Due to sodomy's historical image as a crime against the politico-theological order, the discourse of sodomy provides a powerful tool for channelling affect. Given the adhesive nature of "sodomy" to stick to various sorts of enemies and establish a chain of equivalence between them, analysis of the discourse of sodomy necessitates tracing how "sodomy" acquires its

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<sup>115</sup> William made Keppel an English earl in 1697. See, Van der Kiste, *William and Mary*, p. 201.

<sup>116</sup> Crompton, *Homosexuality and Civilization*, 363.

meaning from its associated terms in a particular text and also how it draws affective resonance from a history of sodomitical terror. To this end, I started with a focus on what I call ungodly sodomy. This discourse draws its affective power by associating sodomy with signifiers of the ungodly, the evil, and the soulless – witches, beasts, devils, and monstrous humans. In so doing, ungodly sodomy launches the sodomite out of the earthly realm and into the space of otherworldly disorder. Critics of the king thus mobilized the discourse of ungodly sodomy to attack William's transgression of divinely ordained principles of hereditary succession.

Other writers, however, viewed William's transgression not against hereditary succession as such, but against the nation. In retaliation for this offense, they both deployed and helped to constitute the idea of the nation through a critical and accusatory discourse of sodomy. Older conventions of ungodly sodomy fell away as this new discourse of *national* sodomy marshalled the idea of the nation and its markers of space as the source of sodomitical danger. The discourse of national sodomy reconfigures affective attachment not just to a certain political body – whether the king or parliament – but more significantly to a certain understanding of the political body as a national body. While the discourse of national sodomy relies on a *religious* history of terror for its affective power, this discourse displaced the prevailing articulation of ungodly sodomy by shifting sodomy's terms *spatially*, from the other-worldly to the nationally-other.

This nationalist discourse sought to configure sodomy – whether William's, Portland's or Albermarle's – as explicitly *Dutch*, using spatial signifiers of nationality to infuse this discourse with meaning. As evidence of this discourse, I pointed to textual markers of nationality surrounding accusations of sodomy: the use of adjectives (*Dutch* King, *Dutch* advisors, *Dutch* Government, *Dutch* breeding), the signs of place (Denmark, Holland, Low Countries), or the displays of foreign idiom (Mynheer). In these texts, the concern with sodomy was not its sinful

transgression, but its threat to the integrity of national space. As such, we witness reference to William's armies as England's lost armies, complaints that gifts of land to Portland and Albemarle entail a loss to the nation as does increasing wealth among foreign courtiers mean a loss of the nation's wealth. Opposition to the non-English-as-sodomite therefore illustrates the territorializing nature of these claims, as sodomy becomes tied to a distinctly foreign territorialized community, namely the Dutch.

Having unpacked the discourse of national sodomy, I suggested that the growing power of parliament provides a possible reason for the shift to nationally inflected accusations of sodomy. In the late seventeenth century, parliament sought to secure control over military, financial, and territorial resources from a court it increasingly viewed as foreign to the nation. Far from simply constituting the idea of the nation, I speculated that the discourse of sodomy helped constitute the English nation juridically, as charges of sodomy may have moved parliamentarians to act against these Dutch favorites and thus foreigners generally through laws such as the Act of Settlement. In this sense, the discourse of national sodomy supports the formation of what Lauren Berlant calls the "National Symbolic": the entangled collection of texts that mediates a national "public" and aims "to link regulation to desire, harnessing affect to political life through the production of 'national fantasy'".<sup>117</sup> Texts that accuse the monarchy of sodomy attempt to mobilize affect to produce a national fantasy that imagines the "national public" as somehow more worthy of its resources by merit of being English.

Though we may be hesitant to mark the immediate aftermath of 1688 as the birth of nationalism,<sup>118</sup> in keeping with the notion of an event set out at the beginning of this paper, the

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<sup>117</sup> Lauren Berlant, *The Anatomy of National Fantasy: Hawthorne, Utopia, and Everyday Life* (University of Chicago Press, 1991), 5.

<sup>118</sup> Concerned with the realm of aristocratic politicians and the intelligentsia, this essay does not account for large masses of the poor at the turn of the 18<sup>th</sup> century who do not identify with the nation. On the relationship between



emergence of the nation proper need not contradict its eventful and momentary crystallization in the reign of William III through the accusatory discourse of sodomy. Spatially oriented, this nationally modulated discourse of sodomy demonstrates the territorialisation of affect, as foreign sodomites threaten the nation's integrity. In so doing, this discourse of sodomy indicates the beginnings of the imbrication between fantasies of the nation and heteronormativity. In conflating sodomy with foreignness, the discourse of national sodomy identifies the nation as a space of sexual purity threatened with contamination from outsiders. As such, a few decades after one pamphleteer wrote that the "Dutch are spread like locusts over the whole kingdom" the leader of the Society for the Reformation of Manners, the group responsible for organizing the first mass arrest of sodomites in London, would describe sodomy as "an evil force invading our land".<sup>119</sup> Tied to foreigners, sodomites and later homosexuals are always already outside the heterosexual purity of the nation. The ways in which heteronormativity underpins and shapes the emerging national fantasy of the eighteenth century is work for the future.

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nationalism, the intelligentsia, and the masses, see Tom Nairn, "Scotland and Europe" in *Becoming National: A reader*, ed. G. Eley and R. Suny, (Oxford, 1996), 84-86.

<sup>119</sup> Quoted in Rose, *England in the 1690s*, 35; Quoted in Rubini, "Sexuality and Augustan England", 352; See also, Johnson, *Representation of Male Homosexuality*, 47.