From colonial practices designed to civilize indigenous communities, to counter-terrorism initiatives aimed at de-radicalizing dissidents in the wake of the War on Terror, to controversies over blasphemy and religious harm in international law, religious passions are cast as a specter of unreason, treason, and radicalization. My research addresses the persistent opposition between 'rational, scientific modernity' and 'irrational, emotional religion' that informs contemporary legal, security, and public policies. Such oppositions prove useful for states seeking to restrain dissent, justify interventions into minority communities at home and abroad, and conduct countering violent extremism initiatives in the Middle East, South Asia, and among Muslim communities in Europe and the US. I examine first, how shifting conceptualizations of religious psychology inform religious freedom and blasphemy legislation; and second, the dilemmas faced by subjects and communities situated at the margins of these definitions in their pursuit of legal protection and political recognition. My work illuminates the divisions, hierarchies, and exclusions that mark the selective condemnation and collaboration with religious communities advocating for protection from religious offense, and how that recognition (or misrecognition) is tied to assumptions about rights, religion, and security.

Seen as the dark under-belly of failed secularization, governments often fear demands for legal protection from religious emotional harm because such demands threaten the norms of liberal tolerance, or worse, aim to supplant and overturn the liberal order entirely. In contrast to this dominant narrative, my dissertation *Impassioned Religion in International Politics* traces how the symbolic vocabulary, legal forms, and doctrinal tensions – the politics – of religious blasphemy and offense have been generated and negotiated in relation to British colonial criminal codes, US counter-terrorism initiatives, and the jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights. It describes how historical and colonial practices of circumscribing religion became the dominant international legal and political framing of what is distinguished as religious offense and feelings. As I demonstrate, attention to these representations of religious emotional harm is crucial because such discourses affirm particular notions of political identity and authority that differentially impact minority and majority religious communities.

Section I of my dissertation sets up my conceptual argument. Emotion continues to present a problem within existing categories of analysis in International Studies because religion is often approached as a set of beliefs, institutions, and identities. Seen as existing apart from these social frameworks, emotions are seen as fleeting subjective experiences that occur naturally. But as I argue emotions are political precisely because they are shaped by dominant cultural frameworks that condition us to see some emotional expressions as normal and appropriate, and others as threatening and dangerous. To capture these political dimensions of religious emotion and religious offense, I propose an "emotional practices" approach to identify shifts in a) which actors and institutions are authorized to identify and categorize religious emotions b) based on what criteria c) authorizing what response. Drawing on insights from political phenomenology, I show that controversies over religious emotion and offense illuminate broader regimes of intelligibility that frame perceptions of religious difference more generally. Acknowledging this process opens space for problematizing the boundaries that naturalize certain affective experiences while rendering others suspect.

Section II applies and develops this argument in three case studies. The first chapter, which was awarded the International Studies Association "Best Graduate Student Paper in Religion and International Relations" of 2019-2020, examines the legal regulation of "religious feelings" in late 1920s British Colonial India. Through an analysis of the late 1920's legislative

debates over India's 'religious feelings' law 295A, I show that demands to legally recognize religious feelings were not opposed to but rather were crafted within secular idioms, cultivated by state administrators as a logic of governance and legal recognition, and used to securitize the very groups (Muslims, marginalized caste groups) they were cast as an ostensible concession to by the progenitors of a nascent Hindu-majoritarian discourse of tolerance and Indian secularism. By tracking the reasoning and references of judgments in specific cases surrounding these laws, I show that colonial anxieties over religious affects influenced conceptions of rule of law, sovereignty, and order to produce diverse legal and political formations designed to adjudicate religious tolerance and harmony. I argue that understanding the institutional-historical contingency of these laws exposes their discursive entanglement with, not binary opposition to, the universalistic normative commitment to secular-liberal rights found in religious freedom advocacy initiatives.

My second case demonstrates how the epistemological and evaluative stances that I describe in the preceding chapter operate today to shape legal controversies in national and international legal disputes over religious freedom, blasphemy, and defamation in the European Court of Human Rights between 1994 and 2018. Shifting legal norms surrounding what I term "feeling right(s)" – by which I mean collectively shared understandings of appropriate affective relationships and reactions – play a significant role in how states and courts govern, suppress, and protect different religious communities' feelings of offense. In its landmark 1994 decision *Otto-Preminger vs Austria*, the Strasbourg Court controversially asserted that Article 9 (Religious Freedom) included the right of believers "not to be insulted in their religious feelings by the public expression of views of other persons." The Court's jurisprudence on subsequent cases involving alleged injury to religious feelings through blasphemy or defamation has been similarly controversial. Some have denounced these rulings as having led to the overall weakening of Article 10 and the normative priority of 'freedom of expression;' and, with the ECtHR ruling in 2018's *E.S v. Austria*, have voiced concern that this line of judgment has enacted a de facto blasphemy law across Europe. These cases are typically analyzed in terms of the perceived strengths and deficits in how the court applies the legal principles of balancing and the margin of appreciation; in contrast, my analysis examines the historical contingency and particularity of how the ECtHR empowers states to intervene in the issues of religious offense. This allows me to track how shifts in the representational and legal construction of "religious feeling" have exacerbated the unequal enjoyment of legal rights and political protection.

The third case examines the discourse of religious emotional attachment in counter-terrorism and countering violent extremism initiatives in the US, bringing together the 2017 case *Raza vs City New York*, a series of secondary ethnographies, and trends in terrorism studies which focus on emotional and psychological markers of radicalism rather than political substance. While securitization is often *opposed* to legal governance precisely because the exception is defined as that which is beyond the law; I demonstrate that in fact processes of securitization and legalization work in tandem to authorize state power to simultaneously legally regulate religious emotion and also to suspend those laws in moments of exception. I show that concerns over religious emotions have never solely been a matter of securing an objective danger but are rather competing political practices in which certain emotional displays are privileged while others are censored or misrecognized. Security initiatives do not merely reflect but rather produce the emotional dynamics that underlay and fuel religious conflict in democratic states.

While these cases may at first seem distinct temporally and geographically, each in fact reveals a different aspect of a recurrent and productive paradox that is embedded in the secular

governance of religious difference: the presumption that religious belief is characterized by an exceptionally strong affective attachment which both justifies its special protection from state interference and also necessitates its regulation insofar as this affective attachment is especially sensitive and prone to dangerous incitement. Current conceptual, legal, and disciplinary schemas naturalize this assumption; in contrast, my research weaves the story of the production and political regulation of religious feelings through multiple historical eras to clarify the specific processes that are involved in the securitization of affective and emotional attachments that are often named "religious." This opens a new perspective on the assumptions that guide secular liberal responses to appearances of "emotional," "religious," and "political" phenomena in legal advocacy and security initiatives, clarifying what makes these distinctions possible as well as the complex power dynamics that they engender.