



27 Centuries in 90 Minutes

History URC shows connections across time, broadens perspectives

Thursday, April 21, 2016



CAMERON CALATO '17 DISCUSSES THE POLITICAL STRUGGLES IN NEPAL AT THE URC HISTORY EVENT ON THURSDAY.

What do Syria, Nepal, Iran, ancient Galatia and sixth-century Europe have in common?

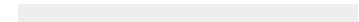
At first glance, they were simply the settings for one set of the presentations and panel discussions by history department students at the Undergraduate Research Conference (URC) on Thursday. However, when the 90-minute session was at its end, the audience that gathered in MUB 302 had been treated to a

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the Islamic Revolution of 1979."

Baha'i, she explained, is based on inclusion and peace — and today in Iran, those who practice the faith are often forced to do so in secret or face imprisonment and other forms of oppression because their beliefs are seen as a threat to the theocracy.

In Nepal, another form of oppression is taking place, Cameron Calato '17 explained in his presentation, "Where the Hills and Planes Collide: A Look at Nepal's Political Tension Through Tharus in Chitwan."

Calato spent time studying in Nepal, witnessing the devastation in the aftermath of the April 2015 earthquake and the political struggles that contributed to issues including fuel shortages.



PARTICIPANTS IN THE URC HISTORY PRESENTATIONS ANSWER AUDIENCE QUESTIONS.

In Nepal, he explained, the people of the southernmost plains region struggle with lack of representation in the government and years of oppression by those who moved into their region, using fear tactics to convince them to give up their lands. With 90 percent

of Nepal's government in favor of the country's proposed constitution, those in the south are protesting their lack of representation and the impacts on their way of life.

There are no simple answers, Calato was quick to point out, and it is essential to consider both sides. Living with the people of the region, following their traditions and hearing their stories is essential to understanding, he said.

John O'Neill '16 was the last to present, sharing his research, "Syria: A History of Resisting Revolution and a Failed State's

Future."

Amidst current concerns about the refugee crisis and oppression of Syrian citizens, O'Neill took the audience back in time through Syria's history to the events leading up to when Bashar al-Assad's father, Hafez al-Assad, rose to power.

"Why should we care?" he asked, showing images of the current suffering Syria and the aftermath of the government's response to the Arab Spring in 2011. "Over 60 years, they took power by force, by illegitimate means. You have to look back to move forward."

Moderator Michael Leese, assistant professor of history, summed up the power of URC events like this: "It's a great thing we do here at UNH, providing students the opportunity to present their research."

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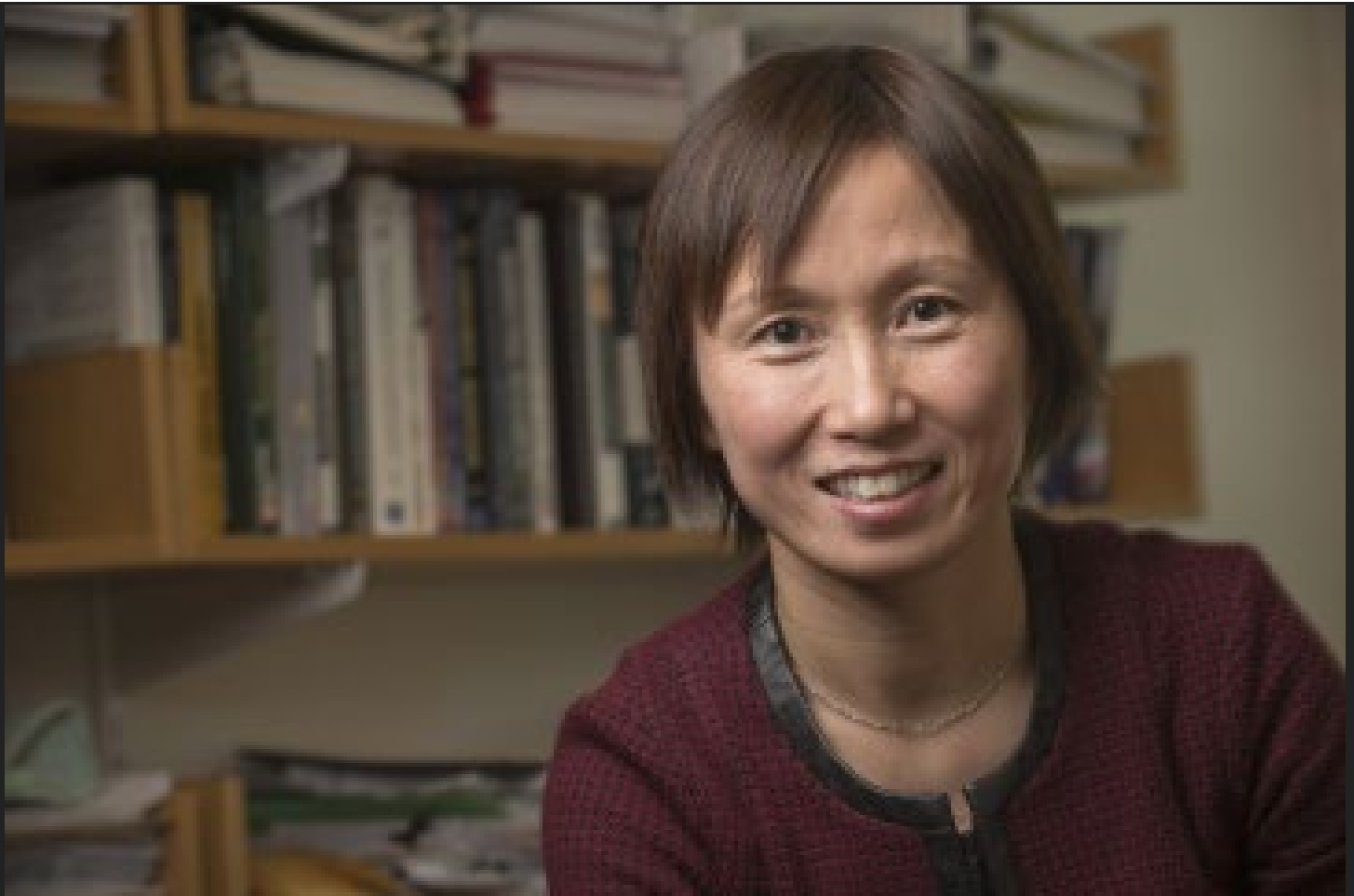
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