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Beauregard-King Lecture: The Power of Mission

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On Wednesday, April 1, a Norwegian historian presents war, mission, relief and refuge in the history department's annual Beauregard-King Emeritus Lecture.

Inger Marie Okkenhaug, an associate professor at the University of Bergen, Norway, has done extensive research on missions, education and gender in the Middle East and Scandinavia. Her talk, "Total War in the Middle East: Mission and Relief Among the Dispossessed of World War I," will address mission-based relief in the context of total war and the refugee crises in the Middle East in the years during and immediately after World War I.

During these years, Okkenhaug said, individuals such as the Norwegian missionary and nurse Bodil Biørn held vital connections to Western state authorities and could operate relatively safely and independently, unlike men and women from the local communities who often depended on funding, supplies and infrastructure from the outside in order to help the destitute.

Employing a micro-history perspective that follows the life and achievements of Biørn, Okkenhaug situates missionary relief within a larger framework of conflict, the plight of refugees and humanitarian aid efforts in the region.

The lecture, now in its third year, is named for longtime UD history professors Irving Beauregard and Sandy King. It's at 7:30 p.m. in the Sears Recital Hall; a reception follows.