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## Cover picture

The *Mad Woman of Douai* by William Orpen

Between 1918 and 1919 Orpen executed a number of allegorical paintings, each distilling his revulsion at the effect of the war on human behaviour. The painting was inspired by his encounter with a victim of rape by retreating German soldiers. Orpen's earlier Somme landscapes serve as the stage for a hideous theatre of the absurd. The war is presented as a nightmare world in which normal human pity and restraint are absent, captured by the grotesque curiosity of the peasants who crowd around the woman, while the soldiers appear indifferent. The crucifix on the ruined church wall seems like a clear reproof to a God who is powerless in the face of human bestiality.

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We are always looking for interesting and visually appealing images for the cover of the Journal and would welcome suggestions or pictures, which should be sent to Dr Allan Beveridge, British Journal of Psychiatry, 21 Prescot Street, London, E1 8BB, UK or [bjp@rcpsych.ac.uk](mailto:bjp@rcpsych.ac.uk).



This themed issue was produced in collaboration with the World Psychiatric Association (WPA). The WPA proposed the theme of disasters and trauma, inspired by the WPA sponsored international conference on psychosocial, psychotherapy and psychotraumatic methods at the University of Duhok, Iraq. Guest editors Prof. Schulze, Prof. Kizilhan and Prof. Botbol are affiliated with the WPA and guest editors Prof. Bisson and Prof. Jones are members of the BJPsych editorial board.



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