

# The City Savage

by [Justin Wong](#) (August 2023)



*Self-Portrait*, Otto Dix, 1912

**Amongst mist-grey** growths,  
Of bricks and mortar;  
Behind the shrouds of stone,  
Within urban wilds;  
Neath the arch of underpass,  
That protect from the element's caprices:  
Man.

Here he is:  
Primeval and Modern;  
Backwards and forwards;  
Upwards and down;  
In Progress and regress—

The return after progress  
Is his Jerusalem after time.

He forms the ranks of a savage gentry,  
His is a bourgeoisie primitivism,  
Labouring in offices soullessly corporate,  
Hiding the signs of a pagan nature,  
Under shirt and tie, trousers and jacket.

He establishes ties,  
Inscribing names of  
his dubious kin,  
In a *pen of iron*,  
On the book of his flesh.

His beliefs: atavism on the one hand,  
And futurism on the other,  
One foot in the tropics,  
The other in undawned day.

His mind is conflict:  
Pantheism and individualism;  
Universalism and alienation —

The essence of anti-religion.

Pharmacopoeia is his Eucharist—  
Memory and transcendence.  
Death is his end,  
though the future his salvation —  
The donkey's carrot to a Shangri La  
One is moving ever nearer to,  
Though always the same distance from.

The city savage in the savage city,  
The nose-ringed amongst electromagnetic waves,  
The bodily adorned that pass through  
The acrid fumes of stuck traffic,  
The de-civilized amongst extant remnants  
of a rescinded history.

This is a renaissance of prehistory  
at the end of time,  
Savages in the hour pragmatism,  
Adamites in their nude communion,  
The cannibal in the courts of law.

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**Justin Wong** is originally from Wembley, though at the moment is based in the West Midlands. He has been passionate about the English language and literature since a young age. Previously, he lived in China working as an English teacher. His novel, *Millie's Dream*, is available [here](#).

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