

# "the planners" by boey kim cheng essay sample

[Literature](#), [Poetry](#)



The poem ' the planners' is written by boey kim cheng. He was born in Singapore and is now teaching creative writing in an Australian university. This poem is about how Singapore was planned and built because of the insatiable desire toward perfection of the people. In this poem the poet uses various literary tools like alliterative phrase, oxymoron, irony and many others. There are also various kinds of tones in this poem. The main tones are lament and accusatory. In the line " They plan, They build, All spaces are gridded." In the first stanza shows that the place is very organized which makes it look to artificial. The word " They" refers to the planners and the repetition of this word shows a slight emotion of anger towards them. According to the planners ' gridded' is what is desired. It also describes layout of the city which is very boxed in. In the following line the phrase " permutation of possibilities" suggests that there are various different methods to make the cities perfect and the alliteration of the letter ' P' also show the endlessness of the permutation of possibilities. In the third line which is " The buildings are in alignment with the road" reinforces the image of the very planned environment and urban development without any flaws. The line " They build and will not stop." also has a tone of anger which is emphasized by the repetition of the phrase " thy build". The phrase " they will not stop" shows that the planners are blinded by their insatiable desire to build and with their own sense of power. It is shown that even the nature surrenders towards the planners where the planners are seeking to control over everything even the nature. The lines " Even the sea draw back/and the skies surrender" also gives a feeling of sadness of the poet. The phrase " skies surrender" is a personification which gives the image of the skies

retreating as they were not able to overcome the power of the planners. In the second stanza the poet uses several phrases of sarcasm to show what the planners are doing to the nature and history of the country. In the first three lines of this stanza the poet uses few metaphors. The poet describes the past and the history as 'flaws' according to the planners which may be an identity of oneself which is very important. The poet suggests that the planners "blemishes the past, knock of useless blocks". These useless blocks may also be a source of identity of oneself.

The past is also being disrespected and is considered as an undesirable state for the people, which in reality it may not be it. The next four lines suggest that the past is which is not perfect is made perfect by the planners, as perfect as the formation of the teeth where all gaps are filled. "the country wears perfect rows/of shining teeth" is an extended metaphor of "dental dexterity" which is a concentrated to mold everything into one perfect shape, killing all individual's identity. The poet compares the buildings as the dental body to show the perfectness of the environment made by the planners in a sarcastic way. The poet associates the procedure of developments of the planners to "anesthesia" where the history is numbed, "amnesia" where history is erased and "hypnosis" where they control the people and make them believe the fabricated surrounding of the people.

When the poet wrote these three words there was a feeling of anger towards the planners. In the lines "they have the means./ they have it all so it will not hurt" has a feeling of immense sadness of the poet as he is very disappointed about himself that he could not do anything and feels

powerless about himself. In the following line which is "so history is new again" there is also a feeling of sorrow. In the process of development many things were lost including history. "the drilling goes right through/the fossils of last century" shows that even the history is being destroyed. The poet described the history as a fossil being destroyed. The poet must have felt a sense of anger for the planners. In the last stanza, the line "but my heart would not bleed poetry" shows immense sorrow and disappointment of the poet towards himself as he was not able to do anything when all of the urban development was happening as he was powerless. The poem is therefore about the endless development of the country at the cost of various things like the history being obliterated and nature needing to succumb to human control in need for perfection.