

The Radiator

Ngoi Hui Chien

- **ABSTRACT:** As a Chinese born and raised in tropical Malaysia, I had never seen a radiator before studying in the United Kingdom. Therefore, when I first arrived in the UK in the autumn, I embarrassingly mistook the panel radiator in my room for the place to hang my towel. To capture the experience, I wrote my poem in the shape of a panel radiator, a rectangle with two stands on the sides. Written vertically from right to left, the poem's form resembles the ancient Chinese texts. I chose this form because the UK's autumn reminded me of literary works from China about autumn. Both locales are “the North” for me: while the UK is in the Global North, China is in the North for Malaysians.
- **KEYWORDS:** autumn, Malaysia, radiator, the North, United Kingdom

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If the distant chill were a language

my first metaphor in the September would surely be my jacket, a veil
of my warm homeland, shivering in the room floating high in the air
carefully, the floor undulated, each step making the space tilt toward
the white rectangular panel with vertical furrows, a strange ornament
in the new world, I pulled open the quiet windows—an eloquent gush
of autumn wind, embracing my mind with the bracing imagination of
the Yellow River, dreamily real, like those squirrels with lyrical tails
frolicking with wonder, the muse, flying the broad birds whose wings
the grayish sky slashed open, and so came the downy rain, ploughing
my skin, a sedate patch of land scattered with goosebumps, vibrating
amid the cold surging from the North, a finger germinated gently and
punctuated my vision—the bright panel, cut along the murmurs from
a reticent climate, the panel on which I had wanted to hang my towel
a blushing symbol that radiated heat, its valve had long been waiting
to be rotated, the valve of memory



■ **NGOI HUI CHIEN** is a postgraduate researcher at the Department of English of Universiti Malaya. His main research interests are postcolonialism, psychoanalysis, and Sinophone studies. He works on both English and Chinese literature. Apart from scholarly criticism, he is also committed to creative writing, especially poetry. His English poetry has been published in the *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, *New Writing*, *SARE*, *Asiatic*, *Gothic Nature*, *Transnational Literature*, and *New Beginnings*. His recent Chinese poetry can be found in *Sin Chew Daily* and *Rainforest Poetry*. Email: s2182864@siswa.um.edu.my