

## **Bruneian Women's Writings in English: An Emergent Minor Literature**

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In 2009, Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD) introduced English language creative writing modules as part of the English Literature and Drama Studies programmes. These modules provided students—the majority of whom are women aged between 19 and 22—an avenue to explore issues, imagery, and perspectives pertinent to their gender. As a result, these writings not only provide an invaluable insight into women-related themes and representations observed and experienced in Brunei, but also reveal the manner in which they are subordinated as gendered subjects in the country. At the same time, the students' use of English in these classes compounds their secondary status in the nation space. Although English is widely used through bilingualism here, the state also takes pains to defend the premier status of Malay as the national language, seen in its support of *Bahasa Jiwa Bangsa* (language is the soul of the race), as well as its resistance against *Bahasa Rojak* (mixed language). Using Deleuze and Guattari's concept of "minor literature," I will argue that Bruneian women's writings in English straddle both postcolonial and gender trajectories in the construction of a minor literature that is still in its embryonic state. More importantly, these women writers espouse a "particular way of seeing reality" by occupying the hybrid third space in-between the ideological discourses of local and global, tradition and modernity, Asia and the West. My analysis thus considers the ways in which their emergent minor literature represents an alternative voice and viewpoint on the Bruneian literary landscape.