The 2011 Herb Feith Memorial Lecture and launch of “From Vienna to Yogyakarta: the Life of Herb Feith”

“The Life of Herb Feith: A Personal Reflection from Timor-Leste” and book launch by Kirsty Sword Gusmão

When: Tuesday, 2 August 2011
6 pm for 6.30 pm – 8 pm
Where: H1.16, Ground Floor, Building H
Monash University Caulfield Campus
900 Dandenong Road
Caulfield East VIC 3145

* The Caulfield Railway Station is adjacent to the campus. The No. 3 tram from Swanston Street will take you directly to the campus.

RSVP: Monday 25 July, 2011
Eric Cheng, 9903 4616
eric.cheng@monash.edu
*Due to overwhelming responses in 2010, we strongly recommend you RSVP for this event.

HE. Kirsty Sword Gusmão is Chairwoman of the Alola Foundation and Goodwill Ambassador for Education, Timor-Leste.

Kirsty grew up in Melbourne and Bendigo and attended Melbourne University where she completed a Bachelor of Arts (Honours), majoring in Indonesian and Italian, and a Diploma of Education.

In 1991, after working as an Administrative Secretary with the Overseas Service Bureau (Australian Volunteers International), she joined the Refugee Studies Program at Oxford University as Assistant to the Development Coordinator. During 1991, she travelled to East Timor as the Researcher/Interpreter the Yorkshire Television documentary film (In Cold Blood: The massacre of East Timor) on political and social developments in the territory.

She lived and worked as a teacher and human rights campaigner in Jakarta, Indonesia from 1992-1996, during these years her work for the East Timorese independence cause intensified and brought her into contact with the independence leader, Xanana Gusmão, who was serving a 20-year sentence in a Jakarta jail and whom she married in July, 2000.

She has lived in East Timor since October 1999 and is the founder and chairwoman of the Alola Foundation which she established in 2001 to address the needs of East Timorese women and their families. Information about the work of the Alola Foundation can be found on the website: www.alolafoundation.org

Kirsty was appointed by the President Dr. Jose Ramos Horta as Goodwill Ambassador for Education in October 2007. This appointment was in recognition of Kirsty’s tireless efforts to date and to formalize future endeavours in addressing the educational priorities of Timor-Leste.


‘Jemma Purdey reveals a multifaceted personality of an engaged political scientist and a committed humanist on a scale not known before.’
– Sabam P Slagian, Former Indonesian Ambassador to Australia

Herb Feith came to Australia as a Jewish refugee from an Austria reeling from the shock of Kristallnacht and a sense of impending doom and went on to become a renowned and passionate scholar of Indonesia. He died tragically in Melbourne in 2001. An inspiring figure, Feith was a pioneer in relations between Australia and Indonesia; a volunteer and civil servant working alongside Indonesians; a leading scholar, analyst and teacher; and an activist fighting for a better outcome for the impoverished and oppressed in Indonesia and around the world. He pioneered the influential program now known as Australian Volunteers International.

This is the story of Feith and his many extraordinary achievements. Indonesia was the focus of Feith’s work, scholarship and activism for fifty years, so this is also the story of a tumultuous period in Indonesian history and the relationship between Australia and Indonesia.

About the Author

Jemma Purdey is an Australian Research Council Postdoctoral Fellow in the Centre of Southeast Asian Studies and the School of Political and Social Inquiry at Monash University. Her research interests include Indonesia’s ethnic Chinese minority, violence, human rights and Indonesian politics. She is author of Anti-Chinese Violence in Indonesia, 1996–1999 (NUS Publishing, 2006).