

# Permanent Things



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## RUSSELL KIRK IN *TIME* MAGAZINE

The February 13, 2012 issue of *TIME* magazine featured an article by David Von Drehle on the topic of “The Conservative Identity Crisis.” In the article, Von Drehle describes the important historical impact Russell Kirk made on conservative thought, saying, “modern conservatism was born in the early 1950s...[when a] young writer named Russell Kirk unearthed a rich philosophical tradition going back to British writer and politician Edmund Burke; Kirk’s 1953 book, *The Conservative Mind*, was a sensation, influencing a generation that included William F. Buckley, Barry Goldwater, and Ronald Reagan.”

Von Drehle goes on to say, “Kirk’s was never the only brand of conservatism, but his ideas were like a magnet pulling others toward them, and steadily, a coalition of the right was formed. Kirk emphasized the religious roots of society, which spoke to the rising Christian conservatism of the 1970s. He counseled slow and orderly change rather than radical or utopian schemes; this made his movement a welcoming home for Americans unnerved by the social revolution of the 1960s and ’70s. He held that individual property is the root of freedom...and he cherished traditional values and local institutions rather than shiny new ideas from central head-quarters, which made his philosophy a comfortable place for the inevitable backlash against Washington and the New Deal.”

In an interview, Von Drehle described his connections to the work of Russell Kirk saying, “I became familiar with Russell

Kirk when I was pursuing my Master of Letters degree in English at Oxford University some 30 years ago. I wrote a thesis on the political philosophy of T.S. Eliot, and of course in the process of researching that project I read Dr. Kirk’s masterful book *The Conservative Mind: From Burke to Eliot*. I left graduate school a journalist rather than an English professor, and as I got deeper into covering politics, I came to understand Dr. Kirk’s lofty place in the intellectual history of the American conservative movement. When *TIME* asked me to write an essay on the state of the conservative movement today, I decided to focus on the philosophical tensions that now exist between the heirs of Kirk and the currently ascendant libertarian wing of the movement.”

Von Drehle believes conservatives today have an important lesson to learn from Kirk because, “There is a radical edge to some of today’s libertarianism—an individualism so extreme that it is off-putting to all but the disciples of Ayn Rand. A reading of Kirk serves to remind conservatives that their movement is also rooted in ideas of order, humility, community, and faith.”



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## BOOK LAUNCH IN BRAZIL



Launch party, São Paulo University, Dec. 2011



Annette Kirk, Angela Zogbi, Edson Filho,  
and Felicia Kirk Flores



Edson Filho (editor), Pedro Sette-Câmara (translator),  
Annette Kirk, and Alex Catharino



Receptive audience at book launch,  
São Paulo University, Dec. 2011

## Partnership between *É Realizações* and The Russell Kirk Center

Edson Oliveira, publisher of *É Realizações*, is being referred to as one of the most exciting publishers in Brazil nowadays. Having discovered a market that was not being served in his country, he is shaking up the publishing world by translating into Portuguese and publishing books about the liberal arts and conservative thought.

Last year, the Russell Kirk Center entered into an agreement with the Brazilian publishing house *É Realizações* to establish a "Research and Translation Program for Brazilian Scholars." Under this arrangement, the RKC will provide facilities for scholars conducting research relating to Russell Kirk and the work of other important conservative authors.

As part of this collaboration, Márcia Xavier de Brito has been doing the first translations into Portuguese of Kirk's books, and I have been writing introductions to those works. Both Márcia and I have been consulting Russell Kirk's Library and the extensive archive of writings and manuscripts while preparing Kirk books for Brazilian publication.

The first Kirk book published under this arrangement was *Eliot and His Age*, launched last December in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, with lectures by

Annette Kirk and me. As this was the first book of Russell Kirk to be published in Brazil, the presence of Annette Kirk, the widow of the author, made the launching of the book more personal for the audience, as they could ask many questions about Kirk's life and thought.

This launching was a success. More than a hundred people attended the lectures. The Portuguese edition of *Eliot and His Age* was reviewed in the literary supplement of *Estado de São Paulo*, one of the most influential Brazilian newspapers, and in *Revista Veja*, the most popular weekly magazine in that country, with an average of 8.5 million readers. An interview with Annette Kirk by the most famous Brazilian conservative philosopher, Professor Luiz Felipe Pondé, was published in the cultural supplement of *Folha de São Paulo*, the second biggest Brazilian newspaper, with a daily circulation of 300,000 printed copies.

Alex Catharino  
Executive Vice President of  
Centro Interdisciplinar de Ética  
e Economia Personalista (CIEEP)  
Assistant Editor of  
*Communio Review* (Brazilian ed.)

## Interview with Edson de Oliveira Filho, *É Realizações* Publisher

Last December, Russell Kirk's memory and moral imagination arrived in Brazil. Having as hosts Mrs. Annette Kirk, *É Realizações* Publishing Company, and the legacy of T. S. Eliot, "Russell Kirk" visited the cities of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. For the first time, a broader Portuguese-speaking audience could have access to his writings and pose questions to Mrs. Kirk and to scholars such as Alex Catharino and Pedro Sette-Câmara.

The awakening to Russell Kirk's intellectual work in these far-away lands was remarkable: big Brazilian and Latin American media companies opened space to debate Kirk's thought. Large numbers of letters and e-mails from enthusiastic readers arrived at the publisher's mailbox, and *Eliot and His Age* was a great success in one of the main Brazilian book fairs at São Paulo University. Curiously, this was the first time our publishing company had a display at this book fair.

*The Moral Imagination in the Twentieth Century*, as says the subtitle, in the clear perception of Kirk and in the subtleties of Eliot's poetry, is enlightening the Brazilian moral imagination in the twenty-first century, in a world dramatically changed since the book appeared for the first time, in 1971.

It is a world of disappearing borders and access to information for a number of people never seen before in human history. In a time where we are quickly passing from the "era of libraries" to the "era of internet," we are called to conceive of ourselves once more as moral beings, exercising even more responsibly this intrinsic human ability. The term "moral imagination," coined by Edmund Burke, is renewed by Kirk and shown in its fullness in writers such as John Henry Newman, G. K. Chesterton, Irving Babbitt, and T. S. Eliot.

The twenty-first century mentality, which speaks of freedom of speech and entitles us, new global citizens, with many other rights, has to become aware that all technological gains come with additional responsibilities. In this context, the publishing of Russell Kirk's works in Brazil in partnership with the Russell Kirk Center, is not only filling a gap in the Brazilian publishing market, but it is an answer, a way of making available Kirk's exemplary intellectual life as well as his ability to understand the world and ourselves. As he writes in his *Sword of Imagination*, in a sentence

quoted by Alex Catharino in the Introduction to the Portuguese edition of *Eliot and His Age*, "The world is governed, in any age, not by rationality but by faith: by love, loyalty, and imagination."

### 1. What is the profile and vision of *É Realizações* Publishing?

Our vision is to carry out large, long term projects. There is, for example, the René Girard Library project (a total of 60 titles written not only by Girard but by other scholars about his work). We are also publishing Eric Voegelin, Christopher Dawson, Bernard Lonergan and Russell Kirk. And we have other large-scale academic and cultural publishing projects right now, unparalleled even in Europe or the United States.

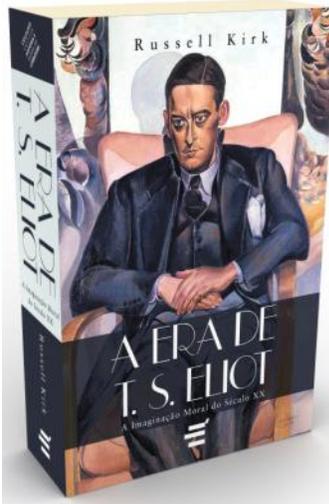
I believe *É Realizações* must create a cultural model in publishing that can be exported for its outstanding quality, while in Brazil our company also plays the role of a producing and diffusing center of culture. We are plural and globalized, without any political distinctions—as is our contemporary world. Another important thing is that our publishing company never wanted to sell only "products," but to create knowledge in a unique way that combines editorial projects and research. Another aspect is that in our books we emphasize everything that shows the union of a multitude of different perspectives—everything that links culture, religion and arts—giving readers the chance to know

the best that has been produced in these areas of human knowledge.

### 2. Could you talk about the partnership between *É Realizações* and The Russell Kirk Center? What can we expect for the future?

This partnership gives me great happiness. We will continue not only to publish the works of Russell Kirk, but the whole intellectual circle that revolves around his legacy. Our publishing house wants to be the bridge between the Russell Kirk Center and Brazil, creating a healthy and productive exchange between Brazilian researchers and Kirk scholars worldwide. Concerning Kirk's works, the next three books to be published in the near future are *The Politics of Prudence*, *Edmund Burke*, and *The Conservative Mind*.

Felipe Cherubin  
Press Agent of *É Realizações*



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NEWSLETTER**

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**WILBUR FELLOW UPDATE:  
RYAN STREETER**



Ryan Streeter is a Distinguished Visiting Fellow and Director of Fiscal Studies at Sagamore Institute and serves as Editor of ConservativeHome.com. Formerly he was a Senior Fellow at the Legatum Institute in London and a Special Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy at the White House in 2005-2007.

When asked to reflect on the role the fellowship played in his life, Streeter answered with candor: “My time as a Wilbur fellow at The Russell Kirk Center for Cultural Renewal was a pivotal moment in my professional development. During the time I spent at the Center, I benefited in three consequential ways. First, I was able to complete the bulk of my dissertation prospectus (for my Ph.D. in political philosophy from Emory University) utilizing the remarkable library holdings and unmatched environment for study and research. Second, I sharpened my arguments and views through the regular interaction with other fellows and esteemed visitors to the Center. Third, through the extended network of individuals associated with the Center, I was able to move into the world of public policy in a way that allowed me to hold positions of significant responsibility.”

**John O’Sullivan & Vigen Guroian Speak at the RKC**

At an October ISI Seminar on GK Chesterton and a Cultural Vision of the Permanent Things, John O’ Sullivan (Former Editor of *The National Review*) and Vigen Guroian (Prof. of Religious Studies in Orthodox Christianity, University of Virginia) spoke at the RKC. O’Sullivan discussed “Wit, Wisdom, and Public Discourse: Journalism and Chesterton,” and Guroian discussed “Restoring a Compelling Vision of the Permanent Things” to a receptive audience.

John O’Sullivan, CBE is Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty’s Vice-President and Executive Editor, setting editorial vision and direction for the organization. He has served as a senior editor at *The London Times* and *The Daily Telegraph*, and he was a member of the team that launched the Canadian daily, *The National*

*Post*. His recent book, *The President, the Pope, and the Prime Minister*, has been translated into several languages. Vigen Guroian is the author of *The Melody of Faith: Theology in an Orthodox Key*, *Rallying the Really Human Things*, and *Tending the Heart of Virtue: How Classic Stories Awaken a Child’s Imagination*.

~ Noelle Kasa

