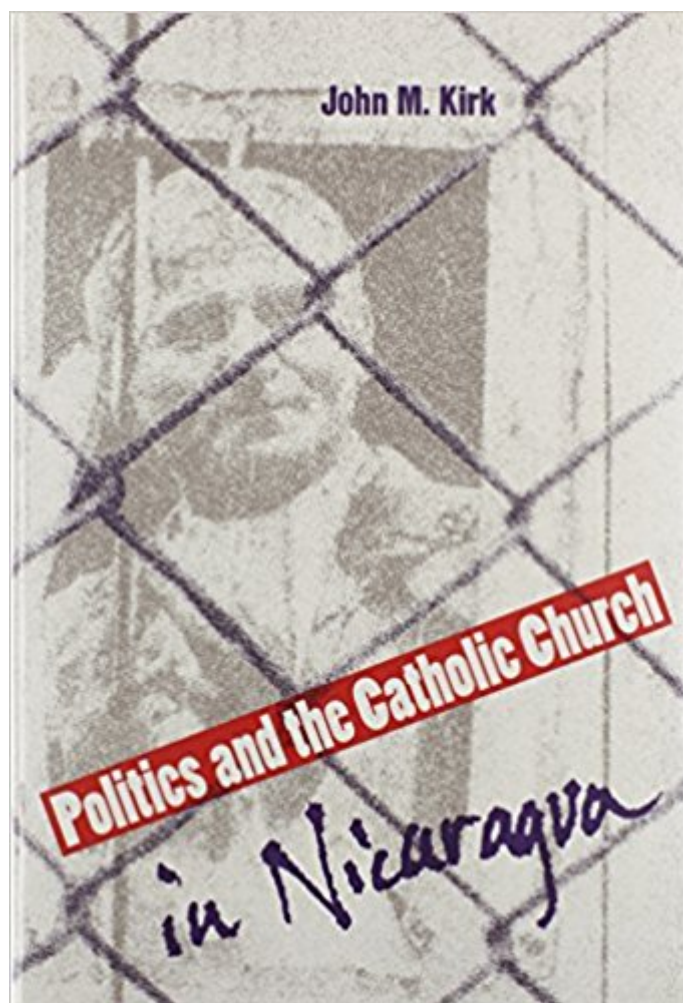


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# Politics And The Catholic Church In Nicaragua



## Synopsis

Guerrilla-priests and liberation theology are not new phenomena in Nicaragua. Ever since the arrival of the Spanish conquistadores, Catholic Church leaders have played a major role in that country's politics. The result, the author writes, is a polarized church, one with a progressive minority at loggerheads with the conservative hierarchy.

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## Customer Reviews

Kirk (Latin American studies, Dalhousie Univ., Nova Scotia) presents the first scholarly study of the Church in Nicaragua during the entire ten years of the Sandinista upheaval and revolution from 1979 to 1990. He argues that the Church has always played a central role in politics there, despite its claims to the contrary. He begins by tracing the Church in Nicaragua from 1503 to 1979, contrasting the role of the conservative hierarchy and the progressive revolutionary minority in the Church during the Sandanista years. He then discusses the search for reconciliation in church-state relations. Kirk finishes with a chapter debating whether the proper role of the Church is prophetic and progressive or conservative and accommodating in revolutionary struggles. For academic and large public libraries.- C. Robert Nixon, MLS, Lafayette, Ind.Copyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Guerrilla-priests and liberation theology are not new phenomena in Nicaragua. Ever since the arrival of the Spanish conquistadores, Catholic Church leaders have played a major role in that country's

politics. The result, John Kirk writes, is a polarized church, one with a progressive minority at loggerheads with the conservative hierarchy. Kirk sets each stage of the church-state debate in a historical continuum, then examines the forty-year period of Somocismo and the Sandinista period (1979-90) that followed. This social revolution - blending nationalism, Marxism, and Catholicism - dared to be different, he claims, and accordingly it paid the price. Kirk wrote this book following three trips to Nicaragua during the 1980s, when he witnessed firsthand the social polarization occurring at the time. But the involvement of the Catholic Church in Nicaraguan politics is not exceptional, he says: "Most - if not all - religions are also encumbered with socio-political concerns that go beyond the essentially 'religious.'"

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