

Acknowledgments

This book has been a long while in the making and owes much to the help, constructive criticism, and good natures of other people. Most of the research was conducted in a number of Mexican archives over the course of the past eight years. I very much appreciate the assistance and unfailing patience of the archivists and staff at the Archivo General de la Nación (Mexico City), Secretaría de la Reforma Agraria (Mexico City, Morelia, and Uruapan), Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (Mexico City), Archivo Histórico del Poder Ejecutivo de Michoacán (Morelia), Registro Público de la Propiedad (Morelia), and Archivo de Notarías (Morelia). Financial support from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the MIT Center for International Studies, and Boston College made this research possible.

The book started out as a Ph.D. dissertation in the MIT Department of Political Science, and was shaped through the intellectual support of my thesis committee. My emphasis on the importance of local histories in understanding politics owes much to Charles Sabel, and my thinking on Mexico has been very much influenced by Jeffrey Rubin's work on popular movements, regional politics, and revolutionary state formation. Jonathan Fox, the chair of my committee, has, over the years, taught me a great deal about rural politics and peasants in Mexico, and provided consistently helpful comments and unflagging moral support throughout the course of my dissertation work.

Many people have provided me with insightful comments on various aspects and phases of this work, for which I am enormously grateful. I'd like to thank Christopher Boyer, Lynn Stephen, Jeffrey Rubin, Gilbert Joseph, Ramón Jade, Betsy Aron, Donald Hafner, Emilio Kourí, Caren Addis, Cathie Jo Martin, Roger Karapin, Annabelle Lever, Stephen Page,

Lourdes Melgar, and Gretchen Ritter. I'm particularly grateful to John Tutino and Mary Kay Vaughan for their careful reading and insightful comments on the entire manuscript. Finally, I want to thank the members of my family, above all my husband, Petri Flint, for their much-tested patience and loving support over the course of this endeavor.