

Preface

This study began life as a doctoral dissertation on the Mexican revolution in Guerrero. I began my work hoping to document the existence of a *ranchero* class in Porfirian Guerrero and its participation in the revolutionary movement. The attractions of Guerrero were obvious.

First, the state's history is, relatively speaking, uncharted. Second, Guerrero's controversial role in the contemporary body politic in Mexico suggested that a study of its recent past would provide fascinating results. Moreover, this mountainous, somewhat peripheral area seemed a likely region in which to find a substantial *ranchero* population, and while Guerrero did not give birth to a Zapata, a Villa, or an Obregón, it was an area in which an important *ranchero* group, led by the Figueroa family, joined the Maderista revolution in February 1911. In addition, the Figueras originated from the portion of the state which borders on Morelos, and their dealings with Zapata seemed likely to provide a useful point of comparison of the *ranchero* style of revolution with the Morelos paradigm.

The nature and quantity of the archival materials in the Secretaría de la Reforma Agraria (then the Departamento de Asuntos Agrarios y Colonización) forced me to concentrate my study of land tenure on the northern portion of the state embraced by the districts of Alarcón and Hidalgo. My study of the political origins and development of the revolution in Guerrero could not be so circumscribed, and, accordingly, it proved necessary to consider the broader issues of state politics, while nevertheless according a certain emphasis to the Figueras and other groups in the north of the state. For the activities of the Figueroa family and the role of northern Guerrero in local politics cannot be properly understood outside the context of the wider politics of the state as a whole. The north was not always the focus of state politics, although its role was often crucial. Ideally, this study might have included more material on the municipal and

regional politics of the districts of Alarcón and Hidalgo, but, unfortunately, such a study was not possible. Only in Taxco have the municipal archives been conserved, and very little material could be found in the archives of the state government in Chilpancingo.

Unfortunately, I was denied access to two private archives which might have done much to elucidate further the revolutionary history of Guerrero in general, and of the district of Hidalgo in particular. These were the private archive of Carlos Carranco Cardoso and the private papers of the Figueroa family. In the absence of these documentary sources, Dr. Arturo Figueroa Uriza's history of the revolution in Guerrero is a work of fundamental importance for events from 1911 to 1924. His *Ciudadanos en armas* is based on the family archive in his possession. It displays certain natural family biases (Dr. Figueroa Uriza is the son of General Andrés Figueroa) but, prudently used in conjunction with available documentary and newspaper sources, it is a mine of information. In particular, in using Dr. Figueroa's narrative, one needs to take account of his strong antipathy for Zapatismo.

It would have been quite impossible to complete the research for this book without the help of a considerable number of people, in Great Britain, Mexico, and the United States, who gave generously of advice and friendship. Although I can mention only some of them here, I am grateful to them all. For sound and freely offered advice I am indebted to Alan Knight, Moisés González Navarro, Alicia Orive, Beatriz Rojas Nieto, and Dudley Ankersen. Alan Knight and Geoffrey Walker read and criticized my Ph.D. dissertation, and their perceptive observations helped to make the final draft more cogent and readable. Alfonso Campos read, and corrected in some points, the section on the Porfiriato. Discussions with Malcolm Hoodless and James Murray helped crystallize some of the ideas set forth herein.

I owe a debt of gratitude to Professor Enrique Florescano and his researchers in the Departamento de Investigaciones Históricas del Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia for their hospitality and advice, and for allowing me free access to their bibliography of Mexican economic history. In Chilpancingo, Arquímedes Morales Carranza, rector of the Universidad Autónoma de Guerrero, and his staff, notably Lic. Salvador Camelo, offered advice and assistance and generously allowed a foreign visitor to use the facilities of their institution. In the Colegio de México, Luis Muro kindly allowed me to consult his annotated index of the Archivo Histórico de la Defensa Nacional.

My research would have been quite impossible without the help and patience of the staff of a number of libraries and archives: Biblioteca Nacional del México; Biblioteca del Colegio de México; Biblioteca del Departamento de Investigaciones Históricas del Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia; Hemeroteca Nacional; University Library, Cambridge; British Library; Library of Congress; Archivo de la Secretaría de la Reforma Agraria; Archivo General de la Nación; Archives Department, Biblioteca de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México; Instituto Nacional de Estudios Históricos de la Revolución Mexicana; Instituto de Estudios Históricos de México, Condumex, S.A.; Archivo General del Gobierno del Estado de Guerrero; United States National Archives.

Dr. J. Antonio Ortega Figueroa, in 1975 *presidente municipal* of Taxco, must be singled out for special thanks for allowing me access to the papers of the *ayuntamiento* of Taxco, and for granting me the aid of one of his policemen to clear a space in which to work. Another gracious *guerrerense*, Don Jesús Figueroa Alcocer, made me a gift of his *Crónica de la Revolución en Guerrero*, and of two bottles of the excellent wine which he now produces in Huitzuco. I greatly appreciated his hospitality and generosity.

Many others who, in one way or another, helped my work along cannot be mentioned here, but two must be singled out, for my debt to them is especially deep. David Brading, my research supervisor, was unstinting with his advice and criticism, without which this book would never have been written, and much of the credit for whatever value it has belongs to him. Finally, my wife, Janet, through her tolerance and support made a special contribution to my work for which acknowledgment here is but small thanks.

Of course, any errors of fact or interpretation are my own, and nobody else bears any responsibility for them.

The reader should note that wherever "\$" is used it stands for the Mexican peso, unless qualified by the prefix "U.S."

"Many of those who sign this memorandum have been born and have grown up on the small piece of land which we possess today and which . . . we have managed to buy by dint of perseverance and sacrifices; we are satisfied at having always fulfilled our duties and obligations as citizens and taxpayers, even in the periods of armed agitation."

*Smallholders of Huitzuco
in a letter to Lázaro Cárdenas,
12 May 1938*