

ESCUELA NACIONAL DE ANTROPOLOGÍA E HISTORIA.

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SYMPOSIUM: STUDIES ABOUT OAXACA AND NEIGHBORING AREAS (continuation).

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ABSTRACT:

The following paper is a first attempt to know which are the boundaries shared by the states of Oaxaca and Guerrero, as well as which communities from both states have had conflicts and which are the different ways of naming these boundaries. The ultimate goal is to know in greater depth the relationships that existed in the past between the communities of Oaxaca and Guerrero. This analysis is based on a book from the 19th century entitled *Arbitraje sobre los límites territoriales entre los estados de Guerrero y Oaxaca* [arbitration on the territorial boundaries between the states of Guerrero and Oaxaca], a document kept in the National Library (reserved section).

“An approximation to the geopolitical analysis of the boundaries between Guerrero and Oaxaca”

The book called *Arbitraje pronunciado por el general Mucio P. Martínez sobre los límites territoriales entre los estados de Guerrero y Oaxaca* [Arbitration given by general Mucio P. Martínez about the territorial boundaries between the states of Guerrero and Oaxaca] was published in Puebla in 1890¹. This is a document dealing with the technical and legal process of revising the boundaries that form the dividing line between the states named above. This process was undertaken in the last two decades of the 19th century.

¹ This book is in the National Library of Mexico in the collection of reserved access.

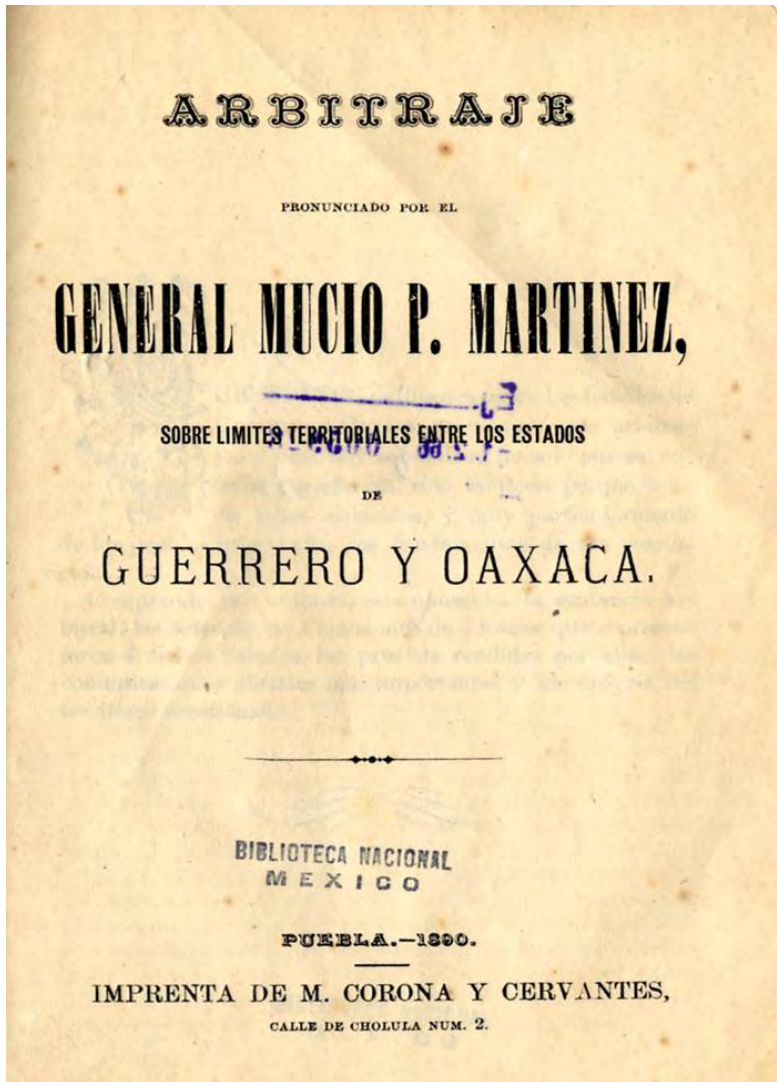


Figure 1. Book cover.

The interest in knowing the contents of this book is due primarily in knowing the specific boundaries pertaining to the Mixtec area between La Montaña de Guerrero and Oaxaca, to see whether they appear in the codex called *Lienzo de Aztactepec y Citlaltepec*, pertaining to the municipality of Metlatónoc in Guerrero.



Figure 2. The *Lienzo de Aztactepepec*.

In this paper the contents of this book will be discussed in broad terms, with data which I believe may be relevant for the territorial history of both states, as modern entities of the Mexican republic. We will leave for a later study the comparison between the boundaries mentioned in this arbitrage and the ones appearing in other documents of La Montaña de Guerrero.

The book consists of five parts. Part one is the **sentencia arbitral** [arbitrage sentence]; part two refers to the **actas** [official records] of this sentence; part three deals with **comunicaciones** [communications]; part four with the **pruebas de la comisión de Oaxaca** [proofs of the Oaxaca Commission]; and the fifth with the **pruebas de la comisión de Guerrero** [proofs of the Guerrero Commission].

The sentence was carried out on April 25th 1890 in Puebla, in order to create new commissions to review the points of disagreement between both states, since

previously they had not come to an agreement about their territorial boundaries. Therefore it is stated that:

“Ninth result: that the points fixed by the commissions of Guerrero and Oaxaca, in an extension of more that eighty leagues, which form in their borders the districts of Jamiltepec, Tlaxiaco, Juxtlahuaca, and Silacayoapan in the state of Oaxaca, and Ometepec and Tlapa in Guerrero, were the following ones, which are numbered for greater clarity. The points accepted by both commissions are shown with Arabic characters, the ones pointed out by Oaxaca as determining their division line are shown with Roman numerals” (p. 9).

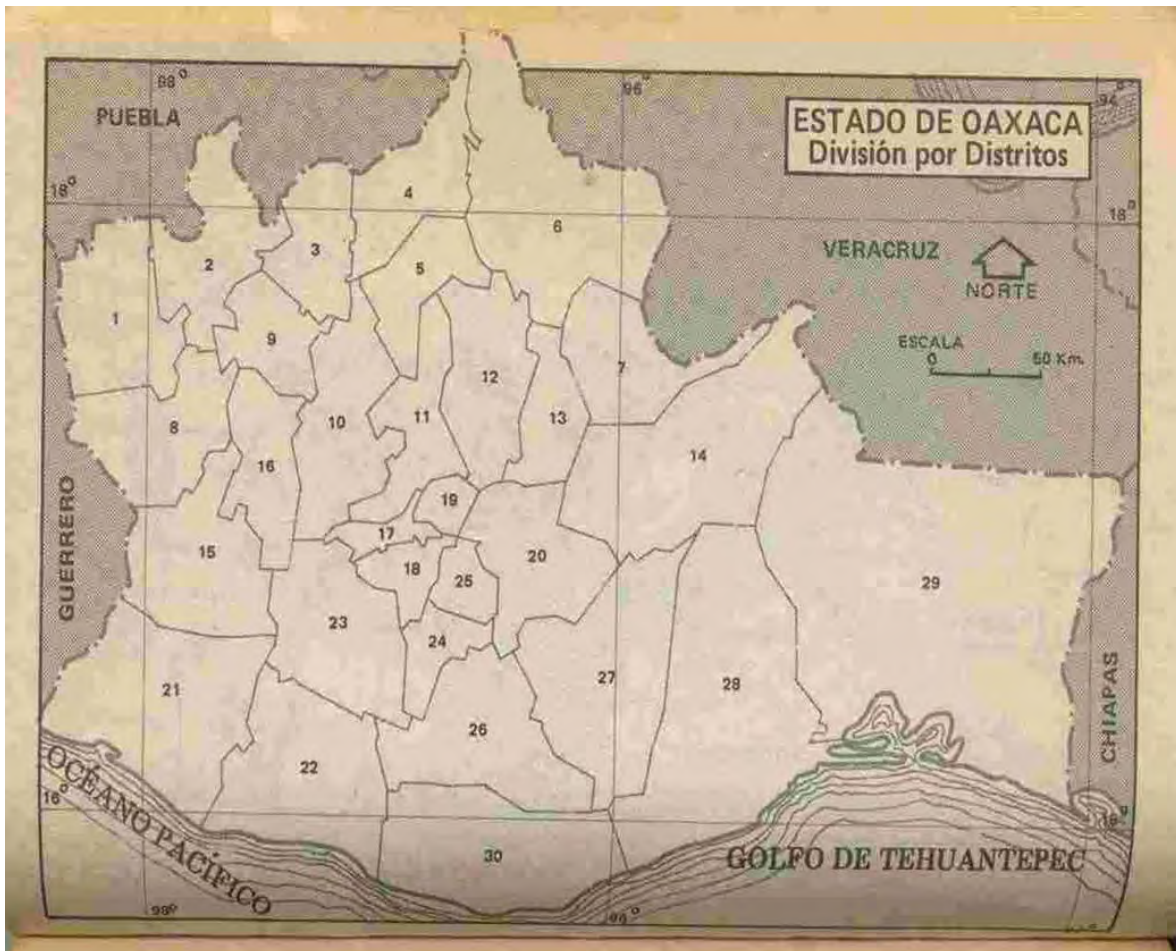


Figure 3. Map of the Oaxaca districts.

In total there were 96 boundaries forming the division line between both states. Guerrero mentions 13 points in disagreement and Oaxaca 18. The boundaries in disagreement are mostly on the coast (p. 10, 11). Therefore, most of the book deals with impugnations and proofs of property of boundaries and whole towns of

the coastal areas of both states. The following table shows the points of disagreement of both states, which are different between one state and the other because each state considers the points belonging to its territory, which were taken from them or were inside the territory of the neighboring state.

Points mentioned by Guerrero.	Points mentioned by Oaxaca.
Confluence of the Cayahual with the Cortijos River	Road from the Monte Alto lagoon to the Cayahual, following it to its confluence with the Cortijos River
Cerro Grande de Santiago	Paso de las Flores
Piedra Hueca	Frutillo Raizudo (Center of the Capulín gully)
Coacoyul Viejo	End of the Callejón de los Horcones
Cerro del Nanche	Alto de los Licos.
Laguna Colorada	Callejón del Tío Cleto
Maguey Viejo	Alto de Buena Vista
Tierra Colorada	Alto de las Mesas
Royal Highway up to the confluence of the Zapote stream	Peña Grande
Upriver until reaching the road to Cacahuatepec	Charco de las Garzas
Summit of the “Ciruelo”	Tranca Vieja
Head of the Maíz River	Boundary stone
Upriver until reaching the road from Huajintepec to Buena Vista.	La Escondida stream
Upriver until reaching the head of the “Tres Ríos” [three rivers]. Summit of Sanapila.	Piedra Rajada Heights
	Piedra Zopilote Heights
	Conejo Heights

	del Barrio Meadow
	La Vainilla Hill

Table 1. Boundaries in disagreement between Oaxaca and Guerrero.

In order to be able to clarify the points in disagreement, the commissions presented documents supporting the statement of possession of the boundaries. In some cases are shown documents from the colonial administration, for example in pages 23 and 24 a document is mentioned belonging to the towns of Tlacamama and Ixcapa, which was found in “*Teatro Americano: descripción de las provincias de N. España y sus jurisdicciones* [American theater: description of the provinces of New Spain and their jurisdictions], by D. Joseph Antonio de Villaseñor (1748 edition, Book 4, Title 2, Chapter XII, pp. 159-165). This work was formed by royal decree on July 19th 1741”. There are other examples of colonial documents which will be cited below.

The second part of the book, called “Actas” [official records], starts on page 41. In this part are shown the boundaries that would be definitive for the division line. They are numbered from south to north, starting with the ones on the coast area. The meeting to recognize the first boundaries was held in the town of Tapextla in 1889. The first boundary between Oaxaca and Guerrero is “Boca de Tecoyame” (p. 42, 43), following “Monte Coche” in a straight line (50, 51), “Laguna de Portezuelo” is the fourth point, followed by “Cañada de gaona” (p. 52), then “El Torontón”, “Mata de Otate”, which is the eighth point which joins the “Los Otates” stream (p. 53). Finally, the ninth point is the “Laguna de Monte Alto” [lagoon], which is found in Cuajinicuilapa (p. 54).

One of the points of greatest conflict for the resolution of the location of the boundaries was Ometepec (Guerrero), Amusgos, and Pinotepa, which belonged to the jurisdiction of Jamiltepec in Oaxaca. This was due to the fact that in the last part of the colonial period and the beginnings of Mexican independence the chiefdoms were disappearing and properties were sold to individual buyers.

Bordering towns sometimes belonged to one jurisdiction and later changed to another one, as is the case of this area. However, as the arbitrage of the territorial division advanced northward, the recognition of the boundaries was not as controversial.

The next meeting to revise the boundaries was held in Juxtlahuaca (Oaxaca), where three important points of the boundary line were recognized: Tres Ríos, Llano de Agua Fría, and Cruz Chiquita (p. 71). In this reconnaissance several boundaries were inspected whose name is in Mixtec; luckily the meaning was translated into Spanish (p. 72-73), shown in Table 2, below. The first column of Table 2 shows the name of the boundaries in Mixtec; in the second column the Mixtec word is broken up in order to find its corresponding Spanish word (this is based on Arana and Swadesh 1965, in the *Vocabulario de los Reyes* and in Alvarado² [edited by Jiménez Moreno in 1965]). The third column shows the Spanish translation of the boundaries, as it appears in the book.

MIXTEC BOUNDARY NAMES	LITERAL TRANSLATION	TRANSLATION IN THE BOOK
Yucucani	Yucu. Hill, mount. Cani. Long, high, much; hot, angry. Cani. Sole of the foot.	
yucuyu	Yucu. Hill, mount. -yu. Very strong. Yuu. Stone; testicle.	stone cross
Misiconundú		dead man's depth
Yutanutí	Yuta. River, stream.	River of the one who writes
Yutasigua	Yuta. River, stream. + cacao. Dzehua.	River of cacao

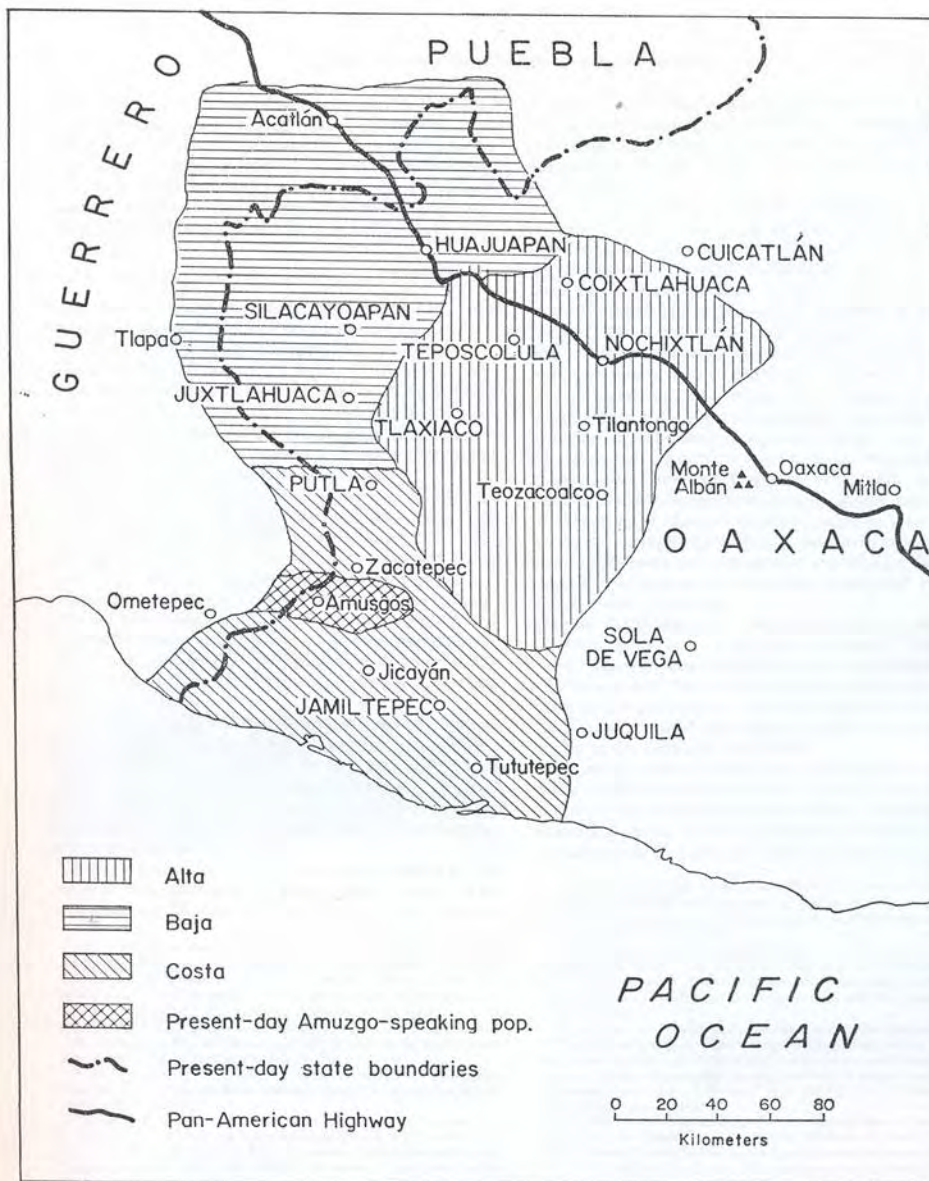
² Alvarado's translation is identified by the (+) symbol, the one by de los Reyes by the (*) symbol.

Yutatoso	Yuta. River, stream. Todzo. Hut Todzo. Creak, roar.	broken river (Metlatónoc)
Yutativi	Yuta. River, stream.	River of the sweeping one, or Clean stream
Yutanuitia	Yuta. Río, arroyo.	watery river
Peña Colorada y hay un río llamado [and there is a river called] Río de Tilapa		
Yuvihi		gully of the badger
Cahuatiyac	Cavua. Rock, boulder; pit; bile. *tiyaca. Fish.	big boulder or copal stone
Yosottianda	Yodzo. plain, meadow; grinding stone.	grassy meadow
Yuta Tundutia	Yuta. River, stream.	buried boulder
Sini Yucu Yuinuma	+cabeça. Dzini, dzeque. Yucu. hill, mount. *Numa. Children's crown of the head.	Head of the hill of the sprout.
Ituntiquitin	Itnu. steep climb.	Hill of the mouse.

Table 2. List of Mixtec boundary names.

As one can see, not all translations based on the vocabularies used match the interpretation given to the boundaries in Mixtec in the book. This may be due to the fact that Colonial vocabularies pertain to the Mixteca Alta variant, which is different from the Mixteca Baja, since the boundaries belong to the latter region. On the other hand, these names are written in modern Mixtec, which is also different from the Colonial Mixtec recorded in the Alvarado and de los Reyes vocabularies. However, we can distinguish key words such as *yucu* for hill, *yuta* for river, *yoso* or *yodso* for meadow, and *cahua* or *cavua* for boulder.

The name of these boundaries in Mixtec is of utmost importance for the following reasons: first, one can recognize boundaries shared among the Mixtec zone of Guerrero and Oaxaca, which may appear in colonial documents and codices. Second, they give us a sample of the linguistic variants of the Mixteca Baja proper.



MAP 2. Approximate location of the Alta, Baja, and Costa regions of the Mixteca

Figure 4. Map of the distribution of regions in the Mixteca, based on Smith.

Following with the reconnaissance of the boundaries, the next meeting was held in Alcozauca (Guerrero); there the boundaries known as “Cerro de Otate” [hill of the reed], “Cerro Gachupín”, “Tierra Blanca” [white earth], “Cerro Cuhuiniahu”, or Cerro del Contrario [hill of the contrary], or Cerro del Cuchillo [hill of the knife], “Arroyo Frío” [cold stream], “Llano del Pensamiento” [meadow of the thought], “Cerro del Perico” [hill of the parrot], “Tres Cruces” [three crosses], “Paraje Lagarto” [lizard meadow], “*Itun Nama*” or Hill of the Totomoxtle, cordillera of hills of “Tabaco” [tobacco], Barranca del Ocote” [gully of the reed] “Piedra Molino” [millstone], and “*Itu Taya*” or Hill of the Royal Road (pp. 73 and 74).

It should be mentioned that the hill called Gachupín is still regarded as an important point for going on foot between Oaxaca and Guerrero, I was told this by the inhabitants of the Mixtec zone of La Montaña de Guerrero during a field trip carried out in the area in 2005.

The next meeting point was in Tlalixtaquilla, where the reconnaissance of boundaries was also made without problems (pp. 74 - 75). After this the dividing points pertaining to the zone of Nejapa in Oaxaca were reconnoitered. The next one was made in Tlapa, Guerrero (pp. 76-77), then in Huamuxtitlan (p. 77), and finally in Zapotitlan Laguna, Oaxaca. Here was made the last reconnaissance of the dividing line, and the points are “Pozo del Sol y la Luna” [pit of the sun and the moon], “Xoyatitlanapa”, “Temaxcalapa”, “Agualt Cruz”, or Tres Cruces [three crosses], and “Chirimoyo”. This last one makes a three-way dividing point between Oaxaca, Puebla, and Guerrero (p. 78).

The fourth part of the book deals with the “proofs of the Oaxaca Commission”, of which I would like to point out the following: it shows 77 proofs which include news connected with the disputed boundary lines, property titles or purchase titles, and impugnation by both states. For instance, there is mention of a complaint from the Guerrero commission against the Oaxaca commission because the former encouraged the inhabitants of the bordering towns to invade lands belonging to

Guerrero, deforesting the hills, and destroying crops “to open lanes indicating to what point the Oaxaca Commission attempted to move the division line” (pp. 92-93).

Another interesting document is the file pertaining to the possession of lands of the towns of Pinotepa del Rey and Ixcapa in the state of Oaxaca, which is dated 1721. In this document are reviewed the boundaries pertaining to the chiefdom of Doña Margarita Rodríguez, who had properties in Tlacamama and Ixcapa. When she died she left no heir, therefore the inhabitants of these places requested to be given this woman’s possessions, since she had expressed her desire to do so. Doña Petrona de Mendoza is named as chieftain of the town of Amuzgos, neighboring Doña Margarita’s territory (pp. 117-124).

Lastly, there are the proofs presented by the Guerrero Commission. This is an interesting document presented by them, consisting of the copy of a document which “consists of the possession given to the chieftain of Ometepec of the lands of his chiefdom... Province of Iqualapa”. This document is dated 1779, and deals with the fact that the mayor of Iqualapa gives possession of the local chiefdom to Don Manuel Mariano López. In order to grant this privilege the chieftain of Pinotepa and Amuzgos was called, as well as the administrator of the Hacienda of Cortijos in the province of Jicayan (p. 150).

The documents mentioned above give us just a fleeting glance of the Colonial politics in the Amuzgo area, giving the names of the chieftains of the last years of the 18th century. This increases our curiosity to know and investigate the colonial political relationships of the Amuzgo area of Guerrero and Oaxaca.

This arbitrage was under the charge of two commissions, one from Guerrero and one from Oaxaca, who were accompanied by the arbiter and by the engineers who made the maps and the demarcation of some points, as well as the general population in order to know the name and location of the boundaries.

As a final statement about the book titled “Arbitration given by General Mucio P. Martínez about the territorial boundaries between the states of Guerrero and Oaxaca”, we can say that the work made by the authorities of both states to walk over the boundaries is the result of a long national historical process, whereby Mexico –recently decolonized from Spain– needs a new territorial and political configuration which will enable it to better manage the new government under construction.

On the other hand, it is important to point out that, although the arbitrage process of the boundaries between Guerrero and Oaxaca is important, we should briefly point out how the state of Guerrero was instituted. In colonial times Guerrero was divided in three intendances, the west part of the state belonged to Valladolid (Michoacán), the central part belonged to Mexico and the eastern part, known as La Montaña de Guerrero, belonged to Puebla (Martínez 2000: 157). When Guerrero is instituted the other states give up part of their territory in order to create a new state which is regarded as such on the 27th of October of 1849 (Martínez 2000: 166). On the other hand, the Mixtec zone of Oaxaca was administered during Colonial times by Antequera rather than by Puebla, this explains why Oaxaca didn't give up part of its territory to Guerrero when this was formed. Although the Mixtec of Oaxaca and Guerrero had always been in constant contact between each other, they were not evangelized by the same religious order; the Oaxaca Mixtec were converted by the Dominican and the Guerrero Mixtec by the Augustinian.



Figure 5. Map of the Guerrero intendances in the Colonial period.

Lastly, in spite of some drawbacks and disagreements between both states during this process, an agreement was reached about the territorial boundaries. At present the state of Guerrero has an extent of 63,794 km² and the state of Oaxaca 95,364 km² (Salvat 1976, vol. VI and IX.).

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