Zig Zagging in and out of the Ethnobotanic Garden of Oaxaca

You enter a walled garden, and are instantly absorbed into a realm of tranquility. You almost forget about the world out there. But not quite. As you move through the garden so you wake up to a world beyond. This paper will register some of the ways in which, as we move, we are simultaneously moved (by the plants, textures, smells, sensations, artistry). This garden opens out in a remarkable way: to stories, to histories of entangled relations between plants and creatures of various kinds, to cultural scenarios, to political futures. The garden only contains plants native to Oaxaca, and pertinent in terms of ethnobotanic significance, but through this specificity it tells a great deal. Moreover, it is a provocation to think about how, in traveling through a garden, we might conceptualize the connections between diversity, sustainability, endurance and change.

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