



ECOCENE

CAPPADOCIA JOURNAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL HUMANITIES



Volume 5/Issue 1/June 2024

Storying Ecocenes



Parallel Lines

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Chattaraj, Jhilar. 2024. "Parallel Lines." *Ecocene: Cappadocia Journal of Environmental Humanities* 5, no. 1 (June): 36. <https://doi.org/10.46863/ecocene.109>.

Poetry/ Received: 28.01.2024 /Accepted: 05.06.2024

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Parallel Lines

by Jhilam Chattaraj



About the Author

Jhilam Chattaraj is an academic and poet based in Hyderabad, India. She has authored the books, *Noise Cancellation* (2021), *Corporate Fiction: Popular Culture and the New Writers* (2018), and *When Lovers Leave and Poetry Stays* (2018). Her works have been published in Mekong Review, New Contrast Magazine, One Art Poetry Journal, Calyx, Ariel, Room, Porridge, Queen Mob's Tea House, Colorado Review, World Literature Today and Asian Cha among others. She received the CTI Excellence Award in 'Literature and Soft Skills Development,' 2019 from the Council for Transforming India and the Department of Language and Culture, Government of Telangana, India. She was nominated for the Nina Riggs Poetry Award, 2023.

Parallel Lines

Gachibowli, Hyderabad

Jhilam Chattaraj

Quiet testimonies come home
in the shrinking green of Gachibowli.

Mornings that once broke upon
rock-curved horizons

suppress the sun
behind glass and steel.

City of ceaseless data—punctured skies.
Dust-showers—elephant-skinned calderas.

Who can stop the breaking?
Catch the scatter of exploding Peacocks?

Migrant men live on transformation—
gneissic stiffness to tethering vibrance.

Only the domes, arches, and pillars, remain—
regal splendours in stone.

Boulder-burnt meat—god-etched stillness
dare to halt machines.

Poets, painters, *kalamkari* hues
attempt stone life on leaves.

Art fails—persuasion fails.
Progress and Preservation don't meet.

*Kalamkari: "[Kalamkari](#), means 'pen-worked,' it is a multi-step process for creating designs. It is a type of hand-painted or block-printed cotton textile, produced in parts of India and Iran. Its name originates in the Persian, قلمکار which is derived from the words *qalam* (pen) and *kari* (craftmanship), meaning drawing with a pen. Only natural dyes are used in *kalamkari* and it involves seventeen steps" ([The Craft Atlas](#)).