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To Reach the Source

The Stepwells of India

Claudio Cambon

ISBN	9781961856349
Publisher	ORO Editions
Binding	Hardback
Territory	World excluding USA, Canada, Australasia, China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, South Korea, and Japan
Size	228 mm x 279 mm
Pages	114 Pages
Illustrations	120 color
Price	£27.95

- A photographic book about stepwells across India and the mysterious, meditative ambiances that these unique and beautiful structures elicit

To Reach the Source: The Stepwells of India is a photography book about a unique and magnificent architectural form that remains unknown to most people outside (and even within) India.

More than just a shaft dug into the earth to fetch water, these are entire buildings that descend several stories below ground; they are spaces to be entered and occupied, serving functional, social, and ritual purposes. Often, they are as monumental and ornate as a church, and this is intentional.

They are a source of water, a gathering space, and a temple all at once, but instead of rising into the sky, they descend below the surface. They create a spatial experience unlike any other, in which one is below ground but remains connected to the sun and sky. Today they lie largely abandoned and overlooked, in various states of preservation or, more often, disrepair.

The photographs seek to recreate the striking ambiance that they elicit. The brief text that follows the images (interspersed with a few architectural drawings) provides a necessary minimum of context, ultimately to reinforce the primarily visual nature of the reader's experience, one in which the photographs have priority. The photographs seek to give readers some sense of the meditative process of descending into these beautiful structures, of going away from the surface on which we live, but not being cut off from it, instead directed towards the very source of life.

Claudio Cambon has worked as a photographer for more than 30 years, and on the Indian Subcontinent for more than 25 of them. He has worked, exhibited, published, taught, and lectured across the world. He is currently residing in France.







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