

# *Underground Shrine*

QUEEN'S STEP-WELL AT PATAN



JAIKISHANDAS SADANI



Bharatiya Vidya Mandir

## Preface

Queen's Step-well at Patan, the ancient capital of Gujrat, is a magnificent creation of superb beauty and grace. In it are enshrined the sculptures depicting almost every aspect of Indian culture. The artists have handled the puranic themes and literary heritage with profound depth and understanding, in the language of sculptures.

I visited the remarkable step-well and was thrilled to behold its aesthetic charm and artistic excellence. I discussed about the beautiful images which deck the walls of the step-well with Dr. P. C. Parikh, the then director of B. J. Institute of Learning and Research. He was also highly appreciative of the step-well and proposed to me to give three lectures on the sculptural beauty of Queen's step-well. I likewise delivered the three lectures in the Institute on 14th, 15th and 16th Sept., 1995 under their series on "Indian Culture". The book covers the content of the lectures alongwith more details of the other sculptures as well which makes it more fuller and comprehensive. It highlights over 80 sculptures from nearly 500 images. The representative images give a fair idea of the artistic merit and spiritual depiction in Queen Udaymati's Step-well. Its matchless grandeur is only to be seen to be

believed. We are simply enthralled as we behold the images and are lost in the spiritual delight of ecstatic bliss.

I am grateful to the eminent archaeologist and museologist Dr. R. C. Sharma for writing an erudite Foreword and Dr. Hariprasad Shastri for the scholarly prologue. American Institute of Indian Studies, Varanasi has kindly given the required photographs from their archives to enable making the book quite illustrative. I offer my grateful thanks to them.

I am thankful to the publishers for publishing this artistic monograph, and placing it before the connoisseurs of Art. I hope it will aptly communicate the sculptural beauty of Queen Udaimati's step-well.

Its aesthetic delight will shine all the brighter as years roll on.

**Jaikishandas Sadani**

113B, Monardas Katra  
Kolkata-700 007  
E-mail : jksadani@hotmail.com