

Growing the tree of science: Homi Bhabha and the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research

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Abstrak

This book is about one of the premier scientific institutions of modern India, the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR) founded by the physicist Homi Bhabha in 1945. In a critical departure from books that focus on Bhabha as the architect of Indias atomic energy programme, *Growing the Tree of Science* concentrates instead on his efforts towards the creation of a scientific culture at his institute. Bhabhas institutional model came from the West; the book details out his efforts to transplant the tree of science on Indian soil. Chowdhury weaves together a story of personal connections, new forms of philanthropy, nationalist objectives, ideas of citizenship, international training networks, and art, design, architecture, and landscape that shaped scientific life at TIFR. Analysing the dissonances between institutional narratives and individual recollections, the book asks how we might interpret the nature of institutional legacy. The book goes beyond Bhabhas individual efforts and reveals the ways in which the institute was also shaped by younger scientists who attempted to reinterpret institutional legacy. Reflecting on the relationship between history and memory, *Growing the Tree of Science* presents a cultural history of science. Chowdhurys reflections on archival resources and the uses of oral history of scientists provokes us to think of new methods with which to understand the functioning of institutions and the nature of resources required to understand them.