



# Growing the Tree of Science: Homi Bhabha and the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research

*Indira Chowdhury*

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**Growing the Tree of Science: Homi Bhabha and the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research** Indira Chowdhury

How does a premier institute of science come into being? How does it foster a culture promoting free thinking and original research? What impact do the policies of a newly independent nation have on the way it functions? Exploring such themes and analysing the dissonances between institutional records and individual recollections, this book narrates the unique history of the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), Mumbai.

Acutely aware that a scientific temper had not been nurtured in colonial India, Cambridge-trained physicist Homi Bhabha, who later came to be known as the architect of India's atomic energy programme, wished to plant the tree of science on Indian soil. Thus was born TIFR on 19 December 1945. What followed were years of dynamic growth and struggle during which some of the best minds from across the world worked as well as taught at the institute.

Using both archival documents and detailed interviews, *Growing the Tree of Science* blends history and memory to reinterpret institutional legacy by moving beyond Bhabha's individual efforts and bringing to light the role of younger scientists during the formative years of TIFR. In the process emerges a fascinating account in which personal connections, novel forms of philanthropy, art and architecture, and international training networks, all come together in creating a vibrant culture of science at TIFR.

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