

From the Instituto Industrial de Lisboa to the Instituto Superior Técnico: places for the teaching of electricity in Portugal

Ana Cardoso de Matos

The first degree course in electro technical engineering in Portugal dates back to 1911 when the *Instituto Superior Técnico de Lisboa* was set up by Brito Camacho. However, electricity and its applications were already being taught in a number of teaching establishments including the *Instituto Industrial de Lisboa* formed in 1852. The teaching of electricity at this institution was directly linked to Fonseca Benevides, a physicist who was professor and director at this school. During his travels abroad, Benevides went in search of the latest developments in electrical energy and its applications. His up-to-date scientific knowledge was reflected in the classes he taught at the Industrial School where he organized a modern electricity laboratory in which the first Swan light bulbs in Portugal were used.

When the Industrial Institute was restructured in 1911 to form the Instituto Superior Técnico (IST), Maximiliano Gabriel Apolinário - a Portuguese engineer who graduated from the University of Liège - was responsible for teaching general Electro Technical Engineering, and industrial constructions and installations, while Léon Fech – a Belgian engineer who also graduated from the University of Liège - was put in charge of teaching the Electricity course (General Theory, and applications).

In this paper, we propose an analysis of:

- the evolution of the teaching of electricity from the Industrial Institute to the setting up of the first degree course in electro technical engineering at IST;
- the places in which electricity was taught and how they evolved over the years.