

Alfredo Bensaúde: a “revolutionary” in the training of engineers

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Abstract

Alfredo Bensaúde was a revolutionary of his time in the training in engineering. He was a visionary of progress and was aware of the need to connect the education with technological innovation, institutional reforms, and economic growth.

The establishment of the Republic in 1910 created a favourable context to reform and innovate the previous education structures. In 25 of May of 1911, the new government established a new Decree-law where it states the need to reorganise all public instruction highlighting that our delay comes only from the insufficiency of our technical teaching industrial schools are flawed in their installations, equipment and pedagogical standards.

In 1911, when the *Instituto Superior Técnico* (Technical Institute) was created Alfredo Bensaúde was chosen as director. The new project was based on an essential premise: the existence of administrative autonomy, giving the Director the necessary power to implement the pedagogical program without intermediaries or constraints. The new school invested in theoretical-practical teaching where workshops and laboratories, as well as the library, played an essential role in the educational project. The *Instituto Superior Técnico* intends to establish a frontier between the former Industrial Institutes and Polytechnic Schools and new teaching of engineering, believing that education and science should be the basis of the growth of the economy in the 20th-century.

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