

José-Augusto França interviewed by Ana Tostões

On April 2016, Ana Tostões interviewed Professor José-Augusto França, the Portuguese modern art researcher of reference on the contemporary era, in order to discuss the key modern structure that made the shift towards a Modern Lisbon.

José-Augusto França (b. 1922, Tomar) is historian, sociologist and critic of art. He has a graduation in Historical and Philosophical Sciences (1944, Faculty of Letters, University of Lisbon), a PhD in History (1962, Paris-Sorbonne University, *Une Ville des Lumères: la Lisbonne de Pombal*), a diploma on Sociology of the Art (1963, *L'Art et la Société Portugaise au XX^e siècle*) and a PhD in Letters (1969, Paris-Sorbonne University, *Le Romantisme au Portugal*).

He is professor emeritus of the Nova University of Lisbon, where he created the first Art History masters of the country (1976). He was Director of the Portuguese Cultural Center of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation in Paris (1983), President of the National Academy of Fine Arts (1985) and member of the UNESCO *Comité du Patrimoine Mondial*.

He is a reference author in the field of visual and cultural arts in Portugal, being the first one identifying and presenting modern architecture in Portugal in his *Arte em Portugal no Século XX* (1974). Among his works stand out studies on art in Portugal in the 19th and 20th centuries, as several volumes of essays on historical, sociological and aesthetic reflection on contemporary art issues.

He has received the Medal of Honor of the City of Lisbon (1992), the Grand Officer (1991) and the Grand Cross (2006) of the Infante D. Henrique Order and the Grand Cross of the Order of Public Instruction (1992).



01 Porfírio Pardal Monteiro, *Instituto Superior Técnico*, Lisbon, Portugal, 1927-1937. © Arquivo Nacional de Fotografia, 1937.

ANA TOSTÕES Please tell us why you have been defending the importance of *Instituto Superior Técnico* (IST) within the modern urban development of Lisbon.

JOSÉ-AUGUSTO FRANÇA By placing IST on the site of the Arco do Cego (the 17th century entrance to Lisbon and, in 14th century times, to *Alvalade*, prior to the *Circunvalação* defined in 1850), to the east of the *República Avenue* (and flanked by what were still the *Avenidas Novas* of Ressano Garcia's technical urbanization), the new installations of IST, which he began to direct at the end of the 1st Republic (he upheld in his youth, but came to actively and pragmatically support the financial and dictatorial policy of Oliveira Salazar), Professor Engineer Duarte Pacheco created a stimulating hub for the city, which then (and only then) entered

the 20th century with its new aesthetics, new techniques and new forms of communication.

If, on the other side of town, the west side, from *Rego* to *Campolide*, Lisbon had to wait for success (which Duarte Pacheco would also provide), here the city was booming and purposeful, with the subsequent urbanization of the 16th century site of *Areiro* and the controlled monumentality of the *Alameda* that was generated in the IST.

So I respond, in parentheses within parenthesis, covering the map of the modern city that we have come to have - and arrive chronologically in the 1930's of the IST, an idea and calculation of Duarte Pacheco, and an architectural body that only Pardal Monteiro could then define. This work will be regarded as determinant.