



Mateus Meeting, 15th - 16th October

**Social Capital & Trust,
mobilization and demobilization in modern democracies**

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Teachers: Between Union and Professional class

This paper develops along four sections. In the first one, after presenting some results of a sociological survey to the teachers, carried out by Manuel Braga da Cruz in 1989, I concluded that theirs was 'a growing social group, mostly female, that sees itself as underpaid and having little social recognition, politicized, unionized and well involved with the Catholic community; and that, at the time of inaugurating a new legal statute of the profession, the group has divided and contrasting opinions between the existing career model, where progression is mainly based on seniority, and an hypothetical selective and pyramidal model, based rather on an actual evaluation of the professional abilities of the teacher.'

In the second part I endeavoured to describe the professional regulations that were in place when the PS Government took over, in 2005, and the assessment I then made of the professional career of teaching.

In the third section, based on the book-report recently published by the former Education Minister, I identified the measures that changed the professional situation of teachers, focusing particularly on the new Statutes for the Teaching Career and the performance evaluation.

In the fourth part, I followed and discussed the analyses made by the sociologist Alan Stoleroff on the developing conflict between government, unions and teachers that marked that incumbency.

In the end I concluded that 'the professional power of the teachers – still noteworthy in spite of the attrition and the authority loss – combined with the resentment they feel prey to due to their poor social recognition, and with the assets made possible by an above-the-average social capital (skills of erudition and communication, integration in the 'real world', middle-class relational networks), determined, on the whole, that this professional group should resist, in this conjuncture, to the 'temptation' of evolving into an occupational model that is internally more differentiated, more competing and more 'professionalizing', and would instead hold to the egalitarian model of security and predicability proposed by the union'.