

## **PhD in Sociology**

### **Paradoxes of the Schooled Society.**

**Investigating the centrality of schooling and its institutional effects  
from a global perspective**

**Leandros Kavadias**

**Supervisors: prof. dr. Bram Spruyt (VUB), prof. dr. Susanne Scheibe  
(RUG) and dr. Toon Kuppens (RUG)**

#### Abstract:

It has become very hard to imagine a world without schooling. Never before in history did so many children go to school for such a long time, with almost 9 in 10 children worldwide have followed at least some formal basic education. Since the end of the Second World War, a silent educational revolution has transformed an increasing amount of countries across the world into 'schooled societies'. In such societies, schooling has become a central and authoritative institution that profoundly shapes our thinking, behavior, and feelings. This dissertation rests on the proposition that schooling is a primary, global, and multidimensional institution, the institutionalization of which gives rise to a societal structure that is centered around legitimized education-based differences, which are both the cause and consequence of group formation. Employing a global perspective, this dissertation studies national differences in the rise of schooled society and its sociological and psychological consequences. To this end, the Schooled Society Index is developed, an empirical indicator that maps cross-national differences in this trend. The studies presented in this dissertation show how such cross-national variation in the centrality of schooling is related to contextual differences, and, importantly, education-based inequalities in terms of religiosity, career success, political trust, and political involvement. In schooled societies, such inequalities go hand in hand with the rise of an education-based intergroup relationship, which is central to contemporary and wide-ranging political conflicts.