

## View on Research & Society

### ARNOUD W.A. BOOT

In his work Arnoud Boot focuses on the broad issue of ‘financialization of society’. In a narrow sense, how should we look at and regulate the financial sector? In a broader sense, how does the increasing emphasis on financial measures (e.g. shareholder value, price data from financial markets, often financial performance measures) affect decision making in general. Does it lead to more myopic and/or opportunistic decision making? And what implications does the current FinTech revolution have?

His book on footloose corporations *De onwortelnde onderneming* (2010, in Dutch), ([English summary, 2009](#)) is an example, as is his 2014 JMCB paper *Financial Sector in Flux*, and his 2021 JFS paper, *Fintech: What's Old, What's New?* Developments in the banking sector are further analyzed his JFI paper (2024) with Allen Berger, *Financial Intermediation Services and Competition Analyses: Review and Paths Forward for Improvement*, and his 2024 contribution with Anjan Thakor to the Oxford Handbook of Banking (4th edition), *Banks and Financial Markets in a Digital Age*.

Market forces seem all too often to be at the root of financial instability. How can these be contained without giving up on their potential valuable disciplining role? Similar destabilizing forces seem to play an important role in the increased orientation of corporations on transactions where a short term orientation and lack of commitment may destroy value, and work potentially orthogonal to value creation in the longer run. In his advisory reports to the Dutch government ([WRR 2016](#); [2023](#)), he applies the notion of financial dominance to Dutch society, and formulates recommendations for a stronger focus on the real economy.

In his other recent work, he builds on the notion of sunflower-capitalism, where private sector actors become too much dependent and focused on government support and initiative (i.e. turn as sunflowers to the sun - the government as ‘the sun’), basically side-stepping their own societal responsibilities ([International Banker, Winter 2021](#); and in Dutch, [ESB, July 2021](#)). Governments should strengthen private sector incentives to take matters in their own hands, including for important transitions on climate-change related matters, and in doing so prevent capture by vested interests that would undermine renewal and productivity growth. His latest report *Goede zaken. Naar een grotere maatschappelijke bijdrage van ondernemingen* ([WRR, 2023](#)) for the government (in Dutch), follows this line of thought and provides a roadmap.

In his public policy work and as an independent voice in the public debate, he focuses on these destabilizing forces but also on fundamental shifts in the world economy that are linked to the information technology revolution and current geo-political shifts. Bringing economics to policy, and from an understanding of societal developments trying to shape policy, he sees as a moral obligation in these turbulent times. Arnoud Boot’s academic contributions have appeared in many leading journals including the *American Economic Review*, *Economic Journal*, *The Review of Financial Studies*, and the *Journal of Finance*.