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Understanding technological change in global finance through infrastructures:

Introduction to Review of International Political Economy Special Issue 'The Changing Technological Infrastructures of Global Finance'

Authors: Nick Bernards & Malcolm Campbell-Verduyn

Amid escalating claims about the promises and perils of emergent financial technologies (fintech), critical investigation of the extent to which specific technological changes in global finance are truly 'disruptive' is sorely needed. Yet, IPE has engaged little with the growing focus on fintech in popular and regulatory debates, as well as in Social Studies of Finance (SSF). This article and accompanying special issue foreground 'infrastructures' as a heuristic for injecting nuance into debates on the emergence, limits and implications of technological changes in global finance while bringing IPE into conversation with perspectives on fintech in cognate literatures. Building on insights developed in Science and Technology Studies (STS), we argue that tracing the ways in which infrastructures enabling financial markets to operate are assembled out of multiple old and new socio-technical devices offers productive avenues for addressing key questions arising from several entanglements underpinning technological change. The findings of contributions to this special issue are linked to two key themes in debates on the impacts of technological change: financial inclusion and financial stability. Further avenues are proposed for examining the

infrastructures in which technological change occurs in global finance and beyond, while fostering on-going dialogues between IPE, STS and SSF.

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