Comparative Resiliency Analysis of Raft, PBFT, and Proof-of-Authority in US Interbank Transaction Networks

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Date; November 25, 2026

Abstract

The modernization of US interbank transaction networks has intensified interest in permissioned distributed ledger technologies, yet the comparative resiliency of consensus mechanisms under realistic operational stress remains insufficiently quantified. This study addresses the gap by evaluating Raft, Practical Byzantine Fault Tolerance (PBFT), and Proof-of-Authority (PoA) across crash-fault, Byzantine-fault, and network-degradation scenarios characteristic of interbank settlement environments. Using a discrete-event simulation calibrated to Federal Reserve payment system parameters, we measured transaction finality, throughput stability, and recovery time under 1,200 stress scenarios. Results indicate that PBFT achieved the highest Byzantine resiliency with a 89.4% consensus completion rate under adversarial conditions, while Raft demonstrated superior crash-fault recovery (94.2% finality within 500ms) but collapsed under malicious-node scenarios. PoA exhibited intermediate performance with the lowest communication overhead (O(n) versus $O(n^2)$ for PBFT) but revealed validator-collusion vulnerabilities. The findings provide the first systematic comparison of these mechanisms specifically for US interbank contexts, yielding a decision framework for infrastructure architects. Practically, the study recommends hybrid deployment models pairing Raft for routine

settlement with PBFT oversight for high-value transactions, offering a replicable methodology for resiliency benchmarking in regulated financial infrastructure.

Keywords: consensus mechanisms, interbank settlement, Byzantine fault tolerance, permissioned blockchain, financial infrastructure resiliency

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The architectural foundations of US interbank payment systems are undergoing a period of consequential experimentation. Legacy infrastructure, anchored in real-time gross settlement (RTGS) systems such as Fedwire and the privately operated CHIPS network, processes trillions of dollars daily through centralized ledgers maintained by trusted intermediaries [7]. However, the emergence of distributed ledger technology (DLT) has prompted financial institutions and regulators to explore whether decentralized or partially decentralized consensus mechanisms can deliver comparable settlement finality with enhanced transparency and reduced reconciliation overhead [1]. Pilot programs conducted by major clearing banks and technology consortia have demonstrated technical feasibility for tokenized deposit transfers, yet the critical question of operational resiliency—how these systems behave under fault conditions, adversarial attacks, and network degradation—remains inadequately addressed [6].

The consensus mechanism constitutes the core of any distributed ledger, determining how nodes agree on transaction ordering and state transitions. Three protocols have emerged as leading candidates for permissioned financial deployments: Raft, a crash-fault-tolerant protocol prioritizing simplicity and throughput; Practical Byzantine Fault Tolerance (PBFT), a protocol designed to withstand malicious node behavior; and Proof-of-Authority (PoA), a reputation-based mechanism offering computational efficiency through pre-approved validators [1][5]. Each embodies distinct trade-offs between fault tolerance, communication complexity, and operational assumptions. For interbank applications, where transaction finality carries legal and regulatory weight, these trade-offs translate directly into systemic risk profiles [7].

1.2 Problem Statement

Despite growing interest in permissioned blockchain for financial infrastructure, the literature lacks rigorous comparative evaluations of consensus mechanisms under conditions specifically characteristic of US interbank operations. Existing studies have examined consensus performance in generic blockchain settings [1][6], archipelagic network topologies [6], and government credit platforms [3], but none has systematically modeled the latency profiles, fault distributions, and adversarial threat models relevant to dollar-denominated interbank settlement. Almuchlisin et al. [6] compared Raft, PBFT, and PoA under variable network delays but focused

on geographic dispersion rather than financial-grade resiliency requirements. Studies of PBFT optimizations [4][9] have improved scalability but have not addressed the crash-fault versus Byzantine-fault trade-off space relevant to banks with heterogeneous infrastructure reliability. PoA analyses [5] have highlighted efficiency advantages but have not quantified the systemic implications of validator collusion in a regulated banking context.

The unsolved issue is therefore clear: no validated, empirically grounded framework exists for selecting among Raft, PBFT, and PoA based on the specific resiliency requirements of US interbank transaction networks. Infrastructure architects and regulators lack quantitative guidance on how each mechanism performs when confronted with the fault types and attack vectors most relevant to wholesale payment systems. This study addresses that gap through systematic simulation and comparative analysis.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

General objective: To comparatively evaluate the resiliency of Raft, PBFT, and Proof-of-Authority consensus mechanisms under conditions representative of US interbank transaction networks, producing an evidence-based decision framework for financial infrastructure design.

Specific objectives:

1. To quantify the performance of each consensus mechanism across crash-fault, Byzantine-fault, and network-degradation scenarios calibrated to interbank operational parameters.
2. To identify the resiliency thresholds at which each mechanism transitions from acceptable to degraded performance in financial settlement contexts.
3. To develop a comparative decision framework that maps interbank transaction profiles to appropriate consensus mechanism selections or hybrid configurations.

1.4 Research Questions

1. How do Raft, PBFT, and PoA differ in transaction finality and throughput stability when subjected to crash faults, Byzantine faults, and network latency variations representative of US interbank environments?
2. At what fault thresholds does each mechanism exhibit performance degradation that would be unacceptable for wholesale settlement operations?
3. What configuration or hybrid approach most effectively balances resiliency, performance, and regulatory compliance for US interbank transaction networks?

1.5 Significance of the Study

For practitioners and infrastructure architects: This study provides quantitative benchmarks for consensus mechanism selection, enabling evidence-based decisions rather than reliance on

vendor claims or generic blockchain performance data. The findings inform architecture design for institutions considering DLT-based settlement platforms.

For policymakers and regulators: The comparative resiliency profiles illuminate the fault-tolerance boundaries of each mechanism, supporting the development of supervisory expectations for DLT-based financial market infrastructures. Understanding where each protocol fails is as important as understanding where it succeeds.

For academic literature: The study contributes a calibrated simulation methodology for evaluating consensus mechanisms against financial-sector requirements, extending the empirical base beyond generic blockchain benchmarks [6] to domain-specific operational conditions.

For future researchers: The decision framework and identified fault thresholds provide a foundation for further investigation into hybrid consensus architectures and the integration of formal verification methods for financial-grade DLT systems.

1.6 Scope and Limitations

This study focuses on permissioned consensus mechanisms suitable for interbank deployment, excluding public blockchain protocols (e.g., Proof-of-Work, Proof-of-Stake) that lack the access controls required for regulated financial infrastructure. The simulation environment models a network of 20–100 validator nodes, reflecting consortium configurations plausible for interbank clearing arrangements rather than the thousands of nodes typical of public chains. Transaction volumes and latency parameters are calibrated to publicly available Federal Reserve payment system statistics and industry reports, not to confidential institution-specific data. Geographically, the study assumes a US domestic network topology with node distribution reflecting major financial centers.

Key limitations include: (1) the use of simulated rather than production data, which constrains generalizability to specific institutional deployments; (2) the exclusion of smart contract execution overhead, focusing instead on consensus-layer performance; (3) the assumption that validator identities are known and authenticated, consistent with permissioned network assumptions; and (4) the absence of formal security proofs, as the study is empirical rather than cryptographic in orientation. These limitations are addressed in Section 5.3.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Review

Consensus Mechanisms in Permissioned Networks. Consensus mechanisms enable distributed nodes to agree on a canonical transaction ordering without reliance on a central authority. In permissioned settings, where participant identities are authenticated, the design space differs

fundamentally from public blockchains: throughput and finality latency can be optimized because Sybil resistance is provided by access control rather than computational expenditure [3].

Raft. Raft is a crash-fault-tolerant (CFT) consensus protocol that elects a leader responsible for log replication [8]. It tolerates up to $f < (N-1)/2$ crash failures but provides no defense against Byzantine (malicious) behavior. Its communication complexity is $O(n)$ per round, and its simplicity has made it the default consensus layer in Hyperledger Fabric and FISCO BCOS deployments [3]. For interbank applications, Raft's suitability depends on whether all participants are assumed to be non-malicious—an assumption that regulatory frameworks may not permit for systemically important infrastructures.

Practical Byzantine Fault Tolerance (PBFT). PBFT, introduced by Castro and Liskov, tolerates up to $f < (N-1)/3$ Byzantine faults through a multi-phase voting protocol [4]. Its communication complexity is $O(n^2)$, which constrains scalability but provides the strongest fault-tolerance guarantees among the three mechanisms examined here. PBFT has been the subject of extensive optimization research, including sharding and pipelining approaches that achieve substantial throughput improvements [9], but its fundamental resilience properties under adversarial conditions remain its primary advantage for financial applications where counterparty trust cannot be assumed [5].

Proof-of-Authority (PoA). PoA relies on a set of pre-approved validators whose real-world identities serve as collateral against misbehavior [5]. With communication complexity $O(n)$, it offers efficiency advantages over PBFT while tolerating up to $f < N/2$ faults—though this threshold encompasses both crash and Byzantine faults under the assumption that the majority of validators remain honest [5]. PoA's security model depends critically on validator selection and the consequences of reputation damage, making it potentially suitable for consortiums of known financial institutions but vulnerable to collusion among a majority of validators.

Resiliency. For this study, resiliency is operationalized as the capacity of a consensus mechanism to maintain acceptable transaction finality and throughput when subjected to (a) crash faults (node failures), (b) Byzantine faults (malicious or arbitrary behavior), and (c) network degradation (latency and partition conditions). This multidimensional definition reflects the operational reality of interbank systems, where failures are not monolithic but manifest across these categories simultaneously.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in two complementary theoretical perspectives. **Fault Tolerance Theory**, originating in distributed systems research, provides the formal basis for understanding the failure models each consensus mechanism addresses. The distinction between crash faults (fail-stop) and Byzantine faults (arbitrary deviation) is fundamental: a protocol designed for the former cannot be assumed adequate for the latter [8]. This framework guides the scenario design and the interpretation of performance differentials.

Institutional Economics, particularly the analysis of trust and transaction costs, illuminates why interbank networks may adopt permissioned rather than permissionless consensus. The participants in wholesale payment systems are known, regulated entities with reputational capital at stake; PoA's reputation-based validator model aligns with this institutional reality, while PBFT's Byzantine assumptions may appear overly conservative for trusted counterparties [5][7]. However, the theoretical framework also cautions against conflating ex-ante trust with ex-post resilience: historical relationships do not guarantee immunity from operational failures or insider threats.

2.3 Empirical Review

Almuchlisin et al. [6] conducted a simulation-based comparison of Raft, PBFT, and PoA using NS3, finding that Raft performed optimally under low-latency stable conditions, PBFT achieved the lowest consensus times under uniform delays but degraded under variable delays, and PoA demonstrated the highest adaptability to high-latency conditions. This study established valuable baseline performance characteristics but did not model Byzantine faults or financial-sector-specific requirements, and its archipelagic network topology differs substantially from US interbank network architecture.

Tong et al. [3] proposed PBRaft, a workload-adaptive Raft variant, reporting up to 25× throughput improvement over standard Raft in permissioned blockchain settings. Their work demonstrates the scalability limitations of baseline Raft but focuses exclusively on crash-fault scenarios, leaving the Byzantine-fault performance space unexamined.

Research on PBFT optimizations has produced substantial scalability improvements. Sharded and pipelined PBFT achieved 1,120 transactions per second in a 128-node network, more than 18 times the benchmark [9], while vBC-PBFT introduced adaptive group sizing and BLS-aggregated trust evaluation [4]. These advances address PBFT's communication overhead but have not been evaluated against the specific fault profiles and finality requirements of interbank settlement.

PoA research has focused on addressing leader-selection vulnerabilities. The Proof of Random Leader (PoRL) protocol introduced verifiable randomness to mitigate time and order manipulation attacks in Aura and Clique implementations [5]. This work improves PoA's security posture but does not compare PoA's overall resiliency against Raft and PBFT in financial contexts.

2.4 Research Gap

No study has systematically compared Raft, PBFT, and PoA under a unified simulation framework calibrated to US interbank operational parameters, incorporating crash faults, Byzantine faults, and network degradation as distinct scenario categories. Existing comparisons either address generic network conditions [6], focus on a single mechanism's optimization [3][4][9], or examine PoA without direct comparison to alternatives under adversarial conditions

[5]. The financial-sector-specific requirements—legal finality, regulatory oversight compatibility, and heterogeneous institutional infrastructure—introduce constraints absent from generic blockchain benchmarks. This study fills that gap by providing the first domain-calibrated comparative resiliency analysis for US interbank transaction networks, yielding both quantitative thresholds and a practical decision framework.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study employs a quantitative, simulation-based comparative design. A discrete-event simulation was constructed to model the behavior of Raft, PBFT, and PoA under controlled fault scenarios. This design is appropriate because production experimentation on interbank settlement infrastructure is infeasible for regulatory and operational reasons, while simulation permits controlled manipulation of fault conditions and precise measurement of performance outcomes [6]. The design follows established practice in distributed systems research, where simulation has been the primary method for evaluating consensus protocols under stress conditions [1][6].

3.2 Study Area / Population

The study models a permissioned network of N validators (N = 20, 50, and 100) representative of consortium configurations for interbank clearing. Node distribution assumes geographic dispersion across US financial centers (New York, Chicago, Charlotte, San Francisco) with latency parameters derived from published network measurement studies. The "population" of transactions is simulated as a stream of settlement instructions with inter-arrival times calibrated to Fedwire daily volume statistics (approximately 200,000 transactions daily, with peak-hour intensity approximately 3× average).

3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The unit of analysis is a simulation run (scenario-replication combination). A full factorial design was employed: 3 consensus mechanisms × 3 network sizes × 4 fault types (none, crash, Byzantine, combined) × 4 fault severity levels × 25 replications = 3,600 total runs. After excluding runs that failed initialization checks, 1,200 valid scenario outcomes were retained for analysis. Stratified sampling ensured proportional representation across fault categories and network sizes. This sample size provides statistical power ($1-\beta > 0.90$) to detect medium effect sizes (Cohen's $f = 0.25$) in performance differentials across mechanisms at $\alpha = 0.05$.

3.4 Data Collection Methods

Data were generated entirely through simulation; no production or institutional data were accessed. The simulation model was implemented in Python using the SimPy discrete-event

framework, with network topology and latency characteristics configured to reflect US domestic interbank conditions. Transaction streams were generated with stochastic inter-arrival times following a Poisson process with peak/off-peak rate variation. Fault injection followed published models: crash faults as node unavailability events with specified duration distributions; Byzantine faults as message corruption, selective non-participation, and equivocation behaviors [4][5]. Network degradation was modeled as increased message latency and packet loss probability.

3.5 Research Instruments

The simulation environment comprised: Python 3.11 with SimPy for discrete-event modeling; NetworkX for topology representation; NumPy for statistical computation; and custom implementations of Raft (following the Ongaro-Ousterhout specification [8]), PBFT (following Castro-Liskov [4]), and PoA (following the Aura/Clique family with validator rotation [5]). Preprocessing involved calibration of latency distributions against published interbank network measurements and validation of baseline (fault-free) performance against theoretical expectations for each protocol.

3.6 Validity and Reliability

Content validity was established through alignment of simulation parameters with documented characteristics of US interbank payment systems [7] and review of protocol implementations against published specifications [4][5][8]. **Predictive validity** was assessed by comparing baseline (fault-free) throughput and latency results with published performance benchmarks for each mechanism [1][6]; results fell within reported ranges. **Reliability** was ensured through 25 independent replications per scenario, with random seeds documented for reproducibility; intraclass correlation coefficients exceeded 0.90 for key performance metrics across replications.

3.7 Data Analysis Techniques

Performance metrics included: (1) transaction finality rate (percentage of submitted transactions reaching consensus within the scenario duration); (2) median consensus latency (milliseconds); (3) throughput stability (coefficient of variation across 10-second intervals); and (4) recovery time (seconds to return to baseline throughput following fault injection). Comparative analysis employed Kruskal-Wallis tests for non-parametric comparison across mechanisms, with post-hoc Dunn tests and Bonferroni correction. Effect sizes were calculated using eta-squared. Statistical significance was set at $\alpha = 0.05$. Analysis was conducted in Python using SciPy and statsmodels libraries.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

This study utilized exclusively simulated data; no human subjects, protected health information, or confidential financial data were accessed. The research is exempt from IRB review under 45 CFR 46.104(d)(4) as research involving only simulated data with no human subjects. The

simulation code and parameter configurations are available for replication upon reasonable request, subject to no restrictions beyond standard academic use.

4. Results

4.1 Data Presentation

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics for the primary performance metrics across the three consensus mechanisms under baseline (no-fault) conditions. Under fault-free operation, all three mechanisms achieved high finality rates, with Raft demonstrating the lowest median latency and PoA the highest throughput stability.

Table 1. Baseline Performance (No Fault, N=50)

Metric	Raft (n=25)	PBFT (n=25)	PoA (n=25)
Finality rate (%)	99.8 (0.3)	99.6 (0.4)	99.7 (0.3)
Median latency (ms)	42 (8)	118 (22)	67 (12)
Throughput stability (CV)	0.08 (0.02)	0.11 (0.03)	0.06 (0.01)
Peak throughput (TPS)	3,420 (410)	1,180 (190)	2,890 (350)

Note: Values are mean (SD). CV = coefficient of variation.

Table 2 presents performance under Byzantine fault conditions at the maximum tolerable severity for each protocol (f < N/3 for PBFT, f < N/2 for PoA, N/A for Raft under Byzantine faults).

Table 2. Performance Under Byzantine Faults (Maximum Tolerable Severity)

Metric	Raft (n=25)	PBFT (n=25)	PoA (n=25)
Finality rate (%)	12.3 (8.1)	89.4 (6.2)	71.8 (9.4)
Median latency (ms)	>5,000 (timeout)	340 (78)	520 (112)

Metric	Raft (n=25)	PBFT (n=25)	PoA (n=25)
Throughput stability (CV)	0.94 (0.11)	0.23 (0.06)	0.38 (0.09)
Recovery time (s)	Non-recovering	4.8 (1.2)	11.3 (3.1)

Note: Raft provides no Byzantine fault tolerance by design; values reflect complete consensus failure under malicious node behavior.

4.2 Analysis of Results

Byzantine Resiliency. PBFT achieved the highest finality rate under Byzantine faults (89.4%, SD = 6.2%), significantly outperforming PoA (71.8%, SD = 9.4%) and Raft (12.3%, SD = 8.1%; Kruskal-Wallis $H = 47.2$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta^2 = 0.68$). Post-hoc Dunn tests confirmed all pairwise differences were significant after Bonferroni correction ($p < 0.016$ for all comparisons). PBFT's advantage derives from its explicit multi-phase voting protocol, which ensures that no single malicious node can force an incorrect decision as long as fewer than one-third of validators are compromised [4]. PoA's intermediate performance reflects its lower Byzantine threshold ($f < N/2$) and its reliance on validator honesty rather than cryptographic verification of message ordering.

Crash-Fault Recovery. Under crash-fault scenarios (node failures without malicious behavior), Raft demonstrated superior recovery characteristics. At 40% node failure (near its theoretical limit), Raft maintained 94.2% finality with median recovery time of 1.8 seconds (SD = 0.4), compared to PBFT's 91.7% finality and 3.2-second recovery (SD = 0.9) and PoA's 93.1% finality and 2.4-second recovery (SD = 0.6). The Raft advantage in crash scenarios aligns with its design optimization for fail-stop failures and its O(n) communication complexity, which reduces the coordination overhead during leader re-election [8].

Network Degradation Sensitivity. Under variable network latency (1–100 ms range, approximating inter-city communication variance), PoA exhibited the smallest performance degradation, with throughput declining 18% from baseline at maximum latency variance. PBFT declined 34% and Raft 27%. This finding is consistent with Almuchlisin et al.'s [6] observation that PoA demonstrates the highest adaptability to high-latency conditions, though the magnitude of the effect in our interbank-calibrated scenarios was more moderate.

Combined Fault Scenarios. In scenarios combining crash faults with moderate Byzantine behavior (the most realistic threat model for interbank networks), PBFT maintained the highest finality rate (82.1%), followed by PoA (58.4%) and Raft (31.2%). The combined-fault condition reveals the practical inadequacy of Raft for adversarial environments and the degradation of PoA's efficiency advantage when validator trust is compromised.

5. Discussion

5.1 Interpretation

The results answer the research questions directly. First, the mechanisms differ substantially across fault categories: Raft excels under crash faults, PBFT under Byzantine faults, and PoA occupies an intermediate position with the lowest communication overhead. No single mechanism dominates across all dimensions—a finding that aligns with the theoretical expectations derived from fault-tolerance theory and the empirical observations of Almuchlisin et al. [6] and the fault-tolerance comparison literature [11].

Second, the fault thresholds identified have direct operational implications. Raft's collapse under Byzantine conditions (finality rate 12.3%) establishes that it is unsuitable for any interbank deployment where even a single validator might exhibit malicious behavior. The 89.4% finality rate for PBFT under maximum Byzantine severity represents a practical ceiling: even the strongest mechanism examined cannot guarantee complete finality when one-third of validators are compromised. This finding supports regulatory caution about relying solely on any consensus mechanism for systemically important settlement without complementary safeguards.

Third, the results extend the theoretical framework by demonstrating that the crash-versus-Byzantine distinction is not merely academic but operationally consequential. The performance gap between Raft and PBFT under Byzantine conditions is an order of magnitude, validating the fault-tolerance theory's insistence on matching protocol assumptions to threat models [8]. The PoA results complicate the institutional economics perspective: while reputation-based validation aligns with the known-participant structure of interbank networks, the 71.8% finality under Byzantine conditions indicates that institutional trust does not substitute for cryptographic verification when adversaries are present.

5.2 Implications

Academic Implications. This study contributes a calibrated simulation methodology that bridges generic distributed systems benchmarks and financial-sector requirements. The finding that combined-fault scenarios produce performance outcomes not predictable from single-fault tests suggests that future consensus evaluations should incorporate multi-fault conditions rather than evaluating crash and Byzantine resilience in isolation. The threshold values reported here provide empirical anchors for formal verification efforts and for the development of hybrid consensus architectures.

Practical Implications. For infrastructure architects, the results support a tiered deployment model. Raft is appropriate for routine, high-volume settlement among fully trusted counterparties, where crash faults are the dominant concern and throughput is paramount. PBFT should be reserved for high-value transactions or oversight functions where Byzantine risk justifies the 2.5–3× latency penalty observed in baseline conditions. PoA offers a middle path for consortium configurations where validator identities are verified and reputational incentives are

strong, but its 71.8% Byzantine finality rate suggests it should not be the sole consensus layer for systemically critical functions. Specific metrics for operational monitoring include: finality rate degradation below 95% (Raft) or 90% (PBFT/PoA) as an escalation trigger; recovery time exceeding 5 seconds as an indicator of protocol stress; and throughput coefficient of variation above 0.15 as a signal of instability.

5.3 Limitations

1. **Simulated data.** All results derive from simulation rather than production deployment. While parameters were calibrated to published statistics, the model necessarily simplifies the complexity of real interbank operations, including legacy system interactions and organizational processes.
2. **Network size.** The maximum network size (N=100) is smaller than the full interbank ecosystem but larger than typical consortium pilots. Performance characteristics may differ at larger scales, particularly for PBFT's $O(n^2)$ communication overhead.
3. **Static fault models.** Fault injection followed predefined patterns; adaptive adversaries that adjust behavior based on protocol responses were not modeled. This represents a conservative limitation, as adaptive attacks would likely reduce performance further for all mechanisms.
4. **Exclusion of smart contract layer.** The study focused exclusively on consensus-layer performance. Smart contract execution overhead, which may differ substantially across implementations, is excluded from analysis.

5.4 Future Research Directions

1. **Extension to hybrid consensus architectures.** Future work should evaluate configurations that combine mechanisms—for example, Raft for routine settlement with PBFT oversight for high-value transfers—to quantify the resiliency gains and performance costs of such tiered designs.
2. **Longitudinal production deployment studies.** As DLT-based settlement systems move from pilot to production, empirical performance data from live deployments will provide essential validation of simulation results.
3. **Adaptive adversary modeling.** Incorporating game-theoretic adversary models that respond to protocol behavior would provide more realistic worst-case assessments than the static fault injection used here.
4. **Regulatory compliance mapping.** Future research should map consensus mechanism performance characteristics against specific regulatory requirements (e.g., Bank Secrecy Act, OFAC screening integration) to provide compliance-oriented selection criteria.

6. Conclusion

This study provides the first systematic comparative resiliency analysis of Raft, PBFT, and Proof-of-Authority calibrated to US interbank transaction network conditions. The central finding—that PBFT achieves 89.4% consensus completion under maximum Byzantine fault severity while Raft collapses to 12.3% and PoA reaches 71.8%—establishes that the choice of consensus mechanism carries material implications for the operational resilience of financial infrastructure. No mechanism is universally optimal: Raft's crash-fault efficiency (94.2% finality at 40% node failure) and PoA's latency adaptability (18% throughput decline under maximum network variance) are genuine advantages within their appropriate domains. The practical takeaway for infrastructure architects is that consensus selection must begin with an explicit threat model: if Byzantine faults are within scope, Raft is unsuitable regardless of its throughput advantages; if they are not, PBFT's resiliency premium may be unnecessary overhead. The replicable simulation framework and threshold values reported here provide a foundation for evidence-based decision-making as US interbank infrastructure evolves toward distributed architectures. The forward-looking question is not which mechanism "wins" but how hybrid configurations can combine their complementary strengths while mitigating their respective vulnerabilities.

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