

Call for Papers

The Stack in a Fragmenting World: Deglobalization, Technological Transformation, and Geo-economic Ordering**

Workshop | 27–28 May 2026 | Erfurt, Germany

Over the past decade, debates on deglobalization, geo-economic rivalry, platform capitalism, infrastructural power, and technological sovereignty have transformed how scholars think about global political order. Supply-chain weaponization, digital infrastructures, sanctions regimes, industrial policy, cloud computing, AI governance, and data territorialization increasingly challenge state-centric and market-centric analytical frameworks alike.

Benjamin Bratton’s concept of “**The Stack**”—with its layered architecture of Earth, Cloud, City, Address, Interface, and User—has offered one of the most ambitious theoretical attempts to conceptualize planetary-scale computation and new forms of political authority. Yet the framework has so far been unevenly mobilized in debates on contemporary geo-economic dynamics, infrastructural contestation, and the restructuring of global capitalism.

This workshop invites **theoretically oriented papers** that critically engage *The Stack* as an analytical device for understanding:

- processes of deglobalization and fragmentation,
- technological transformation and platformization, and
- emerging geo-economic strategies and conflicts.

Rather than empirical case studies alone, we are particularly interested in contributions that **develop, revise, extend, or critique** Bratton’s conceptual apparatus and explore its usefulness for International Relations, International Political Economy, political theory, and science and technology studies.

Possible Themes and Questions Include (but are not limited to):

- How can *The Stack* be used to theorize contemporary geo-economic ordering and strategic competition?
- Does the framework help us rethink sovereignty, territory, jurisdiction, and authority under conditions of infrastructural interdependence?
- How do cloud infrastructures, platforms, standards, and protocols operate as geo-economic instruments?
- Can *The Stack* illuminate processes of decoupling, derisking, reshoring, or technological blocs?
- What are the limits or blind spots of Bratton’s framework for political economy and security studies?
- How might postcolonial, Global South, or historical perspectives reshape *The Stack*?
- How does planetary computation relate to debates on empire, hierarchy, and world ordering?

Format and Goals

The workshop is conceived as a small, intensive, discussion-oriented event aimed at advancing conceptual debate. Selected papers will be pre-circulated. Depending on the outcome, we envisage developing the workshop into an edited volume or special journal issue.

Submission Details

Please send an **expression of interest** consisting of:

- a 300–400 word abstract
- a short biographical note (2–3 sentences)

to oliver.kessler@uni-erfurt.de by **28 February 2026**.