

# Alberto Valz Gris

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## Currently

### Post-doctoral Research Fellow

Interuniversity Department of Regional and Urban Studies and Planning  
Polytechnic University of Turin  
viale Mattioli 39  
10125 Torino  
Italy

## Specialized in

Extended urbanization, geographies of production, green extractivism, commodity chain analysis, relational ethnography.

## Research interests

I am an urban geographer working at the intersection of heterodox economic geography and urban political ecology. My research investigates emerging patterns of urbanization through the shifting geographies of production. As such, my main research interests are rooted in the dynamics of extended urbanization, in the geographies of natural resource extraction and logistical reconfiguration, and in their associated socioecological shifts.

## Education

2017–2021

### Ph.D. in Urban and Regional Development, Cum laude

Thesis: Hinterlands of the Green Transition. Atacama, Lithium and the Extended Geographies of the Zero-emission City

**Polytechnic University of Turin**, Italy

2014–2016

### MA in Fine Arts

**Sandberg Instituut, Amsterdam**, The Netherlands

2014

### Erasmus Thesis Scholarship

**Universitat de Barcelona**, Spain

2011–2014

### Ms.C. in Architecture, Construction, City, 110/110

Thesis: Barcelona's Interstices, Opening up Architectural Practice

**Polytechnic University of Turin**, Italy

2011

### LLP/Erasmus Semester Scholarship

**École Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture Paris La Villette**, France

2009–2012

### BA in Architecture Sciences, 106/110

Thesis: Osservare dal Parco. Un Progetto di Trasformazione per il Parco del Meisino

**Polytechnic University of Turin**, Italy

## Research

2022–now

### SUR: città del sud Europa e Global Urbanism

Department of Regional and Urban Studies (DIST), Polytechnic University of Turin

**Post-doctoral research fellow.** Principal investigator: prof. F. Governa

This research program, financed by the PRIN project "Rescaling the Belt and Road Initiative: urbanisation processes, innovation patterns and global investments in urban China", seeks to construct a dialogue between the international debate on Global Urbanism and the urban experience of Southern Europe. Global Urbanism emerges as the attempt to build critical urban knowledge starting from the grounded acknowledgment of differences and their continuous mutations. Through this project, we propose to explore the question of a global urban horizon starting from the specificities and differences of various Southern European urban experiences, hence attempting theory building from peripheral loci. In its initial phases, the program will consist in the critical analysis of existing research, in a selection of three case studies and in their subsequent exploration through short fieldwork periods.

2022–now

### I paesaggi operazionali nel Nord Italia. Geografie mobili, strategie spaziali e mappe dinamiche dell'urbanizzazione regionale

Department of Architecture and Urban Studies (DASTU), Polytechnic University of Milan

**Research consultant.** Principal investigator: prof. S. Armondi

Which dynamics are reconfiguring those territories of production, circulation and support that exists in relation to large urban concentrations? This project—enabled by funding for original research by the Polytechnic University of Milan—critically investigates the geographies of operational landscapes in Northern Italian regions with three main goals. Firstly, it aims at tracing emergent economic geographies by updating their interpretive frameworks, cartographic representations and challenging impending urban dynamics. Secondly, it seeks to describe the plurality of policies, actors and strategies that remake urban contexts and territorial configurations; thirdly, it proposes to build evidence and spatial representations that support the activity of planners and policymakers with respect to the shifting dynamics of global production. In its initial phases, the project involves quantitative modeling, spot cartographic analysis and semi-structured interviews as a focus on case studies spanning the width of Northern Italian regions.

2021

### Dream Story. Urban modernity through Italy and China

Department of Regional and Urban Studies (DIST), Polytechnic University of Turin

**Research assistant.** Principal investigator: prof. F. Governa

The project forms part of the activities financed by the PRIN project Rescaling the Belt and Road Initiative: urbanisation processes, innovation patterns and global investments in urban China, and consists in the design and production of an international exhibition and a multi-media catalog on the theme of urban modernities. Drawing on an openly comparative approach to patterns of urbanization, this research explores the emergence of multiple urban modernities by observing them through two apparently unrelated waves of urbanization: that of postwar Italy and that of contemporary China. My involvement in the project consists in supporting the curatorial team by critically selecting case studies and producing both theoretical, archival and field-based research on the driving themes of the exhibition.

2017–2021

### Hinterlands of the green transition. Atacama, lithium and the extended geographies of the zero-emission city

Department of Regional and Urban Studies (DIST), Polytechnic University of Turin

**Ph.D. candidate.** Tutor: prof. F. Governa

This doctoral dissertation project explores the dynamics of lithium extraction on the Atacama plateau as an analytical move to understand flows of urban metabolism between cities and hinterlands at the planetary scale.

Combining theoretical frameworks from the areas of critical urban studies, economic geography and urban political ecology, the project deepens our understanding of the persisting extractivism of urban green transitions. This argument has been developed through the deployment of ethnographic fieldwork in Argentina and Chile, document and cartographic analysis and visual methodologies. The completion of the project has involved autonomous research design, the organization and fulfillment of international fieldwork and a sustained program of discussion in international conferences and seminars.

	2017	<p><b>Cittadella di Alessandria: Scenari di riuso adattivo</b>  Department of Architecture and Design (DAD), Polytechnic University of Turin  <b>Research assistant.</b> Principal investigator: prof. M. Robiglio  This research was commissioned by Compagnia di San Paolo with the goal of investigating scenarios of adaptive reuse for the Cittadella di Alessandria, a military complex dating to the second half of the Seventeenth century, beyond its current state of under-utilization. The involvement of my expertise in the project consists in the spatial analysis of existing architectural structures and a qualitative survey around the existing use strategies of the Cittadella as an architectural and environmental complex. The latter has involved the organization and fulfillment of a short ethnographic program that worked as a springboard for designing scenarios of adaptive reuse.</p>
Teaching	2020-2021	<p><b>Fattori ambientali e geografici dello sviluppo del territorio</b>  Department of Regional and Urban Studies (DIST), Polytechnic University of Turin  <b>Teaching assistant.</b> Course held by prof. M. Santangelo  Activities completed in this course have consisted in sessions of territorial analysis highlighting the role of physical geography in shaping patterns of urbanization and the making of moving- image materials across the design site for supporting the students' activities.</p>
	2020-2021	<p><b>Urban Studies</b>  Department of Regional and Urban Studies (DIST), Polytechnic University of Turin  <b>Guest lecturer.</b> Course held by prof. F. Governa  This guest lecture for master students in Architecture focused on the planetary dimension of urbanization patterns, covering debates on city-country relations, urban metabolism and extended urbanization through the reconstruction of theoretical lineages and the analysis of empirical case studies.</p>
	2019-2020	<p><b>Urban Studies</b>  Department of Regional and Urban Studies (DIST), Polytechnic University of Turin  <b>Teaching assistant.</b> Course held by prof. F. Governa  This guest lecture for master students in Architecture focused on the planetary dimension of urbanization patterns, covering debates on city-country relations, urban metabolism and extended urbanization through the reconstruction of theoretical lineages and the analysis of empirical case studies.</p>
	2018-2019	<p><b>Urban Economics</b>  Department of Regional and Urban Studies (DIST), Polytechnic University of Turin  <b>Teaching assistant.</b> Course held by prof. L. Buzzacchi  This assistance position in an interdepartmental course at the Bachelor level has involved both lecturing on the subject of urban political economy, supporting the students in the course empirical exercises and marking through the final examination.</p>
	2017-2018	<p><b>Urban Economics</b>  Department of Regional and Urban Studies (DIST), Polytechnic University of Turin  <b>Teaching assistant.</b> Course held by prof. L. Buzzacchi  This assistance position in an interdepartmental course at the Bachelor level has involved both lecturing on the subject of urban political economy, supporting the students in the course empirical exercises and marking through the final examination.</p>
	2012-2013	<p><b>Urban and Architectural Design</b>  Department of Architecture and Design (DAD), Polytechnic University of Turin  <b>Teaching assistant.</b> Course held by arch. M. Ortalli  My involvement in this course consisted in completing design crits with BA level students in Architecture in order to review and support their work-in-progress designs.</p>
Publications		A list is also available <a href="#">online</a> .
Journal articles	2022	Valz Gris, A., Iacovone, C., Safina, A., Pollio, A., Governa, F. Il 'campo' geografico di un'etnografia sottile. <b>Rivista Geografica Italiana</b> , 0(0), 0-0.
	2021	Iacovone, C., Valz Gris, A., Safina, A., Pollio, A., Governa, F. Breaking the distance: Dialogues of care in a time of limited geographies. <b>Dialogues in Human Geography</b> , 102(2), 124-127. DOI: 10.1177/2043820620934940
	2019	Valz Gris, A. Tangling a bi-oceanic corridor. <b>Lo Squaderno</b> , 51, 17-20.
Book chapters	2020	Valz Gris, A. Logistica e urbanizzazione: Uno sguardo dal corridoio bi-oceanico. In Benvegnù, C., Cuppini, N., Frapporti, M., Milesi, F., Pirone, M. <b>Logistica e America Latina</b> . Bologna: Dipartimento delle Arti, Università di Bologna.
	2019	Valz Gris, A. Appunti su città e piattaforma. Dentro e oltre la metafora. In <b>Il Campo di Battaglia Urbano</b> . Roma: Red Star Press.
	2018	Valz Gris, A. Lavoro, spazio, movimenti. Mobilitare l'urbano dentro e oltre il capitalismo delle piattaforme. In Zaar, M., Capel, H. <b>Las Ciencias Sociales y la Edificación de una Sociedad Postcapitalista</b> . Barcelona: Universidad de Barcelona/Geocrítica.
Book reviews	2020	Valz Gris, A. City air beyond the city: Can the planetary mine lead us to emancipatory urban futures? <b>City</b> , 24(5-6), 865-870. DOI: 10.1080/13604813.2020.1833547
Public writing	2020	Valz Gris, A., Iacovone, C. Il virus è un prodotto del Capitalocene. <b>Jacobin Italia</b> . Available at

<https://bit.ly/3Kw8yua>

## Languages

**Italian** mother tongue

**English** excellent

**French** excellent

**Spanish** good

## Software

**Code** Latex, markdown, html

**Office** Word, Excel, Powerpoint

**Adbode** InDesign, Illustrator, Photoshop, Premiere

Last updated: 20/01/2022