

Alberto Valz Gris

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Currently		Post-doctoral Research Fellow Interuniversity Department of Regional and Urban Studies and Planning Politecnico di Torino 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 <i>Politecnico di Torino</i> , Italy
	2014–2016	MA in Fine Arts <i>Sandberg Instituut, Amsterdam</i> , The Netherlands
	2014	Erasmus Thesis Scholarship <i>Universitat de Barcelona</i> , Spain
	2011–2014	Ms.C. in Architecture, Construction, City , 110/110 Thesis: Barcelona’s Interstices, Opening up Architectural Practice <i>Politecnico di Torino</i> , Italy
	2011	LLP/Erasmus Semester Scholarship <i>École Nationale Supérieure d’Architecture Paris La Villette</i> , France
	2009–2012	BA in Architecture Sciences , 106/110 Thesis: Osservare dal Parco. Un Progetto di Trasformazione per il Parco del Meisino <i>Politecnico di Torino</i> , Italy
Research	2022–now	SUR: città del sud Europa e Global Urbanism Department of Regional and Urban Studies (DIST), Politecnico di Torino 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), Politecnico di Torino 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 Politecnico di Milano—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), Politecnico di Torino 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), Politecnico di Torino 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>Cittadella di Alessandria: Scenari di riuso adattivo Department of Architecture and Design (DAD), Politecnico di Torino <i>Research assistant.</i> 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>Fattori ambientali e geografici dello sviluppo del territorio Department of Regional and Urban Studies (DIST), Politecnico di Torino <i>Teaching assistant.</i> 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>Urban Studies Department of Regional and Urban Studies (DIST), Politecnico di Torino <i>Guest lecturer.</i> 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>Urban Studies Department of Regional and Urban Studies (DIST), Politecnico di Torino <i>Teaching assistant.</i> 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>Urban Economics Department of Regional and Urban Studies (DIST), Politecnico di Torino <i>Teaching assistant.</i> 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>Urban Economics Department of Regional and Urban Studies (DIST), Politecnico di Torino <i>Teaching assistant.</i> 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>Urban and Architectural Design Department of Architecture and Design (DAD), Politecnico di Torino <i>Teaching assistant.</i> 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 online .
Journal articles	2022	Valz Gris, A., Iacovone, C., Safina, A., Pollio, A., Governa, F. Il 'campo' geografico di un'etnografia sottile. <i>Rivista Geografica Italiana</i> , 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. <i>Dialogues in Human Geography</i> , 102(2), 124-127. DOI: 10.1177/2043820620934940
	2019	Valz Gris, A. Tangling a bi-oceanic corridor. <i>Lo Squaderno</i> , 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. <i>Logistica e America Latina</i> . Bologna: Dipartimento delle Arti, Università di Bologna.
	2019	Valz Gris, A. Appunti su città e piattaforma. Dentro e oltre la metafora. In <i>Il Campo di Battaglia Urbano</i> . 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. <i>Las Ciencias Sociales y la Edificación de una Sociedad Postcapitalista</i> . 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? <i>City</i> , 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. <i>Jacobin Italia</i> . Available at https://bit.ly/3Kw8yua

Presentations	2021	Hinterlands of the Green Transition Paper presentation. <i>EXALT Conference 2021 - Concurrent Crises and Sustainable Futures: Global Extractivisms and Alternatives</i> . Helsinki, Finland (online).
	2021	Atacama: le infrastrutture della città a zero emissioni Invited seminar. <i>Spazi di contaminazione- Seminari di geografia critica</i> . University of Bologna, Italy (online).
	2020	Extractivismo y Logística en América Latina Roundtable. <i>V Congreso de Estudios Poscoloniales - VII Jornadas de Feminismo Poscolonial</i> . Buenos Aires, Argentina (online).
	2020	Where the veil remains: preclusion as method in follow-the-thing research Paper presentation. <i>RGS-IBG 2020: On methods of thing-following</i> . London, UK (canceled due to covid-19 pandemic).
	2020	Development at the big finance-microfinance nexus: a political ecology of the Cauchari Solar plant, Argentina Paper presentation. <i>NECS 2020: Transitions: Moving Images and Bodies</i> . Palermo, Italy (canceled due to covid-19 pandemic).
	2020	Lithium: Exploring the frontiers of urbanization Invited seminar. <i>Department of the Arts, Alma Mater Studiorum</i> . Bologna, Italy.
	2019	Green cities and extractive hinterlands: on the urban infrastructure of commodity production Paper presentation. <i>Infrastructural Futures across Cities of the Global North Workshop</i> . Manchester, UK.
	2019	Urbanization along the li-ion network Paper presentation. <i>Annual Meeting of American Geographers</i> . Washington, DC.
	2019	Lavoro, Spazio, Movimenti Paper presentation. <i>XV Coloquio de Geocrítica</i> . Barcelona, Spain.

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: 31/05/2023