**ARCHITECTURE AND TOURISM. FICTIONS, SIMULACRA, VIRTUALITIES**

**Theme:Tourism architecture and relation to time: heritagization, virtualization, deconstruction, rewriting, reconstruction**

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**From *Fortress Town* to tourist destination: the attractiveness of a Star-Shaped Citadel City**

“Palmanova is a masterpiece of Venetian military architecture, a fortress town designed and built to defend the regional borders against foreign threats, particularly from the Turks”. These words are the emphatic introduction to Palmanova, a small city that has only recently entered the tourist itineraries attracting tourists interested in military history and architecture. The fortified city represents an interesting cultural testimony in Europe, an example of Star-Shaped Citadel City founded ex-novo with strategic and military objectives, that persisted after the fall of the Venetian Republic at the hands of Napoleon in 1805. After Napoleon’s defeat, Palmanova became part of the Hapsburg Empire until 1866, when it was definitively annexed to the Kingdom of Italy. During the First World War, it was the center of hospitals, warehouses and an exercise field for drilling troops. By the end of the Second World War the fortress was the seat (Caserma Piave) of a center of repression against the partisans. Even after World War II Palmanova, like other cities in this border-region, hosted an important military complex, a defense of the Western borders during the Cold War. Most of the civilian activities were related to the dominant military function, until recent times. By the end of the Cold War the importance of such military role faded, while the opportunities linked to the tourist development became even more evident to the local governing bodies, slowly involving the entire city. The process of image-building has at its core the military architecture and the museums linked to the history of the fortress, but it focuses on a specific time span (end XVI- beginning XVII centuries), while ignoring the more recent military history that seems to have no space in the collective memory. This appears even more clear during the historical reenactments that, twice a year, involve the whole community and a network of local, national and international groups (that during these events play both the role of co-producers and consumers), with a celebration that reminds a conflict that took place not in Palmanova, but in a city nearby in 1615.

The paper aims at analyzing the social-construction of the historical imaginary, focusing both on the activity of the tourist stakeholders and on the role the local community plays in the creation and re-creation of collective representations associated with material (the architecture of the city as evidence of the military past, both remote and recent) and intangible culture. It aims also at exploring whether the (constructed) imaginary linked to the remote past, and specifically to renaissance history, obscures more recent and perhaps contested past and the role of tourism in this “selection process”. The thesis goes beyond the concepts of authentic/false, an inadequate dichotomy that does not help to understand the process of identity construction of a place, that happened recently to be a tourist place. The field work will focus on the analysis of the imaginary created by regional public and private stakeholders and on the relationship between such an imaginary and the one shared and negotiated at a community level.

**Short bio**: Monica Pascoli studied Humanities at the universities of Udine and Göttingen and Methodology of Social Research at the University of Florence. In 2007 she obtained her PhD with a thesis in Sociology of Tourism, focusing on the community role in tourism development in the Alpine region. Currently she is Lecturer of Economic Sociology and Methodology of Social Research. Her research interests include tourism development and its sociocultural impacts, alternative modes of consumption, alcohol consumption among youngsters