What Is the Relationship between Collective Memory and the Commoning Process in Historical Building Renovation Projects? The Case of the Mas di Sabe, Northern Italy

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Abstract: In Italy, an increasing number of historical buildings have been abandoned in the last decades. As a response, some local administrations decided to foster renovation projects to preserve their heritage for future generations. Among them, the northern municipality of Val di Zoldo (Veneto) relies on the European Shelter Project, which covers a part of the costs of renovating an ancient private barn called Mas di Sabe, which the community considers an identity symbol of local history and culture. For this reason, the local administration decided to acquire the structure through donations and expropriation, activating a commoning process of the Mas di Sabe. This process is based on the involvement of local inhabitants to identify the building's future uses, which will inform the renovation project and the integration of renewable energy plants. Through thirteen semi-structured interviews, the study investigates how the collective memories of the building influence and are influenced by the commoning process of the Mas di Sabe. By analyzing the results and identifying five categories (future visions, collective memory, commoning process, energy, and resources), the study shows that collective memory and commoning process have a crucial role in determining people's visions and imaginaries on historical buildings' renovation.

Keywords: historical buildings; collective memory; commoning process; renewable energy; cultural heritage; sustainable communities

1. Introduction

In the last decade, researchers have increasingly investigated territorial development and social innovation initiatives in disadvantaged areas as a response to the effects of globalization [1–4]. In designing the projects, local governments aspire to include the population in the decision-making process since it represents a fundamental component of social and territorial innovation [5]. Research showed that collaboration among inhabitants, democratic institutions, and entrepreneurs might benefit rural area planning [6]. Accordingly, the local population may represent a resource for disadvantaged areas by contributing to socially innovative projects [7] and, thus, compensating for depopulation, unemployment, and brain drain.

The involvement of local stakeholders in development-oriented projects produces several advantages for democratic institutions, sustainable local development, and energy transition. First, the participatory processes fostered by local administrations may enhance people's trust in democratic institutions [8] and their role in local innovation. Second, their thorough knowledge of the territory and its resources may help design a suitable and sustainable plan that locals would likely accept [9,10]. Third, local inhabitants have a strong interest in managing resources sustainably [11]. Fourth, when renewable technologies are employed in local projects, participation may also reduce the gap between trust and social norms, improve the sense of community [12], and encourage climate and energy transition processes [13].

Among the elements included in development projects, European countries consider it fundamental to preserve the landscape as a collective cultural and natural heritage (i.e., buildings, monuments, books, artifacts, biodiversity). In particular, people identify the landscape as a common good [6] from which they derive their identity [14]. This is also stated by the European Faro Convention 2005, which confirms people's tendency to project meanings and values to landscape elements, and the community's role in governing common good sustainably. Moreover, researchers [15–17] claimed that people acquire their 'place identity' from those places where they spent their youth or where they have experienced important events [14] or which they frequently use [18]. This type of identity includes physical objects, memories, and meanings that people link to cultural and natural landscape elements [19]. According to researchers, people's willingness to preserve the landscape shows how much place identity matters to them [14].

Historical buildings are considered a landscape element to preserve among the common goods enhancing people's identity. They can be included in development-oriented projects that aspire to restore their cultural value [20], boost the demand for rural lifestyle [21], strengthen the local shared identity [22], and generate value from new building functions [23].

During the Italian post-World War II, new architectural artifacts replaced old rural buildings, causing their neglect and abandonment. However, rural buildings are acknowledged to carry a historical value that enhances social identity, which brings people to consider them as common goods [24]. Accordingly, stakeholders may decide to preserve those common goods that are related to place attachment, historical narratives, and village identity, thus, ensuring social sustainability and continuity with the past [25].

Linked to the collective management of common goods such as historical buildings, [26] suggested using the term 'commoning' instead of 'commons' since it better describes a social practice constantly in the making. Because it expresses the relationships in society, the term 'commoning' helps understand how communities manage resources by defining their use, production, and circulation [27].

A recent study in south Italy [28] investigated the attitude of the main stakeholders — owners and community—in preserving and managing the redevelopment of historical rural buildings called 'Masseria'. The research showed that the heterogeneous uses envisioned by local stakeholders encompass the conservation of the building for agricultural or tourist purposes. On this basis, researchers highlighted the role of redevelopment projects in ensuring a present existence for historical buildings while maintaining continuity with the past [29,30]. A strategy for doing this might be, for instance, the conservation of the original structure, considering that historical buildings hold an identity value that people express through feelings of attachment and belonging [31]. The continuity between past and present is not limited to guaranteeing the preservation of the architectural structure. It is also fundamental for keeping alive people's memory of the building as it represents an identity symbol of the territory.

Regarding the transmission of identity through memory, [32] highlights the importance of collective memory as a memory shared by a group, intertwined with the memory of individuals as group members. Unlike historical memory—a collection of data and facts –, collective memory is "a current of continuous thought whose continuity is not at all artificial, for it retains from the past only what still lives or is capable of living in the consciousness of the groups keeping the memory alive" [32]. By doing so, it creates a connection among remembered past, the living present, and the imagined future [33]. For [32], "every collective memory unfolds within a spatial framework", shaping through the interaction between human beings and cultural artifacts. By doing so, the collective memory defines and preserves the group identity, influencing the relationships between its members [34].

According to [35], collective memory may satisfy various functions since it may contribute to the group's definition, set the group's value, legitimize past, present, or planned actions of the group, and mobilize a social group to reach a collective project in the

name of their shared identity. The author of [36] highlighted the role of social groups in keeping the memory alive by arguing that social interactions are fundamental for validating and maintaining the storytelling in which human thoughts are organized. According to the researcher, this explains why sharing oral or written narratives is the best tool for forming and transmitting collective memories.

The present paper illustrates the case study regarding the renovation of a historical building called Mas di Sabe in the north of Italy (Val di Zoldo, Veneto). So far, studies have focused on the importance of preserving cultural and natural heritage by presuming its value as a common good. However, they did not delve into how peoples' intention to preserve their identity drives historical building projects and their collective management in practice. Starting from the municipalization of the Mas di Sabe fostered by the local administration, the study shows how the collective memory shared by inhabitants influences and is influenced by the commoning process of the building. The aim is to understand the role of collective memory in the commoning process and people's imagination of future uses to address the renovation project and the energy-saving renovation measures for the building.

This study gives a contribution to the literature on historical buildings' renovation and collective memory mainly for two reasons. First, it highlights the importance of actively involving local stakeholders in the identification of future addresses of buildings as they represent an essential source of knowledge of the territory's history, values, and culture. As [37] argue, historical buildings' preservation has a crucial influence on social aspects such as society's development, quality of life, maintenance of values and social identity, and collective memory. This study recognizes the importance of society's improvement and social identity's preservation linked to the Mas di Sabe's renovation such that stakeholders have a crucial role in the analysis of the future address of the building.

Secondly, by delving into the stakeholders' perspective on the building, this study analyses how their future vision is linked to the energy issue, and how collective memory may influence buildings' renovation and the integration of renewable energy technology. As [38] argues, focusing on buildings' energy efficiency to address climate change may provoke a loss of cultural, historical, and architectural values. However, by integrating stakeholders' perspectives into Mas di Sabe's renovation project, this study intends to define the building's renovation concerning the integration of renewable energy technology that must be informed by local knowledge and cultural values.

The emphasis that the present research puts on people is due to the tendency of preservationists to privilege buildings' renovation over history and people's well-being [39]. On the contrary, with Mas di Sabe's case study, this research intends to highlight how appraising the expertise and knowledge of people in technical projects is a successful key for preserving the history and collective memory of a community and reducing potential mistrust towards external experts. For the study, local stakeholders were invited to imagine the future uses of the Mas di Sabe, which type of renewable technology may be employed, and the territory's natural resources to support a sustainable renovation project. For exploring the community's proposals, thirteen online and telephonic semi-structured interviews [40] were conducted in March 2021 and then analyzed using the following five categories: 'Future visions', 'Collective memory', 'Commoning process', 'Energy', and 'Resources'.

The study shows that local stakeholders share the same idea of the Mas di Sabe as a fundamental identity element, which expresses their territory's tradition and history and has to be renovated and preserved in its original structure. By doing so, the community supports the commoning process of the building and the municipalization process held by the local administration.

The present paper is structured as follows: Section 2 presents the method of the study, Section 3 the results regarding the inhabitants' vision of the future uses of the Mas di Sabe, the energy needed to supply the building, and the resources available in the territory for

the renovation project. Finally, Section 4 discusses the results and concludes the study, identifying the limits and inputs for future research.

2. Materials and Methods

This article presents the findings of Val di Zoldo's study belonging to the project Interreg ITA-AUT Shelter "Smart rural heritage along tourism routes", carried out from August 2019 to March 2022.

2.1. The Shelter Project

Shelter is an ITA-AUT Interreg project aiming at elaborating tools that support the new uses of historic rural buildings and their landscape. Its goals are supporting building conservation and its sustainable use by focusing on land management and maintenance in rural and mountainous areas in climate change and the COVID-19 crisis. In particular, the project involves facilities and regions which suffer from abandonment and neglect, causing multiple issues such as hydro-geological risks, biodiversity reduction, soil impoverishment, and cultural heritage loss.

In Italy, the main stakeholders involved in Shelter are local institutions such as Regione Veneto, Eurac Research, Plattformland, and local administrations such as Anras (Austria), Rasun-Anterselva (Sud Tirol, Italy), Valbrenta, and Val di Zoldo (Veneto, Italy). Moreover, the project involves citizens of the Austrian and Italian municipalities just mentioned.

2.2. The Case Study

This paper investigates Val di Zoldo, a mountain municipality in the province of Belluno (Veneto) at 1.177 m above sea level and with 2.862 inhabitants (2021), the adjacent districts of Costa—where the Mas di Sabe is located—and the district of Iral—which is connected to the building by a 'mulattiera', an ancient path also included in the renovation project (Figures 1 and 2). The entire territory is dominated by the Dolomiti UNESCO (World Heritage Site since 2009), an attraction for Italian and foreign mountain lovers and known for its ski facilities, trekking, and biking routes, which explains why the local economy of the entire territory is based mainly on tourism.

Figure 1. The mulattiera connects the Mas di Sabe with the village of Iral—10 October 2019 (Eurac).

Although Zoldo suffers from depopulation issues like several other Italian rural and mountainous areas, it also offers a unique cultural and historical heritage. This territory's history is characterized by an ancient migration of iron handcrafters who arrived at Zoldo in the Middle Age. During their stay, they built several buildings (tabià) where they led metallurgical and agricultural activities, and which became typical structures of the area (Figure 3). Today, local museums such as the Museum of the Iron and Nail testifies the long handcraft tradition of the valley.

Figure 2. Mulattiera stones—10 October 2019 (Eurac).

Figure 3. The other high-rise tabià of the area—10 October 2019 (Eurac).

Among the ancient tabià, the Mas di Sabe (Figure 4) was founded around the XVI century in an area close to Val di Zoldo called Costa. Over the years, the farmers and iron handcrafters' families inherited the Mas di Sabe, using it in a variety of ways. For instance, it was employed as a barn for keeping livestock and hay or as a gathering place for local inhabitants' meetings. Originally the structure was composed of the farmer's house, a barn, smaller agricultural buildings, and agricultural and forest lands. Moreover, the tabià was big enough to host more than one family simultaneously. Unfortunately, during the XIX century, the owners' house was destroyed, leaving the barn the only survivor of the ancient complex of buildings.

Many historical papers have documented that the Mas di Sabe was acquired by several families which succeeded over the years. Although the area has many other private barns, the Mas di Sabe is considered to be unique. Compared to the other high-rise barns, it presents a unique shape that makes it appear shorter and broader due to several extensions that have been realized through the years. It is the older tabià of the area and the only one with the upper part composed of trunks that have been assembled according to the unique blockbau technique (Figure 5), and a lower base made of stone.

Figure 4. Mas di Sabe with the forest behind—10 October 2019 (Eurac).

Figure 5. The blockbau structure—spring in the Nineties (Fondazione Angelini, archive photo).

Besides its architectural characteristics, the tabià also benefits from its position under the Pelmo and Civetta mountains, which belong to the Dolomiti UNESCO (Figure 6). The mountains, the field, the adjacent forest, and the several legends on the building create a relaxing environment that attracts local and external visitors who want to enjoy this intimate and fascinating setting. The Mas di Sabe also represents a crossroads of several local paths, such as the mulattiera that connects the building with the village of Iral, creating a 'network' with the other tabià scattered across the area. For this reason, the building has become one of the stops of a local route which can be explored by families and mountain lovers in Zoldo's valley.

Currently, the state of the building is of severe degradation worsened by atmospheric agents, such as snow, that challenge its existence every year (Figure 7). Specifically, the most damaged part is the wooden one, which is rotten and consumed by woodworms (Figure 8). On the other hand, the vast field surrounding the ancient barn is kept by a local farm that regularly cuts it, using the resulting hay to feed its livestock.

Figure 6. The surrounding landscape of Dolomiti UNESCO—fall in the Nineties (Fondazione Angelini, archive photo).

Figure 7. Mas di Sabe's structure is challenged by annual snow—winter in the Nineties (Fondazione Angelini, archive photo).

Figure 8. Mas di Sabe's damaged board—10 October 2019 (Eurac).

Because it represented the local agricultural and handcrafted tradition for centuries, the Mas di Sabe has become an identity symbol for the local population who do not hesitate to express feelings of attachment and belonging. For this reason, the Mas di Sabe, together

with the mulattiera, has been included in a renovation project fostered by Val di Zoldo's administration within the European Shelter Project, aiming at valorizing it as a symbol of tradition and local identity. In particular, the municipal administration expressed its willingness to renovate the Mas di Sabe by acquiring it through donations and expropriating single proprieties to allocate it to public use. These actions aim to secure the building, process the redevelopment project, and address the building for cultural purposes.

Besides, by involving communities in defining new uses and developments for abandoned buildings, the project seeks to understand the role of historic buildings during the energy transition [41]. In this way, local communities and the identification of new uses for historic rural buildings could contribute to the renovation wave, the diffusion of renewable energies, and the spread of energy-resilient local communities.

The choice to investigate the renovation of the Mas di Sabe is driven by the importance of cultural heritage in Italian rural and mountainous areas, and of marginal villages such as Val di Zoldo, which suffers from depopulation and emigration. In these areas, the renovation of cultural heritage represents an opportunity to enforce social and cultural identity threaten by urban areas considered more attractive from an economic and social point of view. It happens that people from marginal villages such as those of Val di Zoldo are aware of the importance of preserving and valorizing their cultural heritage, which is strongly linked to their survival.

However, economic barriers may become an obstacle for those who are willing to support renovation projects. Val di Zoldo is a great example of how having the support of local administrations and European funding can be crucial for the sustainable preservation of local cultural heritage in the respect of collective memory. The bottom-up nature of the renovation project of the Mas di Sabe is made evident also by the involvement of local stakeholders in the process of identifying future uses and the sustainable use of energy for the building.

2.3. Semi-Structured Interviews

The present paper uses thirteen semi-structured interviews [40] conducted online and by phone in March 2021, lasting approximately 60 min with stakeholders from institutions, associations, companies, and private citizens. In particular, the latter were residents, emigrants in close cities or abroad originating from Zoldo's valley, and people with family members still living there. Table 1 gives a little additional information on stakeholders involved in the study in compliance with their privacy and qualitative research ethics.

Table 1. The stakeholders of the study.

Stakeholders	Characteristics
Institutions	Regional and local level
Associations	Cultural, touristic, research
Companies	Touristic, agricultural
Citizens	Inhabitants, emigrants, natives

In the scientific literature [42–44], the reliability of a small sample of stakeholders is validated by the qualitative method which implies data saturation as a symptom of the adequacy of the information collected [45]. This is true also considering the small dimension of the case study examined in this paper. The participants were identified through a mix of a purposive sample, which is a no probabilistic sample selected according to the knowledge of the research object, and a snowball method starting from a few stakeholders linked to local associations and institutions. Specifically, through the snowball method, it has been possible to let local stakeholders identify themselves autonomously. This bottom-up selection has allowed not only to involve everyone interested in the project but also to consult diverse stakeholders which would have been difficult to reach out to without an internal contact. At the end of the interviews, the participants received a document that included a summary of their ideas and proposals on Mas di Sabe's future uses and informed

them about the redevelopment project's progress. Both the interview guideline and the interviews were initially written and conducted in Italian and then translated into English for this paper.

The interviews tried to understand to what extent locals consider the Mas di Sabe a fundamental element of the community and which future they imagine. Moreover, they also investigated whether people intend to supply energy, what type they would use, and to what extent they would accept the employment of renewable energy technology. For reaching this information, the local stakeholders were invited to answer the following questions:

1. Can you tell me how long you have lived in Zoldo's community (or how long are you interested in this area)?
2. Do you know the Mas di Sabe? If so, would you describe it?
3. How do you figure the Mas di Sabe's future?
4. Which resources to produce renewable energy for the Mas di Sabe are available in the territory? What type of renewable energy might be produced?
5. Which type of energy and how much electricity and thermal energy would be necessary for supporting Mas di Sabe's future uses?
6. Could you tell me about your best memory concerning the Mas di Sabe (or the surrounding territory)?
7. Could you indicate another person who might be interested in this interview?

Ethical principles and privacy norms are in compliance with national rules and good research practices. The participants were recruited using snowball sampling and ensuring the collection of the perspectives of the main stakeholders of the local community. During the interview phase, we ensured a GDPR-compliant consent process. Qualitative interview data were recorded and transcribed storing and not publishing personal data, according to the ethical principles and privacy law. Furthermore, results are published in an anonymous way. The interview collection phase was accompanied by a GDPR-compliant consent process and concluded with the submission of a report summarizing the interview results for participant validation. The sharing of interview results, maintaining the privacy and FAIR use of the data and results, allowed respondents to access the ideas of community members without knowing whom they are referring to and to further build a discourse on the future use of Mas di Sabe.

2.4. Method for Content Analysis

NVivo helped structure five categories based on the data collected—'Future visions, 'Collective memory', 'Commoning process', 'Energy', and 'Resources'—to support the analysis of the research results. Considering the importance of the Mas di Sabe as a cultural testimony of its territory, the primary purpose of the interviews was to understand the community's ideas regarding the future uses of the building (Future visions) for an inclusive renovation project.

To identify the connection of the ancient barn with its locals, we refer to 'Collective memory' as the meaning that the building represents for the community, which has been expressed during the interviews by individuals who shared their memories, anecdotes, and collective knowledge on the barn.

The interviewees manifested the cultural and historical importance of the Mas di Sabe also by supporting its 'Commoning process', namely the actions and relations between individuals, who consider the building as a common good whose renovation would benefit the entire community and local future generations.

The participants also had the chance to express their ideas on the employment of renewable technology for producing the electricity and the heat needed to supply the building and its activities (Energy), and the availability of local natural resources engageable in the project (Resources).

By employing the five categories above mentioned and, in particular, the collective memory and the commoning process concepts, this paper aims at understanding (i) how

inhabitants became aware of the importance of the building as an identity symbol, (ii) what is the community reaction to this awareness, and (iii) to what extent people accept employing renewable energy technologies for renovating a historic building.

3. Results

3.1. Future Visions

During the interviews, the participants could express their ideas regarding the future uses they imagined for the Mas di Sabe. Acknowledging the building's historical and cultural value, all the stakeholders involved shared the willingness to restore the ancient barn preserving its original architecture and purpose and turning it into a benchmark of local agricultural and handcrafted tradition.

> [. . .] I imagine it [the Mas di Sabe] as a place that needs to be preserved since it represents the history of our territory and, thus, kept it as it is. I mean—if it's possible—we should renovate the damaged parts and preserve the building as a witness—let's say—of the agricultural activity and the handcrafters that used to work in the iron industry. [. . .] I think it is necessary also to renovate the surrounding field and bring it back as it was, no? [. . .] also cultivating some plants there to illustrate how the tabià looked back then.

> [. . .] in this area, many tabià were built. However, our kids don't know their history anymore; it has been lost in the collective memory because the territory lost those elements that help us remember our history. (SIM)

After confirming its cultural and historical importance, the interviewees suggested that the Mas di Sabe could become a place for cultural activities, considering that local associations previously arranged some activities at the barn's field.

> [. . .] a reference point of the Dolomiti-UNESCO Foundation. . . where organize events. . . of course, when it'd be possible to renovate the interiors because first the exteriors need to be renovated and. . . becoming. . . according to us. . . something symbolic, for events. I'm not talking about a dance party [laugh] but something joyful, an exhibition, a local market, bringing it back to life and turning it into a meeting place. (ECAF)

> Mh. . . it could be a [. . .] for cultural activities since Val di Zoldo organizes them. . . like concerts, theater, and readings. (DDDF)

> I think it could be used for small and specific cultural activities. . . for example, I know that the Proloco [local cultural association] organized some itinerant shows, which also stopped at the Mas di Sabe where some theatrical gags were played. (AZF)

Among the cultural activities proposed for celebrating the building, the Mas di Sabe is also imagined as a place for exhibiting its unique—and of the other tabià—architecture through expositions, conferences, and artistic representations, as well as a place where learning through alternative ways—such as interactive workshops for kids and adults, and revivals—about the mountain world and the territory's history and tradition. In this way, they can also share their history with people from the outside who could understand their cultural identity.

> We think that the Mas di Sabe could be used as an eco-museum where visitors can see how the barn was built—considering that it's the last of its kind in Zoldo—and we might create an exhibition hall to show the tabià's history, [. . .] also creating a room [. . .] where kids might experience the mountain. Therefore, we can make expositions and project videos and, at the same time, make them build and play with materials linked to the mountain. [. . .] and maybe also [. . .] use that room to educate people on the dangers and the mountain world in general, in a suitable way for kids.

> [...] we imagine the building with expositions of technical sheets explaining how barns were built in Zoldo. (MBF)

> I think it could also be a study center of... the emigration phenomenon... the mountain areas, the Dolomiti... the tradition, and the depopulation and repopulation of the Dolomiti, something like this. (ECM)

> It would be nice if both locals and externals could enjoy the Mas di Sabe; in this way, the externals could explore how people in ancient times lived the mountain. I thought that maybe—I guess I saw it abroad—we could organize some days where people can live again the time past [...] people coming from Milan could spend a weekend with a local guide who explains to them everything about that life, so you can sleep there, eat there, also with the animals. (FPMM)

An essential aspect of the renovation project is preserving the building structure in all its elements; otherwise, the barn and the population would lose their identity. The building represents a symbolic element of the community's identity, which must be preserved and valorized. For this reason, the local stakeholders highlighted the necessity to renovate the ancient barn without modifying or spoiling its original structure.

> [...] I prefer to keep it as it is... without additional parts and preserve its original essence, structure, and purpose. If someone decides to turn it upside-down or amplify the building, it would not be a witness of the past anymore; instead, it would become another thing. (CGM)

Despite the uses that the Mas di Sabe will supply, the local stakeholders consider it necessary that the tabià's architecture, the surrounding field, and natural resources are not spoiled by mass tourism. On the contrary, they support tourism that respects the environment, the silence, and the place's rhythm.

> And... then, maybe our imagination is of including the Mas di Sabe in an itinerary so you can go there and visit it and... very quietly, tiptoe, moving away [laugh]. (PBF)

> [...] according to soft tourism, tourism of... silence, contemplation, which is what people ask in the mountain, they don't want crowds, instead... in this way, people could be alone, or with few persons, for learning, admiring, contemplating, and so on. (ECAF)

> I imagine it as a place where every activity respects the [...], silence, environment [...]. If there will be cultural or even touristic activities, they shouldn't aim at a profit. Instead, this place should be for people to meet with a rhythm that [...] should be less chaotic, and not of those cultural and touristic activities where people are encouraged to consume. (DDDF)

> I also thought about an astronomic observatory, but we should ask the experts. (MBF)

3.2. Collective Memory

When it was asked the participants to think about their best memory regarding the building and its surroundings, the interviewees immediately shared personal and collective memories. For example, some personal memories recall events linked to their childhood at the ancient barn's field as a gathering place.

> When we were kids, I remember we used to go there with our school. The teachers—and also some elderly of the area that decided to join us—used to tell us stories about how the building was structured, all parts' functions... of course for us it was a trip, so we used to listen but also play and eat on the field [laugh], and after that go back home. (LDRF)

Besides being a symbol of the past, people link the Mas di Sabe to the idea of spare time and time dedicated to creative activities alone or in a group (Figure 9). For the relaxing

and carefree atmosphere that the building with the surrounding environment can produce, the participants manifested their attachment to a place that seems unforgettable.

> When I saw the Mas di Sabe for the first time, it appeared to me like an enchanted place, a place where you can take your time... you can go there and read, write, sing, draw... or you can chat with someone; a place where you stay gladly. There are some places with that kind of... attraction. That's how it began, and since then, the Mas di Sabe has this meaning for me... it's characteristic, and also, somehow [smile]—if I may say—it's magical. (CGM)

> When you arrive in the village [Costa], you are always curious to see the Mas di Sabe. You take a walk and watch the landscape, you go there, and it helps you relax, regenerate, and then you go home. It feels... somehow, like a medicine... it's like a therapeutic place. (ECM)

> It's a special place. I mean, when you're there, your heart opens up. (FMPM)

Figure 9. People gathered at Mas di Sabe's field—summer in the Nineties (Fondazione Angelini, archive photo).

The fact that the building is an element deeply linked to the identity of the locals is also evident from the words of the emigrants, who keep feeling the Mas di Sabe's attraction and cannot abstain from visiting it when they return to the valley.

> Every time I... I go there, I feel that I'm in a special place. I mean... the feeling of isolation and estrangement from personal issues, together with your memories [connection problems]... and different feelings of joy, worry of a community it's something that always touched me. Because it's an identity place, I always feel the need to go there and re-assimilate a tiny part of that identity, which is not mine anymore since I've been living in Venice for many years now [...]. (FAM)

According to the participants, the current link between the community and the barn has ancient roots even for the previous generations, since the Mas di Sabe represented a reference point for their social life, with the difference that today it also embodies the territory's history.

> [...] [the Mas di Sabe] always represented some sort of identity, of cultural identity. In fact, in the XIX century, it was used as a gathering place during summer [a dance hall]; it was a place of identification and social aggregation. For me, it's fundamental that even today, for the inhabitants... the local community, the Mas di Sabe is an identity place. Thus, both the building and the surroundings represent the history of this valley. (FAM)

The memory of local stakeholders regarding the Mas di Sabe is strengthened by documents, legends, and studies that describe the past of the building and transmit it through the next generations.

> In "Pelmo d'altri tempi" [Giovanni Angelini, 2008. Nuovi Sentieri], the author reports pictures of the Mas di Sabe, which was intact at that time. Moreover, he tells the legends that the local people created on the ancient barn. He states what we all know nowadays: the Mas di Sabe had a substantial identity value [. . .]. (ECAF)

> [. . .] for example, a legend says that the Mas di Sabe was a house for rich dames who owned precious marriage chests, which are enormous rocks that fell from Pelmo since everything happened under the shadow of this beautiful and peculiar mountain. During mass on Sundays, everybody waited for the dames who came by carriages. . . to attend the mass. Another legend refers that those dames had low-necked gowns, which means they were [laugh], you know? Many legends and stories about the Mas di Sabe have been created because the building means something to locals; it's not a random place. (ECAF)

> Coming from Iral, there's a path in the forest [the mulattiera], and. . . there's a legend to which I'm attached. Zoldo has some legends regarding mysterious characters who weren't magicians, fairies, or nymphs [. . .]. They were dames, characters that belonged to ancient times. Some say they were miner's companions, other nobles and that they had carriages, horses and used to turn furiously around the Mas di Sabe—coming from Iral through the forest—I'd say because they were bored. Doing so, they made circular marks still visible [laugh], namely if you go in the wood there's a groove with a slight rise part like a bump, which makes your imagination run wild since, you know, the witches' sabbath and so on. (PBF)

3.3. Commoning Process

The municipalization process made by donations and expropriations and the network of relationships built among the stakeholders consulted during the renovation project define the commoning process of the Mas di Sabe. The Val di Zoldo administration supported the building's municipalization and agreed to involve the local stakeholders in the decision-making process to investigate future uses and the energy needs that the population imagines for the building. During the interviews, the participants shared their knowledge regarding the local administration's intention to municipalize the building and expressed their consensus and ideas on making the ancient barn accessible.

> One may involve the local population through cultural associations that manage the municipalization process directly because I believe that we can only give people the chance to use the building but if the locals don't participate through territorial organizations and the existing associations. . . [. . .] I mean, for me is essential that people got involved because they feel that the building belongs to them. In this way, it's possible to think about a future for the Mas di Sabe that overcomes its original purpose. (FAM)

> Of course, it's necessary to. . . make it available for the community and. . . find a usage that fits the current time. I mean, it's essential not just to renovate the building and keep it closed, turning it into another cathedral of the desert. . . but. . . it should be accessible for communal and social uses. (CGM)

Considering that the interviews represented the very first occasion for local stakeholders to think about Mas di Sabe's renovation and that the territory lacked a solid network of stakeholders, the participants showed a high interest in the idea of collaborating and actively contributing to the project. In particular, some of them presented suggestions coming from a brainstorming meeting that they had organized autonomously before the official interviews.

[I spoke with] *** and *** [. . .] and we asked some questions, you know? Then I called the mayor to understand the progress of the building's municipalization. (MBF)

After expressing their proposals, some participants shared contacts of acquaintances that might put into practice their ideas thanks to their expertise, highlighting the importance of creating a dialogue between local stakeholders and manifesting their actual willingness to develop relationships that are functional to the building's municipalization project.

[. . .] of course, once they [the local administration] found an architect and planned the renovation, we need to discuss and decide before they start working. Otherwise, we are forced to adapt, no? I believe. . . or better. . . *** asked me if we could meet again all together, no? A meeting. . . also with *** that has clear ideas on the project. (MBF)

[. . .] Then I think it is fairer if it's the administration, the people, to choose how to put the ideas into practice. . . the essential thing is to save it [the Mas di Sabe], the way. . . for renovating it. . . I mean. . . which is the use. . . it's vital that people express it. . . maybe through round table discussions, and meetings. (ECAF)

3.4. Energy

Linked to the future uses imagined for the Mas di Sabe, the interviewees were invited to share their ideas on the quantity and type of electricity and heat needed to allow public access. In particular, the Shelter project involves the employment of renewable technologies, aiming at enhancing disadvantaged areas by valorizing their existing natural resources. For the Mas di Sabe renovation project, the local stakeholders imagine a minimum electricity requirement or no electricity at all.

It depends on its [of the Mas di Sabe] future uses. If we use it as we're doing right now, the energy won't be necessary because [blurred word] it's a small building, so it'd be necessary only to illuminate the interiors. (SIM)

Uhm. . . well, electricity. . . the minimum required. Honestly, I don't think it needs a significant amount of electricity. (FMPM)

I would avoid electricity or any other energy. I mean, I'd keep it as it is. I would renovate it to prevent its collapse, but I would bring it back to the XVI century. (PBF)

Moreover, they do not see a positive link between the ancient barn and modern technologies since their priority is to respect the original architecture and the building's identity, which—according to them—would be damaged by renewable technologies, such as solar panels on the roof. In general, as they do not find renewable energy and technologies necessary for Mas di Sabe's valorization, the participants disagree/are not convinced about employing them in the renovation project.

I would never think about a photovoltaic installed on the structure, I mean, in many cases, it's possible, but in cases like this one, I'd see it. . . difficult. It would be a sacrifice for Shelter's purposes of safeguarding. (FAM)

Oh my God. . . [laugh] I'm smiling because here [in Veneto's region] they [companies] dried out and spoiled all the streams with the excuse of renewable energy, I mean they built massive installations—by the way private—and they took away the watercourses from the valley, which were also a tourist attraction, so. . . I'd be careful in telling you about [laugh] renewable energy technologies. (MBF)

I don't even know how to address this matter. We need to be careful about renewable energies because. . . well, the devil could hide behind them, creating environmental disasters and catastrophes that it's better to avoid, no? So, for example, I refer to the hydroelectric or other activities that enrich only the promot-

ers, which cling to subsidies. . . subsidies. . . and, thus, the renewable energies, ok. But they must be clarified, and well thought out. (SDZF)

When talking about renewable energies, the interviewees recall the negative experiences their territory had faced in the past years, when external stakeholders damaged the mountain watercourses in Veneto by inappropriately employing hydroelectric technologies. Since then, the inhabitants do not trust who decides to apply them to projects.

I can tell you that [. . .] in some places in Belluno's province, some conflicts took place—some of them with positive results—regarding the usage of water for producing energy. And, of course, water is a renewable energy resource that implicates serious stuff, and we all know that thanks to the subsidies, and capitals of different kinds, European capitals, there was massive speculation on. . . the management of water as a resource, you know? for producing energy. So, well, obviously. . . this is something we need to consider. (DDDF)

3.5. Resources

Also linked to the building's future uses, the interviewees were invited to identify the local resources they find helpful for supplying the building with electricity and heat once renovated. The aim is to preserve the historical building by employing resources from the area, trying to not rely on externals. According to the participants, there are some resources available in loco.

Access to subsidies that support the local government in the renovation project (economic resources).

[. . .] We are at the starting point of the building's renovation project. Having already acquired some properties through donations and having access to Shelter's subsidies allows us to maintain the surrounding, no? However, after planning it, we'll have to find a more significant contribution that will enable us to undertake the renovation in the forthcoming months and years. Because today we have some resources for supporting it physically, but currently we don't have resources for renovating the building. Moreover, nowadays, the lack of resources limits even the energy issue. (SDZM)

Associations that promote activities and stimulate participation and access to the building (social resources).

[. . .] we founded the association in 2012, but we were more active in the early years—as I love to say—of the 'Third Millenium'. We also had a positive reaction from the administration, which saw us being active on the territory, so it was assigned to us a headquarters [. . .] free of charge. (PBF)

Cultural activities that are already available in the territory (cultural resources).

[. . .] there are some. . . small, well. . . let's call them museums in the valley and. . . yes, with—I don't know—maybe three or four exposition halls, that concern . . . themes. . . yes, for example, one of them concerns the manufacture of iron and nails, you know? That was one of the ancient activities in the valley. (LDRF)

Environmental heritage and local natural resources that might serve renewable energy to the building (ecological resources).

It's a beautiful place because there is a vast field, there is the Civetta [mountain] on its front, the Pelmo [mountain] behind it, which make it a panoramic place [. . .]. (AZF)

[. . .] solar energy might be certainly used. I don't know about the wind. And. . . there is little water and. . . yes, I know there is a stream nearby, but I'm not sure it's enough to produce energy. (CGM)

Otherwise. . . as a renewable resource, we have the wood from the forest that might be used for heating. (ECM)

> [. . .] nearby there are no streams that allow the installation of a small hydroelectric plant. . . there's something, but. . . it's far away, maybe. . . sixty, seventy meters. . . that might be used for. . . creating a small waterfall that produces 1 KW of energy, that's it. 1 KW or two max., because it has a limited flow rate. (SIM)

4. Discussion and Conclusions

The results show that Zoldo's population positively responded to the local administration's intention to include them in the renovation project's decision-making toward territorial innovation [5]. For Mas di Sabe's case study, the inhabitants' involvement in planning the building renovation means that the local stakeholders' knowledge of the territory and its resources [9] permitted them to gather some ideas and proposals for the future functions they envisioned and the local renewable resources employable for supplying the tabià. By consulting the locals, Val di Zoldo's municipality prevented people from perceiving Mas di Sabe's renovation as a top-down project and, thus, rejecting it.

Confirming that renovating historical buildings implicates restoring their cultural value [20], the interviewees expressed the willingness to make the Mas di Sabe a reference point of the local traditional architecture (e.g., exhibition of technical sheets, workshops for kids and adults) and the agricultural and handcrafted history of the territory (e.g., cultivation of the surrounding field, a research facility for local emigration and depopulation). They also unequivocally expressed their intention to keep the original structure without adding new elements, transmitting the local tradition symbolized by the tabià to future generations and externals by taking up again the cultivation of the surrounding field and organizing guided visits. This is because local stakeholders consider the blockbau architecture and the meanings they ascribe to it [19]—through legends, childhood memories, and important personal events—as essential for their place identity [14]. Accordingly, by preserving the material structure of the tabià, the inhabitants also protect an immaterial element such as their own identity [24]. Renovating the building and its surrounding field also implies restoring its past role as a gathering place (e.g., dance hall) for leisure events such as concerts, theatrical sketches, and local markets, which would enhance social interactions while bringing the Mas di Sabe back to life. Moreover, the community's intention to preserve the Mas di Sabe's past—as an agricultural and gathering place—while making it operative in the present—as a benchmark of local tradition and a place for events—confirms that renovation projects ensure historical building continuity [30].

The broad range of activities and events proposed during the interviews show people's attachment to a familiar and intimate place where they can connect with natural and cultural local heritage. Whether they enjoy the silence and the calm atmosphere alone or with their family and friends, inhabitants feel a deep and unique bond that links them to the building and is enhanced through a collective memory created during centuries, which seems to be also transmitted through oral (e.g., legends) and written (e.g., books) narratives [36] during meeting events (e.g., school trips) or interviews.

Although public access to the Mas di Sabe is fundamental for the interviewees, they take its protection against mass tourism into higher consideration, proposing soft tourism (e.g., stargazing, contemplation, silence) to ensure that visitors respect the surrounding natural environment (e.g., a reference point for the Dolomiti-UNESCO Foundation) and the cultural value of the building itself. The willingness to support the renovation project and guarantee the transmission of the building's cultural value to future generations and its access to everyone also confirms that locals consider the Mas di Sabe in terms of a common good. The interviewees manifested their interest and initiative in Mas di Sabe's commoning process by setting a meeting before the interview or proposing further collective discussion regarding its future address. Both actions seem to demonstrate that the renovation of a historical building could also enhance local identity [22] through the voluntary creation of a relationships network focused on managing the common good.

The five categories illustrated in Figure 10 show that the collective memory of the Mas di Sabe played a crucial role in driving the local community to support its renovation and

commoning process since it represents an identity symbol for the historical and cultural local tradition.
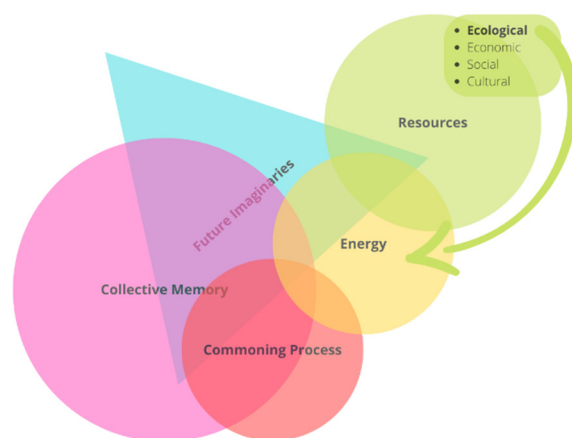
Figure 10. Five categories (own production).

The collective memory—namely the inhabitants' memories, legends, and stories on the Mas di Sabe—contributed to the idea of the building as a reference point that symbolizes the local community culture, which has been transmitted over time. During the interviews, local stakeholders referred to the Mas di Sabe as a tangible element of their identity as Zoldo's inhabitants, manifesting their interest in preserving its collective meaning through time. Thus, it is evident that people's collective memory influenced their ideas and proposals for future uses (Future visions) to preserve the building's value.

Moreover, the collective memory had a crucial role in supporting the commoning process of the Mas di Sabe, which consists of both the local administration's effort to municipalize the building and the creation of a network of relationships fostered by those inhabitants willing to contribute to the renovation project. The different activities and events proposed for the building (Future visions) induced the interviewees to identify some social interactions over others (Commoning process), considering Mas di Sabe's sake.

The collective memory—and, thus, the future visions—also affected the inhabitant's ideas about employing renewable energy technology (Energy) for supplying the Mas di Sabe in the future. The interviewees manifested their skepticism regarding the benefits of installing modern technology as the renewable ones on an ancient barn that existed without energy for centuries. For instance, according to locals, integrating a solar panel on the tabià's roof means transforming the original building architecture (blockbau) into a completely different building, thus, impacting the inhabitants' identity.

Finally, the future visions for the Mas di Sabe depend on the potential resources useful for the building renovation (Resource), the energy needed for supplying it (Energy), and the municipalization practices and the local relationships built for the tabià management (Commoning process). Accordingly, the economic (i.e., subsidies), social (i.e., local associations), cultural (i.e., museums), and ecological (i.e., sun exposition, streams, wind, and wood) local resources available on the territory influence the future uses imagined for the Mas di Sabe. On the other hand, the future Mas di Sabe's uses (Future visions), and the ecological resources have an influence also on whether integrating and accepting renewable technology (Energy) for the building's renovation.

This study provides new insights into the literature on cultural heritage preservation through its methodology, which can be reproduced in further research. The methodology here employed consists of the stakeholders' involvement in interviews through purposive and snowballing aimed at informing the historical building's renovation project. After the results were analyzed, a report has been formulated which summarizes the results of the interviews and has been shared with the stakeholders involved in the project. Through the expertise and knowledge shared by the stakeholders, it becomes possible to act not

only towards the preservation of material common goods, such as a building of historic and cultural importance [39]. By including stakeholders' visions and expectations it is also possible to act on immaterial social aspects linked to cultural heritage such as society's development, quality of life, and the preservation of social identity and collective memory [37]. Finally, consulting stakeholders and appraising their expertise and knowledge of territorial resources can be successful also in the identification of energy needs for the historical building's renovation, thus, reducing the risk of losing cultural, historical, and architectural values [38].

In conclusion, for the Mas di Sabe renovation project—supported by the European Shelter Project—thirteen semi-structured interviews were conducted with local stakeholders from institutions, cultural and touristic associations, touristic and agricultural companies regarding the future uses and energy technology for the historical building called Mas di Sabe. The analysis of the interviews made it clear that collective memory has a crucial role in determining identity groups [46] and their willingness to renovate a historical building. Moreover, it also induces people to manage common goods collectively, thus, organizing a commoning process by creating a relationship network specifically for contributing to the renovation project. Moreover, this study's results confirm the fundamental role of collective memory in preserving heritage value and the redevelopment project's purpose of addressing local communities' needs and visions.

Mas di Sabe's case study represents an example of cultural heritage preservation managed collectively by a community living in marginal rural and mountainous areas [7] in Italy. In the peninsula, many territories can rely on cultural and natural resources only. Despite economic and social issues such as depopulation, brain drain, and underdevelopment, this study confirms the possibility of designing a suitable and sustainable plan which is positively welcomed by communities such as Val di Zoldo when locals are consulted for their thorough knowledge of the territory and resources [9,10], also with the support of European projects such as Shelter. Local administrations willing to preserve historical buildings and cultural heritage, in general, may consider involving the population in meetings and consultations (i.e., interviews, workshops) to be sure they are not acting in contrast with the local collective memory and population expectations. Although the paper illustrates local stakeholders' imaginaries on renewable energy technologies employable for renovating the building and that collective memory generally influenced their acceptance, it missed investigating the role of the commoning process in supporting renewable technologies. Considering that the Mas di Sabe's renovation project needs to be implemented and many activities aimed at involving the population—such as focus groups—will be likely organized, it could be interesting for future research to investigate how collective memory evolves once the building is renovated and frequented by locals and externals.

Author Contributions: Conceptualization, V.-M.C. and J.B.; methodology, J.B.; investigation, V.-M.C.; resources, D.E.; data curation, V.-M.C.; writing—original draft preparation, V.-M.C.; writing—review and editing, V.-M.C. and J.B.; supervision, J.B.; project administration, D.E.; funding acquisition, D.E.. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: This work has been funded by the European Union through the research project Interreg ITA-AUT SHELTER Smart rural heritage along tourism routes (code project: ITAT2041, tender: Interreg V-A Italia-Austria—2018).

Informed Consent Statement: Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

Data Availability Statement: Due to the nature of this research, it is not possible to publicly share data.

Acknowledgments: We are grateful to Natalia Magnani for her comments on earlier versions of this paper, Grazia Giacovelli, and Federico Voltolini for providing insightful discussions.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest. The funders had no role in the design of the study; in the collection, analyses, or interpretation of data; in the writing of the manuscript; or in the decision to publish the results.

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