

Thesis overview

MASSERIA MARTINELLI

Revival of the Masseria system

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Politecnico di Torino

Masters of Science program in Architecture for Heritage

A.a. 2023/2024

Sessione di Laurea Mese Anno: July 2024

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1 THESIS INTRODUCTION & OBJECTIVE

Masseria Martinelli, a historical estate situated in Mola di Bari, Puglia, Italy, stands as a testament to the region's rich agricultural heritage and vernacular architecture. The Masseria system, characterized by sprawling rural estates, reflects Puglia's long-standing connection to the land and its unique cultural tapestry woven from ancient Greek, Roman, and Norman influences. However, time and neglect have taken their toll, threatening the structural integrity and cultural significance of Masseria Martinelli.

This thesis project undertakes a comprehensive investigation into the potential for revitalizing Masseria Martinelli. Employing a multifaceted approach, the project aims to:

- **Architectural Analysis:** Conduct a rigorous examination of the Masseria's architectural style, construction materials, and current state of degradation. This analysis will encompass the identification of original building materials and techniques, alongside a detailed assessment of areas susceptible to decay. The findings will inform the development of a restoration plan focused on structural integrity and historical preservation.
- **Research and Case Studies:** Engage in extensive research on successful Masseria restorations and contemporary trends in adaptive reuse within the Mediterranean context. Case studies of similar projects in Puglia or the broader region will provide valuable insights and best practices for the revitalization process.
- **New Function Proposals:** Based on the architectural analysis, research findings, and a thorough understanding of the local socio-economic context, this project will propose a range of new functions for Masseria Martinelli. The proposed functions will prioritize the economic and cultural sustainability of the revitalized Masseria while ensuring respect for its historical significance and architectural heritage.

Significance of the Study

This thesis project contributes to the ongoing dialogue surrounding the preservation and adaptive reuse of historical structures. By focusing on Masseria Martinelli, the project delves into the specific challenges and opportunities associated with revitalizing a significant element of Apulian cultural heritage. The proposed interventions and new functions have the potential to serve as a model for future endeavours, fostering the sustainable preservation of historical landmarks while contributing to the economic and cultural vitality of the region.

Methodology

The research methodology will employ a triangulation approach, combining various methods to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the subject. This will include:

- **Archival Research:** Examining historical documents, architectural plans, and photographs related to Masseria Martinelli and the broader Masseria system in Puglia.
- **Fieldwork:** Conducting a detailed site survey of Masseria Martinelli, documenting the current architectural condition, material degradation, and potential spatial reconfigurations.
- **Literature Review:** Analysing existing scholarship on Masseria restorations, adaptive reuse projects in the Mediterranean region, and cultural heritage preservation strategies.



- **Case Study Analysis:** Critically examining successful case studies of Masseria revitalization projects in Puglia or similar contexts.

Expected Outcomes

This thesis project is expected to yield the following outcomes:

- A comprehensive architectural analysis of Masseria Martinelli, including identification of necessary restoration interventions.
- A critical evaluation of successful Masseria restorations and contemporary trends in adaptive reuse.
- A set of well-defined, feasible, and sustainable new function proposals for Masseria Martinelli.
- A contribution to the knowledge base on the preservation and adaptive reuse of historical structures, particularly within the context of Apulian cultural heritage.

By fulfilling these objectives, this thesis project aspires to contribute to the sustainable revitalization of Masseria Martinelli, transforming it into a vibrant space that celebrates Puglia's rich heritage while offering a roadmap for future endeavours in cultural preservation and adaptive reuse.



2 THESIS STRUCTURE

The thesis is divided into 13 brief parts namely:

1. *Thesis introduction:*

Here the ideology and the objective of the thesis are explained, thus forming a perfect preliminary step for the beginning of the thesis.

2. *Thesis methodology:*

Here the research method of the thesis the tools that were used and what steps were followed to achieve the objective of the thesis is mentioned here.

3. *Cultural & Rural heritage- Masseria:*

A deeper insight into the Masseria and other rural and cultural architectures that exist in Apulia is explained. The different types of Masserie and how they are functioning now are mentioned here.

4. *Site study in focus- Masseria Martinelli:*

A detailed study of the Masseria Martinelli, the Masseria that the thesis is carried out on is mentioned here. The history, geography, present owners and the current state of Masseria are described.

5. *Site survey & documentation:*

The site survey is carried out by visiting the site and physically measuring the Masseria. This is assisted by the photo documentation of the site to understand and present the current condition of the Masseria in its exact form. Here other details like the materials that the Masseria is built in, the current degradation state of the Masseria and the factors affecting it are also mentioned.

6. *Knowledge, research & evaluation:*

The research and analysis of Puglia with respect to Bari based on factors like population, climate, occupation, tourism etc is carried on here. This suggests the most viable option and method for the revival of the Masseria.

7. *S.W.O.T:*

The basic strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats involved in proposing a new function or reviving the Masseria with respect to certain characteristics like accessibility, architectural accessibility, human behaviour, basic amenities etc.

8. *Case studies:*

The Masseria in the 2km proximity of Masseria Martinelli, how they have been revived, and their current usage explained here. This competitive study suggests the most functional activity in the surroundings and what could be done to either balance out the existing activities or stand out with a new proposal.

9. *Intervention:*

The intervention deals with the cleaning, repairing and addition of the necessary structural and architectural elements for the basic stability of the Masseria. For ex. The windows in the Masseria are in half or completely broken condition thus the solution with repaired double-glazed windows and replacing the broken louvres of the wooden window are shown here.



10. Concept & design

After the primary study of the site, the surroundings and the typology, suggestions are made that could be accepted as the new function for Masseria Martinelli. A tentative study of what combination of functions could benefit the Masseria along with its functioning and requirements are discussed in this section.

11. Lighting design

To highlight and accentuate the Masseria a lighting design study is carried out here. A basic lighting proposition for enlightening the area without causing maximum damage to the Masseria is suggested here.

12. Preliminary pre-feasibility reasoning

An understanding of how the project can be carried out stating the basic costs that are involved in restoration of the Masseria. Thus, the analysis suggests the viability of the project, generating revenue through various suggested functions and its contribution to the local socio-economic culture. Hence, revitalization of Masseria Martinelli can also foster cultural preservation and community engagement, with strong social and cultural merit.

13. Thesis conclusion

This summarises the outcome of the thesis and the list of photos, graphs, and tables. The bibliographic sources are mentioned after this.



3 THESIS CONCLUSION

The compelling case for the revitalization of Masseria Martinelli extends beyond mere economic considerations. This project presents a unique opportunity to breathe new life into a historical landmark, establishing a model for the successful restoration and reuse of the Masseria system throughout Puglia. By fostering a vibrant cultural hub that celebrates Apulian traditions, Masseria Martinelli can become a catalyst for cultural renewal in the region.

The proposed combination of functions – BnB, agrotourism, cooking school, olive oil & wine tasting, co-working space, wellness centre and event venue – caters to diverse interests, fostering a dynamic and enriching visitor experience. The transformative power of BnB guests learning to prepare farm-to-table meals with fresh, local ingredients or delving deeper into the region's culinary heritage through olive oil and wine-tasting sessions. Artists and co-working members would find inspiration in the Masseria's historical charm, fostering a unique creative environment.

The success of Masseria Martinelli can serve as a powerful example for other Masserie in Puglia, inspiring a wave of restoration projects. This network of revitalized cultural destinations would celebrate the region's rich heritage, strengthening the local economy by attracting more visitors, creating jobs, and fostering collaboration between businesses. Beyond economic benefits, the revived cultural heritage embedded within these revitalized Masserie becomes a vital tool for promoting the overall cultural experience of Puglia. Visitors can not only appreciate the stunning landscapes and architectural beauty, but also immerse themselves in the region's unique traditions, agricultural practices, and culinary delights.

As the Italian historian and philosopher Benedetto Croce reminds us, "*Ogni epoca ha in sé la propria vita, e non si può vivere l'una nell'altra*" (Every era has its own life, and one cannot live in another). By revitalizing Masseria Martinelli, I don't seek to replicate the past, but rather to draw inspiration from it, creating a space that resonates with contemporary sensibilities while honouring the region's cultural legacy. This project serves as a testament to the enduring power of cultural heritage, a beacon for future generations, and a reminder that preserving the past paves the way for a brighter future, where Puglia's vibrant cultural tapestry can be shared with the world.



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