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Emerging Ruralities: Constructing Distinction, Desire, and Class through Agritourism and
Farming in Tuscany

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Abstract

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By Whitney Easton

Amid the dislocations associated with the European debt crisis, rural areas have been noted as loci of resilience throughout Southern Europe. Backed by claims of “repeasantization” (Van der Ploeg 2008), the so-called “peasants of the 21st century” (Ventura and Milone 2007) are revitalizing rural areas. Consonant with this, changing EU agricultural policy increasingly obliges small and medium-scale farmers to engage in diversification strategies, ultimately working to transform rural areas from landscapes of agricultural production to “landscapes of hypermodern consumption” and tourism (Heatherington 2011). How long-term farmers fit into this development vision has remained tenuous, raising the question of whose voices are represented and whose life projects are supported by such measures.

This research identifies tensions and emerging patterns of inequality between established farmers and neo-rural lifestyle migrants in Tuscany’s agritourism sector. For established farmers, agrarian values conflict with the requirements of hosting tourists, which is expressed through ambivalence, stereotyping, and self-marginalizing discourses. Without children who are versed in certain neo-rural sensibilities and devoted to the farm, they struggle to successfully engage in agritourism. On the other hand, neo-rural lifestyle migrants increasingly command the cultural capital, hosting skills, and tastes that give them advantages in agritourism. Volunteer and migrant farm workers also play an under-acknowledged role in recent rural transformations, linking small farms with “globalized countrysides” (Verinis 2011). By considering producers’ “economies of sentiment” (Paxson 2012) and class trajectories, this dissertation draws critical attention to the exclusionary dimensions, tensions, and uncertainties that characterize emerging rural transformations in the “New Europe.”

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**Emerging Ruralities:
Constructing Distinction, Desire, and Class through Agritourism and Farming in Tuscany**

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PART I

REPEASANTIZATION IN RURAL CENTRAL ITALY

CHAPTER 1 | INTRODUCTION: EMERGING LANDSCAPES OF POWER AND RURALITY

A farmer's wife recorded by an anthropologist doing research on agrarian change in the 1980s in my field site of the Amiata area of southern Tuscany said, "There is nothing to say about agriculture. It is a disaster. All farmers around here are in the same position, nothing makes any money, there are no alternatives" (Pratt 1994: 91). She was referring to Central Italy's transition from a centuries-long sharecropping past to the transformations of land reform. After land reform in the 1950s, the new class of small family farmers largely transitioned out of mixed cultivation in order to monocrop grains for export. They faced a collapse of global wheat prices in the 1980s and an agricultural crisis and rural exodus followed, leaving most farmers to abandon farming entirely or find supplemental off-farm work (Pratt 1994).

But thirty years later, in 2015, during my fieldwork a farmer told me, "There were only three or four agritourisms (farm tourism operations) initially [in the mid-1990s]. Now there are more than three hundred...now there are more agritourisms than farms!" According to farmers in Amiata, agritourism has undergone rapid growth over the past twenty years, and this trend is statistically visible, with Amiata's province showing steady growth in the number of agritourism farms since 1995 (Belletti et al 2010). In 1995, there were 141 agritourism farms in the province of Grosseto, increasing to 348 in 2000. By 2007, there were 877 agritourism farms (Belletti et al 2010).

This transition from the widespread dispossession of family farms in Amiata to the pervasive adoption of agritourism (*agriturismo*) is the entry point for my ethnographic research

on rural transformations. Many small farms in Amiata have felt the strains of falling profits and increasing costs of production with the globalization of agribusiness over the past half-century, as has been common throughout the world (Van der Ploeg 2008; Weis 2007). They have also run up against the time and monetary costs of growing bureaucratic incursion and regulation. Many small farms in Europe are responding to these difficulties by diversifying into farm-based tourism. This phenomenon is recognized in the social science literature as being one strategy among many for “repeasantization” and it is promoted in development policy in Amiata and throughout Europe, especially as the EU transitions toward an integrative rural development model of agricultural policy (Heatherington 2011; Van der Ploeg 2008).

However, my ethnographic research in Amiata provides caution to claims of repeasantization. It suggests that critical attention to the importance of socio-cultural factors in farm decision-making and the “economies of sentiment” of producers (Paxson 2012) reveals exclusionary facets of agritourism and repeasantization efforts. It also brings to light hidden dimensions and shortcomings of the concept of repeasantization. These under-examined elements include in-migration of urban lifestyle migrants, increasing influence of class-based urban categories of judgment (Bourdieu 2004), and global flows of migrant and volunteer farm workers. All of these factors contribute to emergent class transformations of rural space and farming livelihoods.

This dissertation also offers an ethnographic assessment to problematize certain policy claims and actions of the European Union. The EU’s Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) includes a key policy objective of the survival of small-scale family farms, addressed through rural development interventions in tandem with agricultural policy measures. But it has been argued that the CAP seems to fuel inequalities and it has been accused of paying “only lip service to the

maintenance and strengthening of small family farms” (Papadopoulos 2015: 48). Thus, it is critical to analyze policy claims and consider the mechanisms by which inequalities are amplified among farmers by certain policy incentives before “repeasantization” is embraced and EU policy is commended.

Further, EU agricultural policy is increasingly being re-channeled through rural development, which is part of a broader effort to reconstitute rural areas as not only areas of agricultural production, but also of cultural consumption through leisure and recreation activities (Heatherington 2011). This policy vision demands critical examination as landscapes of neo-rurality are being actively created. This research suggests that such efforts correspond with decreasing funding support for food production, disrupting established farming livelihoods in Amiata. In this sense, claims of repeasantization may serve to mask the ongoing and actively unfolding struggles of food producers.

At the heart of this research are the questions of “whose voices prevail and whose are missing” (Counihan 2014: 220) and how rurality “becomes a vehicle for increasing and storing inequality” (Shucksmith 2012: 377) in efforts toward repeasantization in Amiata. Successful agritourism relies not only on economic resources, but also on the strategic use of forms of cultural capital and claims of authenticity. As such, it is “manipulated by diverse people for diverse ends” (Counihan 2014: 220). This dissertation critically examines actors’ claims in the realm of food production and rural tourist consumption and the interests those claims serve as they shape emerging landscapes of power and rurality.

Chapter Outlines

Chapter 1 introduces the research and lays out a literature review on repeasantization, agricultural transformation, European Union agricultural and rural development policy, and farm diversification drawing mostly from anthropology, rural sociology, and geography. This sets the broad theoretical grounding for this research.

In Chapter 2, I establish the ethnographic context for this study through a history and description of the field setting and its context within Tuscany, Italy, and the European Union with an attention to agricultural transformation and rural change. I also explain the methods of this study and provide a context for the strategies of small farmers in Amiata.

Chapter 3 presents ethnographic data of everyday life and work on Beppe Gaspari's agritourism farm, exploring the lived realities and implications of this development and farm-decision making strategy. I examine the household dimensions of agritourism as a strategy, including marital cooperation, involvement of children, and changing relationships between farm and family. I also describe how agritourism is a type of cultural performance and serves as an arena for self-marginalizing discourses of class and inequality to emerge. Group interactions through agritourism are rife with stereotypes and articulations of difference between regions within Italy and Northern and Southern Europe. These discourses of cultural difference reveal hidden but important perceptions of identity and marginality.

Chapter 4 provides ethnographic descriptions of shifting strategies and divergent trajectories of established farming livelihoods in Amiata. These cases range from diversified family farming as practiced historically in this region to farms utilizing diversification strategies such as agritourism and specialization in high quality wine and olive oil production.

In Chapter 5, I describe the experiences of urban in-migrants to Amiata whom I refer to as neo-rural lifestyle migrants. By examining their engagements with tourism and farming, along with their desires and aspirations, I suggest that they are contributing to emerging forms of rurality by bringing certain forms of distinction and urban values to Amiata. This chapter also hones in on the particular affective challenges faced by young rural lifestyle migrants, including social isolation, desires for romantic partnership, and longing for reciprocal and communal relations including alternative socio-economic configurations. Often these values do not fit with the reality of rural life, and young farmers grapple with dislocation and non-fulfillment of expectations.

In Chapter 6, I compare how established farmers and neo-rural farmers construct the agritourism experience, tracing the forms of distinction and sophistication enacted by neo-rurals. This chapter explores how different class trajectories are emerging between these groups.

Chapter 7 describes the hidden dimensions of labor on small farms in Amiata, which often involve temporary or permanent migrant farm workers or volunteer workers. While this was not initially a primary focus of my research, such a significant presence of hired labor calls into question claims of repeasantization.

In Chapter 8, I provide some concluding thoughts on how farming livelihoods are being transformed in Amiata, and the avenues of inequality that are emerging. I position these findings in terms of claims of repeasantization, ultimately suggesting that the shortcomings of this theoretical construct outweigh its utility in the context of Amiata. I also discuss limitations of this research and future directions for further research.

LOCATING EUROPEAN RURAL TRANSFORMATIONS IN THE LITERATURE

This literature review outlines the broader historical, political, and socio-economic contexts that frame the experiences of farmers and agritourism operators that I describe throughout this dissertation. It begins by laying out debates about repeasantization, the farming strategies that this claimed phenomenon entails, and critiques of repeasantization. European agricultural and rural development policy also shapes farming strategies and rural livelihoods, and I outline key components of policy. Then, I outline the literature on pluriactivity and new rurality, along with European strategies of repeasantization and pluriactivity. Lastly, I discuss the overarching theoretical orientations of this research, including economic anthropology, agricultural anthropology, and critical rural theory.

Repeasantization and its Critiques

Despite Marxist predictions of a totalizing process of de-peasantization, at present it is claimed that there are more peasants than ever before, accounting for two-fifths of human livelihoods (Van der Ploeg 2008). This has led to claims of the formation of “new peasantries” or “peasants of the 21st century” (Van der Ploeg 2008; Ventura and Milone 2007). The recent proclaimed trend of repeasantization (Van der Ploeg 2008; Bernstein 2010) brings mixed farming strategies back into the purview of anthropological interest after the discipline’s robust engagement with peasant households (Edelman 2013; Piermattei 2007).

The rural sociologist Jan Douwe van der Ploeg laid the foundation for the concept of “repeasantization” in his book *The New Peasantries: Struggles for Autonomy and Sustainability*

in an Era of Empire and Globalization (2008). He defined repeasantization as “the process through which agriculture is restructured as peasant agriculture” (2013: 135), suggesting that it is:

...a modern expression of the fight for autonomy and survival in a context of deprivation and dependency...[it] implies a double movement...a quantitative increase in numbers...in addition, it entails a qualitative shift: autonomy is increased, while the logic that governs the organization and development of productive activities is further distanced from the markets” (2008: 7).

Van der Ploeg argues that repeasantization represents a global pattern of the reinvigoration of small-scale farming, especially in Europe. Drawing from Chayanov, he defines the “peasant condition” primarily in terms of autonomy and labor. Dependency on conventional markets for agricultural inputs is avoided, agro-ecological methods are emphasized (Altieri 1995), labor is primarily drawn from the family, and new retail markets are created. In his words, in peasant farming “coproduction based on a self-controlled resource base is central and within which wage labor is (almost) absent” (Van der Ploeg 2013: 134). This account echoes Netting’s (1993) description of smallholder farming in the Swiss Alps and other parts of the world.

Van der Ploeg also emphasizes multifunctionality and pluriactivity of farming as important dimensions of repeasantization, especially in Europe, which I describe below (van der Ploeg 2008, 2016). But in Europe, it has been noted that farming deemed to be agro-ecological often is dependent on European Union funding, wages from off-farm employment, agritourism, and rural development projects (Narotzky 2016). Such realities draw into question Van der Ploeg’s

claims of lack of dependency associated with repeasantization processes.

In some senses, debates around repeasantization echo earlier debates about the agrarian question and the structure of agriculture. Examinations of “peasant” farming systems and economies gained attention during the 1960s and 1970s, a time when Marxist re-examinations of Kautsky’s agrarian question were also gaining traction (Hetherington 2005). In other words, “the political sympathies behind much of the study of the agrarian question were directed toward the plight of the ‘family farm.’ Small farms, for many theorists, became one of the crucial sites of the resistance to the continuing growth of capitalism in rural areas” (Hetherington 2005: 21; e.g., Netting 1993; Wolf 1966). Recognition of complex commodity chains with the industrialization of agriculture, the imposition of technology over ecological conditions, and the consolidation of capital in agriculture drew attention away from claims of simple commodity production in agriculture and placed much of the agricultural sector in line with other industries oriented around industrial capitalism (Goodman 1991; Friedmann 1991). However, scholarly attention to “alternative agriculture,” especially organic farming, continued to question the extent and logic of capitalist concentration in food production (Goodman 1991; Hetherington 2005). Anthropologist Gregg Hetherington aptly sums up the shortcomings of continued debates narrowly focused around the agrarian question:

...one is left proposing either that organic farming, like other forms of production will be engulfed by the capitalist agri-food industry, or that for a variety of difficult-to-substantiate reasons it will somehow survive these structural pressures. The impossibility of resolving such binary questions points to the limitations of any analysis

that narrows its focus to “material” factors like ecology and economic regulation. As with the simple commodity production debate that preceded it, this style of analysis continues to treat ideological, political and spiritual convictions, not to mention cultural and class identities, as epiphenomena with little explanatory power (Hetherington 2005: 24).

Current considerations of repeasantization face similar challenges in tending to sideline ideological, class, and cultural dimensions of agrarian change. Repeasantization has garnered critiques in the rural sociology and geography literatures, along with some limited attention in development anthropology. Some scholars have been skeptical of claims of repeasantization, seeing de-agrarianization as the dominant trend (Bryceson 2002; Li 2009). Others have urged a more nuanced accounting of class dynamics in processes of agrarian change (Bernstein 2010; Goodman 2004; Kay 2008). Further, when anthropological conceptions of peasant livelihoods and strategies are considered — especially around access to land, use of family labor, and peasant households as a social form — reclamation of the category of “peasant” in “repeasantization” becomes problematic (Edelman 2013; Kearney 1996; Narotzky 2016).

Recent studies have used the framework of repeasantization to examine farming strategies and transformations in different parts of the world (Calvario 2017; Da Via 2012; Van den Berg et al 2016; Ventura and Milone 2009). Importantly, Kay’s (2000, 2008) work in Latin America demonstrates that claims of repeasantization are more complicated in reality, with farmers shifting between process of de-peasantization, semi-proletarianization, and repeasantization. Van der Ploeg (2013) and others (Brookfield and Parsons 2007) highlight significant processes of repeasantization throughout Europe and in China, Vietnam, other southeast Asian countries and Brazil. They tend to object to theory that signals the end of the

peasantry, finding that it “denies the agency of peasants, family farmers and smallholders who reproduce and sustain their livelihoods through adding value to their own labour and own resources” (Van den Berg et al 2016: 3-4). Instead, they argue for the continued relevance of the agrarian question amid neoliberal globalization.

Repeasantization is marked by multiple economic strategies of peasant farmers, combining agricultural production with other income generating activities. Van der Ploeg (2008) divides these activities into deepening, broadening, and re-grounding categories. The agricultural side of the farm enterprise may be deepened through organic farming, high quality and regional production, and short supply chains. The rural side may be broadened to include agritourism, nature management, and diversification. Lastly, resources may be re-grounded toward new patterns of use which may take place through “farming economically” through cost reduction and low external input and pluriactivity, including off-farm income. Repeasantization has also become tied to transnational agrarian movements and a critique of neoliberal capitalism (Corrado 2010) as small farmers are supported by social movements.

Van der Ploeg finds the phenomenon of repeasantization to be widespread and significant enough in Europe to be referred to as a paradigm shift (2008: 155; Van der Ploeg and Roep 2003). While repeasantization has been heralded as constituting part of a wider paradigm shift in Europe backed by EU rural development policy that is moving away from being guided by modernization paradigms (Van der Ploeg and Renting 2003), other theorists have been skeptical of such claims. For example, David Goodman (2004) explicitly questions the claims by Van der Ploeg and others that a paradigm shift is taking place in Europe involving the fusion of alternative agro-food networks with EU rural development initiatives. He urges that before announcing a new paradigm of rural development, it is necessary to “specify more fully the

characteristics of the paradigm envisaged and the accompanying changes in social structures and power relations” (Goodman 2004: 3). Goodman urges caution in assessing the “paradigmatic potential” of patterns of alternative farming (2004: 13), suggesting that the reality of pluriactive farm systems points more toward “continuity and incrementalism” than to “vanguardism, rupture, and paradigm change” (2004: 12). Goodman (2004) points out that analyses of recent rural change largely fail to scrutinize power, labor organization, and gender relations within farm households. Additionally, he finds the connections between this trend and potential solutions to rural development challenges such as income inequality and rural poverty – including who gains and loses with these new rural activities – are tenuous at best. Overall, he finds the proclamation of a paradigm shift ungrounded in empirical evidence and premature. This research supports Goodman’s caution, identifying under-examined dimensions of symbolic domination and unequal access to farming strategies.

In the literature on repeasantization and recent agrarian change, diversification strategies are sometimes uncritically spoken of in terms of being a “return” to “traditional” ways and somehow reflective of distant peasant pasts. Even in otherwise careful anthropological studies, certain strategies are referred to as “a return to traditional practices” (Welch-Devine and Murray 2011: 75). Such assessments provide an incomplete picture, and one that is at risk of sidelining differences of cultural capital and class between rural actors. For example, claiming that a farmer who is conducting direct sales is “returning to past ways” when he or she may be doing so with the credentials and knowledge of an advanced degree in gastronomy or with the benefit of heavy internet marketing and rural development subsidies is not only partial, but also eclipses crucial issues of household change, class dynamics, and identity formation. More nuanced understandings of socio-cultural dimensions are required.

Equally, we must be mindful of generalizations in the other direction, assuming that recent forms of rurality are uniquely “new” and therefore must represent a paradigm shift. As an anthropologist might be, Goodman (2004) is critical of these “new” economic strategies representing such a distinct break with the past to warrant the label of a paradigm shift. Farmers have long diversified productive activities in many directions in order to insulate from risk during periods of economic change. Other critiques of repeasantization, phrased as “new rurality” in the Latin American context, note shortcomings in how class is analyzed and how the impacts of state policy are included in analyses (Kay 2008) and my research addresses both of these issues. It is also crucial to gauge to what degree agricultural production has lost importance for family farms that have diversified, and whether it is appropriate to refer to the phenomenon using the term “repeasantization.” Just as “peasant” was never a tidy anthropological category, nor will “repeasantization” and “neo-peasants” lend themselves to easy and productive operationalization.

Anthropologists have an essential role to play in establishing the household dynamics and socio-cultural dimensions of recent agrarian change, the contours of which have been broadly outlined by other social sciences. Additionally, anthropologists can keep in check any tendencies toward romanticism of agrarian pasts and populism, which are sometimes uncritically at work in the social science literature. The body of anthropological literature on peasants and post-peasants is useful in establishing to what extent repeasantization can be spoken of as a phenomenon and to what extent its tenets might constitute a paradigm shift.

Political Economy of European Union Agriculture and Rural Development

The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) constitutes 40% of the total annual budget of the EU and a common market for agricultural products has been symbolic of the process of European integration from its inception (Swain 2016). Southern European countries are more agricultural, as “half of the agriculturally oriented households and two-thirds of EU farm holdings are in southern Europe” (Verinis 2011: 151). Italy is one of Europe’s primary agricultural producers, with 60% of its land under cultivation (Casa et al 2009; Cole and Booth 2007).

The CAP consists of two pillars of policy support. The first pillar consists of direct payments and market measures, while the second pillar supports rural development initiatives and aims to increase the multi functionality of farming. The pillars are respectively funded by the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development. The second pillar only constitutes around a quarter of the total CAP budget (Swain 2016: 577). The CAP, like the U.S. Farm Bill, has a great deal of power in shaping farm scale, production methods, crop selection, and household welfare. Small farms have received relatively little support and have become vulnerable throughout Europe (Heller 2013; Pretty 1998). The CAP has drawn criticism on many fronts, including claims that “the bulk of its policy elements are geared to ‘efficient,’ commercial farming — the ‘neo-liberal’ agenda” (Swain 2016: 577).

Since the founding of the CAP, there has been a steady trend toward fewer and larger farms with the industrialization of agriculture and policy support for larger farms. Between 1972 and 2002, the number of land holdings dropped by 40 percent and agricultural employment fell by 50 percent across CAP member states. Simultaneously, the average size of land holdings under cultivation has grown from 15 hectares in 1975 to 29 hectares in 1997.

Italy stands out as one of the countries with the greatest relative number of small farms, along with Portugal and Greece. In these countries, approximately 75 percent of holdings are less than five acres (Wolf 2002: 47-48). In 1990, the average Italian farm was four times smaller than the average French farm (Ginsborg 2003: 21).

Organic agriculture has grown dramatically throughout Europe in recent decades and constitutes an important strategy in terms of earning higher prices for products and aligning with growing commitments to avoiding chemical-based agriculture (Idda et al 2001; Pretty 1998). During the 1990s, Italy boasted one of the highest average annual growth rates in the organic sector, and as of 2010 has the second greatest amount of land under organic cultivation in Europe (Orlando 2010; Yussefi & Willer 2007). The region of Tuscany has one of the oldest and strongest organic movements.

The European Union has been transitioning from agricultural policy informed by the tenets of agricultural modernization toward a vision of integrative rural development that increasingly aligns agriculture with projects of cultural heritage and landscape management (Bryden 2010; Heatherington 2011; Stewart and Strathern 2010). As I have discussed, scholars have conflicting opinions about whether or not these policy shifts and the rural transformations they prompt constitute a paradigm shift (Van der Ploeg and Roep 2003; Goodman 2004).

The modernization and rural development paradigms are writ small in the established and neo-rural farming livelihoods I describe in Amiata. Established farming strategies are sometimes driven by a partial continuation of the modernization paradigm, as farmers specialize production or rely on industrial inputs or high-risk insertion into a global market. On the other hand, small farm diversification is involved in the shift toward a new paradigm of European agriculture that is increasingly tied to rural development projects that encourage farmers to

engage in a range of activities. Such involvements broaden farm practices to include agritourism and they sometimes encourage involvement in emerging alternative food systems through methods such as organic farming (Brunori et al 2008), regional product certification (Brunori and Rossi 2000), and short supply chains (Gillespie et al 2007; Grasseni 2014; Ploeg and Roep 2003; Ploeg 2009; Sonnino 2007). All of these strategies are present to varying degrees in Amiata.

The reasons farmers make particular choices about their farm enterprises and households cannot be separated from the political economy of European Union agriculture and rural development policy, global commodity markets, and flows of people and resources. Goodman (2004) issues the reminder that it is not a simple dichotomous matter of which development paradigm seems to be winning out, but rather, that the real substance and urgency in current research lies in exploring the tensions between the two paradigms and the frictions that may become manifest in farm households as they are caught up in the lived contradictions between the two development models. Linking household decision-making units with broader structural forces can reveal otherwise hidden patterns of agrarian inequities, an objective that drives this research (Wells 1987). In this vein, I position my findings alongside the socio-historical record of existing ethnographic work (Pratt 1994) and pay careful attention to the regulatory and redistributive power of the state, the EU, and global commodity and service markets.

The New Paradigm? Pluriactivity and New Rurality in Europe

Small farms throughout Europe are increasingly diversifying into non-agricultural realms of income generation, a phenomenon collectively referred to as pluriactivity (Fuller 1990).

Pluriactivity refers to a “multidimensional land-holding unit, in which farming and other activities are undertaken, both on and off the farm, for which different kinds of remuneration are received” (Fuller 1990:367). The concept of pluriactivity is at the core of visions of sustainable European agriculture and rurality which claim to move “beyond modernization” (Van der Ploeg and Roep 2003: 46; Heatherington 2011). Pluriactivity has also been conceived of as “multifunctionality of agriculture,” a crucial aspect of re-peasantization in the European context and a farming style that has been gaining policy support (Heller 2013; Van der Ploeg 2008). A 1985 Europe-wide study on rural change showed that a significant proportion of farmers in every European country combined farming with other, often diverse activities for income (MacKinnon et al 1991). Pluriactivity includes hired labor on other farms, off-farm wage labor, “para-agricultural activities” (food processing, etc.), and other non-agricultural farm activities (tourism, craft work, etc.).

The development of the concept of pluriactivity points to ethnographic opportunities for anthropological engagement in understanding the social, economic, ecological, and political dimensions of recent and unfolding European agricultural transformations. The concept of pluriactivity is significant to economic anthropology because it remedies some of the shortcomings associated with earlier conceptions of part-time farming. The early literature on part-time farming pinned it as being at odds with agricultural modernization and full-time farming and associated with low agricultural incomes. There was also a general neglect of the farm family, a narrow preoccupation with the farm operator, and a restricted focus on the agricultural aspects of farming (Fuller 1984). Farms were automatically classified as “part-time” if farm operators had off-farm employment and as long as a farm operator did not have off-farm employment they were considered “full-time.” Such categorizations did not consider actual

labor allocation within the farm operation or other forms of labor within the farm household. Related limitations include focusing on the operator at the expense of the farm household and family work patterns, which can lead to an elision of gender dynamics. Significant differences were also assumed between part-time farmers and other farmers, where in reality they may be almost identical in terms of production methods and land use. In the words of Fuller, “in the 1980s, we learned to separate the work status of the farm operator from the production function of the farm” (1990: 362). In the early 1980s, these limitations were acknowledged as it was realized that “part-time farming is neither a transitional nor a temporary phase in agricultural development” (Fuller 1984: 202; Fuller 1990). Amid this backdrop, limited approaches to part-time farming would shift to more representative attention to “multiple job holding” and eventually to “pluriactivity” (Fuller 1990; Mackinnon et al 1991; Ploeg and Roep 2003).

The literature on pluriactivity stems from anthropological and sociological considerations of part-time farming and mixed household strategies (Barlett 1989; Cancian 1989; Gasson 1987). This earlier body of literature importantly established part-time farming as a viable and consciously chosen strategy of farm households, rather than a signal of backwardness or the result of poor farm management and lack of alternatives (Fuller 1984). It also laid crucial methodological foundations for how to measure and define part-time farming. Pluriactive farm systems have historically played a significant role in the European agricultural landscape (Fuller 1984, 1990; Ploeg and Roep 2003) including in Italy (Dries et al 2011; Salvioni et al 2009) and they have been quantitatively documented to be less vulnerable to broader economic shifts (Mackinnon et al 1991). Additionally, the link between crop specialization and farm vulnerability has been well-established in the U.S. context (Barlett 1980). My study examines

different farming styles and engagement with pluriactivity strategies, allowing me to evaluate how these small-scale farmers may or may not forge a livable wage and satisfying livelihood through these strategies (Heller 2013).

Pluriactivity has become a central concept in understanding shifts in agricultural production and development strategies in Europe and beyond. In Latin America, transformations in agriculture are strongly associated with neoliberal globalization, which has led to rapidly growing capitalist farms alongside other farms that struggle to compete with subsidized imports for domestic markets. Attempts to theorize these changing agricultural patterns have been referred to as “new rurality” approaches and the diversification of income activities figures strongly in this literature (Kay 2008). New rurality approaches have been conceived in order to foreground the growing importance of diversification of rural activities and non-agricultural incomes for agricultural producers in light of neoliberal globalization. Other theorists go further toward a reformist vision in which rural development strategies are rethought within this framework or a communitarian vision is considered as a radical reconfiguration of the world system of power from below (Kay 2008). In the Latin American context, several characteristics of new rurality are foregrounded, such as the involvement of women in non-farm activities, the feminization of agricultural wage labor, a blurring of distinctions between rural and urban areas, and the growing importance of remittances through international migration. Some have referred to the situation in Latin America and Africa as de-agrarianization with the predominant process being de-peasantization (Bryceson 2002). Others argue that re-peasantization is also happening in Latin America and throughout the world (Van der Ploeg 2008).

In the European context, diversification of income generating activities has taken place

primarily in response to accelerating rural trends in the 21st century associated with the shift away from productivist agriculture and toward agricultural policy being fused with rural development objectives. These processes are certainly still framed in terms of neoliberal globalization, but distinctive trajectories have emerged in light of the supranational regulation of the European Union (Knudsen 1997). These trends include rural depopulation, rising rural tourism and vacation home ownership, and the incursion of recreational activities into predominantly agricultural areas. These shifts have been backed in complex and significant ways by the European Union's CAP and rural development funds. Policy also impacts small farm viability directly through the distribution of funds and incentives as European farms also face increasing costs and land prices in the face of falling profits. As agricultural funds have been decoupled from production quotas, the CAP increasingly supports farmers who offer other services to rural economies and ecologies such as landscape management and tourism (Heatherington 2011; Gray 2000; Stewart and Strathern 2010; Welch-Devine and Murray 2011). Estimates indicate that the EU subsidies in geographic areas of special interest such as mountainous regions can represent up to 66 percent of a farm's annual revenue (Welch-Devine and Murray 2011: 73).

European Strategies of Pluriactivity and Repeasantization

The globalized industrial agriculture system is running up against the limits of scarce oil resources to supply chemical inputs, climate change, loss of consumer trust amid food safety scares, and widespread environmental destruction (Pretty 1998; Tegtmeier and Duffy 2005). Repeasantization in Europe rests on a critique of the industrial food system amid falling prices

and increasing costs of production (Van der Ploeg 2008). Farmer livelihoods, consumer interest, and global economic and ecologic circumstances are all converging to signal a critical need for small-scale agriculture to ensure future global food security and sovereignty (Netting 1993; Patel 2009).

European small farms are supported by social movements such as the well-established and growing international Slow Food movement (Leitch 2003; Petrini 2004), the French Confederation Paysanne (Bove & Dufour 2002; Heller 2013), and La Via Campesina (Desmarais 2002). While it may be assumed that family farms are relatively well supported in the Global North, the family farm crisis in the U.S. (Barlett 1993; Strange 1988) and staggeringly unequal subsidies to small farmers under the European Common Agricultural Policy (Heller 2013; Patel 2009) suggest otherwise. Especially in Europe, new values, connections, and mobilizations are being shaped between producers and consumers in order to move away from the industrial model of agriculture and enact new avenues of support for small farms (Brunori and Rossi 2000; Fonte and Papadopoulos 2010; Grasseni 2014; Moragues-Faus and Sonnino 2012; Sonnino 2007; Stevenson and Born 2007; Trubek 2008).

Farm pluriactivity also takes a qualitatively different form in the European context, with alternative income generating activities being increasingly centered around farms, rather than involving off-farm wage labor by family members as documented in some Latin American and African cases (Bryceson 2002; Kay 2008; Van der Ploeg 2008; Welch-Devine and Murray 2011). The strategies employed by farms in Europe are diverse, and often involve efforts toward the relocalization of food and rural tourism. Organic farming is also significant throughout Europe (Luetchford and Pratt 2011).

First, national and transnational agrarian movements have emerged in response to the

global restructuring of agriculture in the context of neoliberal capitalism and globalization. Many of these movements position themselves against industrial agriculture and unbridled free market capitalism more broadly. The industrial agrifood system alienates farmers from local and regional markets and producers and consumers often seek to “re-embed agriculture and food consumption in socially and ecologically defined regions” (Friedmann and McNair 2008: 237, in Borras et al 2008). Chaia Heller’s ethnography *Food, Farms, and Solidarity: French Farmers Challenge Industrial Agriculture and Confront Genetically Modified Crops* (2013) focuses on France’s second largest agricultural union, the Confederation Paysanne, which is primarily composed of smallholders. The union has been the driving force in a producer-led movement against industrial agriculture and GM crops while also connecting with wider French and international alter-globalization and agricultural movements, including Via Campesina, the Brazilian Landless Worker’s Movement, and the Karnataka State Farmers’ Union. Heller locates a solidarity-based rationality of agriculture as crucial to the French farmer’s movement, emphasizing the “integrity of social fabrics” (Heller 2013: 27), whereas instrumental rationalities revolve around the tenets of efficiency, profitability, and risk.

Further, Italy is the home of the international Slow Food movement. Slow Food attempts to convince urban consumers of certain food values related to place and quality in an effort to transform their consumption patterns and warrant a higher price for producers, ultimately prompting a “transformation of value” and avoiding the elision of the hidden costs associated with the industrial food system (Cavanaugh 2007). Slow Food attempts to do this through social means such as organized presidia, educational programs promoting gastronomy, and global conferences and tastings. The Slow Food movement contends that not only livelihoods are at stake with globalization, but also identities and cultural values. While Slow Food aims to

combat “fast” consumption styles and preserve biodiversity and culinary traditions while championing food that is “good, clean, and fair,” Slow Food founder Carlo Petrini is careful to distance the movement from accusations of provincialism. He claims that globalization is “desirable when it creates networks of communication among diverse realities instead of leveling them” (Petrini 2001: 28).

The concept of *terroir* figures strongly in Slow Food’s mission. It refers to “the combination of natural factors (soil, water, slope, height above the sea level, vegetation, microclimate) and human ones (tradition and practice of cultivation) that gives a unique character to each small agricultural locality and the food grown, raised, made, and cooked there” (Trubek 2008: 238). Such a definition emphasizes the dual environmental and human facets of the concept of *terroir*. It has been used to express the link between food and territory for many artisanal foods, but it has been most strongly associated with wine as a commodity (Black and Ulin 2013). The concept of *terroir* emerged in the 19th century to label wines, but it played a key role in protecting the wine industry during the Great Depression. During this time, the *Appellation d’Origine Controlee* (AOC) system was established by law in France (Demossier 2011) and a similar system known as the DOC (*Denominazione di Origine Controllata*) operates in Italy (further discussion follows). Since then, the concept of *terroir* has morphed over time to encompass different meanings and contexts of use. Recently, it has become aligned with rural development (Tregear 2003), and notions of authenticity, tradition, and food quality (Pratt 2007).

In order to articulate the origins and qualities of foods to consumers through wider markets, legal and regulatory shifts have also taken place in efforts to promote *terroir*. Certification has been established throughout Europe for Denomination of Origin (DOC) for

wines and regional products and Geographical Indications have provoked a good deal of friction internationally within the World Trade Organization (Demossier 2011; Freidmann and McNair 2008). For producers, certified origin production can represent a significant source of value-added for products, especially for those which require transformation such as cheeses, wine, and olive oil (Welch-Devine and Murray 2011; Trubek 2008). However, co-optation of these certifications by elites has also been documented in French wine production, highlighting issues of social equity (Demossier 2011).

The marketing of food products based on their place of origin and method of production has been successful, both in terms of on-farm rural tourism and more commercialized, industrial routes of production and distribution. In France, territorially labeled cheeses through the AOC certification system may be marked up 30 percent compared to industrial cheeses, representing significant gains for producers if the products are sold directly (Welch-Devine and Murray 2011: 78; Corrado 2010; Moragues-Faus and Sonnino 2012). But direct selling also places new sets of demands on the farm household. While direct sales may represent new avenues of job satisfaction for some farmers, direct sales require farmers to master new skills such as marketing, communications, and record-keeping. Studies have documented that there is a great deal of variation in how farmers respond to the potential of direct sales, ranging from passionate endorsement to ambivalent resignation and blatant animosity (Welch-Devine and Murray 2011).

In arguing for fidelity to locality and heritage, efforts toward the relocalization of food may also inadvertently erect boundaries that exclude or dissuade certain class backgrounds, races, and ethnicities, in effect promoting a “defensive localism” or nativism (Counihan 2014). DuPuis and Goodman (2005) highlight the potentially exclusionary underbelly of the localization of

food, emphasizing that “the local is often a site of inequality and hegemonic domination” (359). They make the strong claim that “relocalization appears to be not so much in resistance to neoliberal globalization as an intrinsic part of it” (2005: 367). Their concerns are echoed in the connections between the promotion of local foods and the agendas of Far Right political parties in Italy. This is most vividly encapsulated in the Northern League’s incendiary “Yes to Polenta, No to Couscous” propaganda, which saw the enactment of a ban on new ethnic food shops in the historical center of the Tuscan town of Lucca in 2009 and other towns followed suit (Cavanaugh 2013; Cinotto 2009; Counihan 2014; Demossier 2011; Di Giovine and Brulotte 2014).

Given the realities of production, the construction of authenticity of food items and their opposition to modernity becomes problematic, with essentialized notions of culture, heritage, and territory often figuring prominently (Demossier 2011; Di Giovine and Brulotte 2014). Historically, there may be a “fallacy of conceiving of a pre-industrial era, frozen in time, that represents the cradle of typical food production” but “international trade, industrial production and market dynamics permeated this era, without which typical products would not have developed as they have” (Tregear 2003: 98). The re-localization of food can also hide certain aspects of the contemporary production process and “take us away from the unromantic images of concrete human subjects as they toil in the vineyards, experience harsh living conditions, and even face gender and class exploitation that are quite contrary to how we wish to imagine wine” (Black and Ulin 2013: 7). Contrary to some expectations of authenticity or tradition, mechanization is involved in the production of many regional specialties such as Stilton cheese in the UK (Tregear 2003). Such commodities are also bound up in global markets, making typical foods far from dichotomously opposed to any notions of industrial foods,

neoliberal capitalism, globalization, or modernity. Further, the advocacy around certain regional products that are singled out as endangered by movements like Slow Food may actually contribute to their commodification, significantly reconfiguring local meanings associated with foods (Leitch 2003; Counihan 2014).

Marion Demossier (2011), echoed by Leitch (2003), claims that *terroir* has been variously enacted in particular ways by the European Union to advance the European project of integration, drawing parallels to nation-building and the construction of “a new kind of European nationalism” (133). It is increasingly important to understand how these concepts are being reconfigured in local systems of meaning, how they are politically packaged, and how they are inserted into the global food regime (McMichael 2009).

Solidarity-based rationalities of agriculture challenge the industrial model's instrumental rationality and reframe food questions in terms of food sovereignty in creating a viable post-industrial food system. In Italy, solidarity-based purchase groups (*gruppi di acquisto solidale* or Rete GAS) have a significant presence in certain peri-urban areas, as documented by anthropologist Cristina Grasseni (2014) and others (Belletti et al 2010; Bolghini 2009; Counihan 2014). Farmers markets are also significant, especially in urban areas (Black 2012; Orlando 2011). Food movements in Italy have also been invoked in resistance of mafia control of the food system, agriculture, and land ownership, especially in Sicily (Rakopoulos 2017; Rizzo 2011). Recent solidarity-based food movements have also arisen in the wake of the Eurozone crisis, especially in Greece where the crisis correlates with a flourishing solidarity economy (Knight 2015; Knight and Stewart 2016; Rakopoulos 2014; Vournelis 2013). Such efforts include an anti-middlemen food distribution movement that has been documented as benefitting at least 22% of Greece's population through grassroots co-ops (Rakopoulos 2014: 194).

Tourism also figures substantially in Italy's economy as a whole and its rural economy. In 2016, international tourist arrivals increased by 4% to reach almost half a billion arrivals (World Tourism Organization 2017). Italy has a global reputation for strong links between food and place (Sonnino 2004; Trubek 2009). This has reliably attracted tourists from all corners of the globe, producing niches for artisanal and local products, notions of place-based taste (Brunori and Rossi 2000), rural tourism, and traditional cuisine (Di Giovine 2014). In Italy, farm tourism has served as a response to economic challenges and rural depopulation. As the EU increasingly regulates surplus production, farmers have less and less control over their prices. Agritourism has been cited as one way farmers might regain some degree of control over their production (Sabbatucci-Severini 1990; Sonnino 2004; Van der Ploeg 2008).

Van der Ploeg (2002) sees agritourism as one rural development strategy at the level of the farm enterprise, forming part of a constellation of deepening, broadening, and re-grounding activities that "reshape the farm into a multifunctional enterprise delivering a broader range of products and services" (44). As such, he sees it as a dimension of the phenomenon of "repeasantization" (Ploeg 2009). Agritourism has been credited with contributing to the employment and sustainability of rural communities (Brandth & Haugen 2011: 35). It also figures strongly in the new European model of agricultural development and its ambitious sustainability goals (Heatherington 2011; Ploeg 2009; Sonnino 2004; Welch-Divine & Murray 2011).

Many small- and medium-scale farms in Southern Europe – faced with poor agricultural prices, rising input costs, changing policy supports, and the economic crisis – have diversified into the realm of tourism as an alternative economic strategy. Agritourism is one of many farm diversification strategies and is often practiced in combination with other strategies such as

direct sales, territorial product certification, and organic production. Agritourism is rapidly expanding in many parts of the world, beyond Europe and North America (Chase and Grubinger 2014, Lyon 2013). Yet, it has been understudied in anthropology. There have been ethnographic studies of coffee tourism in Mexico and Guatemala (Lyon 2013). These studies have highlighted how agritourism fits within the broader growth of an “identity economy” in recent decades (Comaroff and Comaroff 2009 in Lyon 2013) and how the benefits of agritourism are not evenly distributed (Lyon 2013). For example, in Guatemalan coffee tourism, Lyon (2013) found that the financial benefits of tourism were largely felt by members of the coffee cooperative, while the actual and potential costs of the tourist influx, such as social frictions, were distributed in the wider community.

In the United States, agritourism impacts have been substantial, where it has been estimated that agritourism generates between \$800 million and \$3 billion for farm incomes annually and more than 62 million adults visit farms each year (Chase and Grubinger 2014: 171-172). Nature and farm-based tourism was the fastest growing sector of the travel and tourism industry in the U.S. between 1997 and 2007 (Center for Responsible Travel 2016: 8). Similarly, in Europe rural tourism has been growing at three times the rate of overall tourism (Center for Responsible Travel 2016: 8). Agritourism is widespread in Italy, although it developed late in comparison with other European countries. The concept was brought to Italy in the 1960s by farmers who had experienced farm tourism in Austria and France (Sonnino 2004). Farm stays connected to skiing in the Alps was one of the earliest forms of agritourism in Italy (Cox et al 2011).

Agritourism is a “cultural experience” and access to regionally typical foods imbued with *terroir* (place-specific attributes contributing to the qualities and uniqueness of a food product)

and cultural heritage (production methods, history, stories) figures strongly in the agritourism experience (Chase and Grubinger 2014; Demossier 2011; Gmelch and Gmelch 2011; Lyon 2013; Sims 2009; Trubek 2008). Access to food producers and locations of agricultural production – real or imagined – are also key aspects of agritourism (Lyon 2013). These aspects draw attention to the personal histories and identities of agricultural producers, which play a key role in agritourism success (Nilsson 2002; Brandth & Haugen 2011: 43). While hosting tourists places new demands on farmers, little research attention has been devoted to how farm household dynamics must change as farms diversify into tourism. The latter portion of this chapter places producer identities and notions of authenticity in agritourism at the heart of inquiry. It acknowledges identities as multiple and embraces “entanglements of often contradictory and paradoxical processes of continuity as well as change” (Tucker 2010: 928) as farmers navigate changing contexts of agricultural production and agrarian livelihoods.

Some research has suggested that farmers benefit unequally from agritourism (Crouch 2006; Sonnino 2004). Whether full lodging services or simply culinary tourism are offered, farm households must have certain material and cultural resources in order to succeed in this avenue of diversification. Strategic enactments of cultural knowledge and certain middle-class values (Guano 2006) may be required of these farm households, reflecting education, occupational experience, and locally determined markers of social status. Tourists also present unexpected, mundane challenges in farming regions, even for farms not involved in agritourism. For instance, in the French Pyrenees Mountains the dogs of tourists present a tangible problem for sheep farmers (Welch-Devine and Murray 2011). In this sense, an attention to the impacts of pluriactivity not just for farms that are undertaking such strategies but for agricultural actors in a region more broadly can reveal some of the local tensions and frictions that so interest

anthropologists. Such frictions may also involve the added third party of environmentalists intervening between farmers, residents, and tourists (Heatherington 2010).

One study in particular illustrates the potential contradictions that may emerge in farms undertaking agritourism. Sonnino (2004) conducted research in two regions of Southern Tuscany where the Province of Grosseto had instituted sustainable development programs on the basis of locally-defined ecological, economic and social subsystems. Sonnino conducted her study in two regions with a high degree of contrast. The first, Castelborgo, is in the hilly interior, which is marked by small towns, wheat, and sunflower fields. The second site, Belloro, is a very touristy area on the coast with high population density. Belloro began to suffer the ecological effects of heavy tourism in the 1990s and was declared at extreme environmental risk due to phosphorous and ammonium levels in the sea. This led the province to begin pushing a more equal distribution of tourism throughout the province and agritourism became the mechanism for creating this change in a “systematic political effort” (Sonnino 2004: 289).

Sonnino concluded that “in the Maremma there are historically-based socioeconomic hierarchies that create profound differences among practices and values associated with farming” which end up manifesting themselves also in relation to the ideals surrounding farming style and attitudes toward diversification into agritourism (296). She identified a divide in her sample between two different economic strategies -- conservative and risky. The conservative strategies were often taken by small and medium farms and involved specializing in the most heavily subsidized crops, most often wheat. For these farmers, agritourism was risky and required material resources that were not available. These farms also tend to emphasize the lifestyle associated with farming, which could potentially be infringed on by entry of tourists in the farm system. On the other hand, farmers with larger enterprises often

invested the capital necessary in order to expand into agritourism. This riskier strategy seemed to be more in service of financial gain, and Sonnino claims that none of the farmers would re-invest profit from agritourism into their farms. Given the state of land holdings in the Maremma, large holdings were much better equipped to exploit tourism, because of their extra buildings for accommodation and financial incentives through the CAP. Sonnino suggested that agritourism as a development strategy ended up sustaining farms in this region that tend to be large, wealthy, and cultivate non-labor-intensive cereal monocrops. Small farmers who were more interested in preservation of their rural livelihoods and values were left out of this development equation (Sonnino 2004).

Clearly, the portrait Sonnino presents in Tuscany differs from those of European development policymakers, who portray flourishing small farms benefitting from flows of people and money to rural areas. Sonnino's study highlights the potential gap between development discourse and practice when it comes to pluriactivity. Pluriactivity has been singled out in European development discourse and policy as a significant potential solution to challenges facing rural Europe such as depopulation, environmental degradation, and unemployment and the initial policy interest in pluriactivity grew amid the acceleration of such problems and an increase in their policy appeal (Brouwer 2004; Fuller 1990).

There are some parallels in the way rural areas have been invoked in development discourses between Europe and Latin America. In Latin America, new rurality came to include "almost every conceivable development objective" from decentralization and local development to empowerment of women and social equity (Kay 2008: 929). Much empirical research is needed in order to understand how visions of sustainable development hold up when "tested against the differing values, needs, and perceptions of those who are involved in it" and

conceived in terms of being “highly contingent and dependent on local views of what is to be sustained and developed, at what level, and for whose benefit” (Goodman 2004: 296). By examining how development objectives actually play out on the ground and by examining different interests of actors, anthropology can provide a singular lens for unraveling these policy discourses and their local inflections, along with restoring an appreciation of the unexpected frictions and contradictions that inevitably emerge in any development initiative (Li 2007).

In summary, the concept of pluriactivity represents significant theoretical advances from narrowly economic understandings of part-time farming. But while EU policy claims that economic benefit is derived from pluriactive farming, the socio-cultural implications of these strategies have been understudied (Goodman 2004; Van der Ploeg 2008). This research contributes through providing an ethnographic lens on what motivates farm families to undertake diversification of household economic strategies, unraveling to what extent these decisions are economic strategies versus reflections of socio-cultural considerations of lifestyle (Barlett 1986). Farm continuity and succession among pluriactive farms is also currently poorly understood, and this dissertation sheds light on these dimensions. As my research demonstrates, new rural identities that increasingly involve urban influences in rural areas crosscut and complicate answers to these questions (Willis and Campbell 2004).

The anthropological perspective on pluriactivity provided in this research advances theory-building around emerging rural configurations such as agritourism, both in terms of agricultural production and subjective processes of actors’ identity formation (Rogers 2002). Fuller’s (1984) early questioning of the role of family farms in “cushioning the social, political, and economic consequences of agricultural modernization” (205) can be extended to question the changing nature of the family farm in light of post-productivist European agriculture and

sustainable development projects. Farmers' perspectives and the broader class and policy dimensions of agrarian change cannot be sidelined, as diversification strategies are not equally open to all rural actors, nor are the benefits equally distributed. There is urgency in this objective, since "an important income safety net" was removed from the CAP in 2014 through "rebalancing or eliminating all direct payments for income support to farmers" (Welch-Devine and Murray 2011: 84).

Economic Anthropology, Agricultural Anthropology, and Critical Rural Theory: Research

Orientations

Economic anthropology provides a rich avenue for exploring economic behavior as it is experienced in daily life while balancing economic conceptions of decision-making with cultural beliefs and meaning systems. The quotidian aspects of making a living cannot be divorced from farmers' potentially radical ideas about how agricultural production might positively impact the world and how they attempt to enact these changes (Hetherington 2005; Paxson 2012). Farm decision-making and agrarian change have been understudied in the European context, especially considering Europe's highly regulatory and redistributive supra-national governance and recent claims of re-peasantization. I remain attuned to European agricultural, development, and tourism "policy worlds" (Shore et al 2011) that were at work in Amiata.

Anthropologists contribute substantially to analyses of agricultural production, as they "talk with farmers over extended periods of time and try to see the decision-making environment in all its holistic complexity" (Barlett 1980:566) while recognizing the long-standing significance of social relations surrounding eating and food production over time and across

space (Farb and Armelagos 1980). Anthropological perspectives have been especially critical to establishing the delicate balance of tradeoffs that must be negotiated between the household unit and the farm enterprise in the family farm system (Barlett 1982; Netting 1993; Wilk 1989). The household has proven to be a highly variable and durable form of organization, but has only recently earned anthropological attention for its centrality in “mobilizing agricultural labor, managing productive resources, and organizing consumption” (Netting 1993:2; Wilk 1989). My research maintains that the household is a meaningful category of production, consumption, and cultural meaning in Italy (Counihan 2004; Pratt 1994). But I also use an actor-oriented approach in order to foreground how the household may be a site of conflicting interests, struggle, and unequal power relations (Goodman 2004; Wilk 1989). To highlight power and authority, which may be patterned by gender, age, and class I substitute the concept of “entrepreneurial strategies” for the older “adaptive strategies” (Galt 1991; Orlove 1980). In Europe, the Wageningen School of rural sociology works from similar premises, seeing farmers as agentive and knowledgeable despite the structural constraints of powerful capitalist forces (Arce and Long 1999; Van der Ploeg 2008) and bears broad resemblance to agricultural anthropology in the U.S. (Buttel 2001).

This research contributes to understanding how farmers make decisions about their farms, households, and ecosystems during periods of economic uncertainty (Cancian 1979). Agricultural patterns must be understood as a complex interaction of internal household dynamics and structural forces external to the household and farm (Whatmore et al 1987). Salamon (1987) used the household as the unit of analysis in order to expose how values related to family ethnic background pattern farm management style and attitudes toward risk in the Illinois corn belt. She found that farms that were run conservatively, relying on less

mechanization and debt outcompeted riskier, entrepreneurial farms during the American family farm crisis of the 1980s. Similar patterns have been documented in Georgia (Barlett 1993), Wisconsin (Mooney 1988), and Canada (Taylor et al 1998). The farming systems I examine bear broad resemblance to Salamon's conservative and entrepreneurial ideal types. However, I go beyond ideal types in order to explore the symbolic dimensions of rurality and emerging patterns of neo-rurality.

Class backgrounds and identities have also been acknowledged as a salient avenue of variation in family farming households, especially between organic and conventional farms (Hetherington 2005; Mooney 1988). This project examines the fine-grained mechanisms of class distinction that may be at work in styles of interacting with farming and tourism in order to question how they may be reflective of shared dispositions, tastes, lifestyles, and aspirations which may be class-specific (Bourdieu 1977, 1984). This project describes emerging class rifts between these styles of rurality, how they go about constructing community (Cohen 1985), and how they are disproportionately shaped by the constraints and inducements being proffered by policy, global markets, and rural trends such as tourism and environmental conservation. Exploring such avenues is critical for assessing who is forming and being included in this emerging vision, both in policy and in practice, of neo-rurality and sustainable agriculture.

I also draw from critical rural theory (Thomas et al 2011) in shunning pure economic determinism and problematizing emerging rural identities. In this vein, I draw from Bourdieu's (1984, 1986) forms of capital, including financial/economic, symbolic, cultural, and social in order to understand rural privilege and prestige. I also remain attuned to hegemonic, "urbanormative" expectations of rural areas that contribute to reshaping rural areas for urban-based desires (Thomas et al 2011: 6).

Richard Wilk (1996) offers a framework for inductively accessing the symbolic meanings behind economic decisions. He imagines a chart with the axes of time and social scale constituting a field within which actors make decisions. Close to the minimum on both axes would be an actor making a decision based on his or her own interests with immediate rationales and effects in mind, while the inverse would be an individual factoring in repercussions of decision-making for wider social groups and ecosystems based on a time scale projected far into the future. Such an approach begins with emic individual appraisals of economic decisions and works toward avoiding the quagmire of assumptions associated with entrenched social scientific paradigms of economic actors as either rational and self-interested, social and group-oriented, or moral and symbolically motivated. In Wilk's framework, motives become "continuous variables" which may be "mixed and ambiguous or multiple," a qualification that aligns well with my problematization of ideal farm types (Wilk 1996: 150).

CHAPTER 2 | RURAL CHANGE AND ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH IN AMIATA

RESEARCH SITE AND HISTORY

Italy's Peasant Past

For centuries, agriculture in Central Italy was organized by the *mezzadria* sharecropping system and it “forged both land and society” as “the cornerstone of Tuscany’s rural economy and landscape” (Gaggio 2017: 6, 32; Agnoletti 2013; Morelli 2007). The *mezzadria* was “a contractual relationship between a cultivator and a landowner, or other holder of rights over land, based on the principle of dividing both expenses and products half-and-half” (Silverman 1975: 45). The contract rested on the landlord providing the capital for agriculture and a farmhouse (*casa colonica*), while the sharecropper and his family would provide the labor. Sharecroppers were responsible for half of any ongoing expenses of production, and entitled to half of the agricultural revenue. Landlords usually lived in nearby towns, while the wealthier owners would also spend time at rural estates. They usually hired middlemen (*fattori*) to supervise agricultural production and the work of the sharecroppers (Gaggio 2017). The *mezzadria* actually originated in Amiata and became the dominant land tenure system throughout Central and most of northern Italy, remaining largely unchanged for many centuries (Pratt 1980; 1994; Sabatucci-Severini 1990). It has profoundly shaped the Central Italian rural landscape, settlement patterns, household organization, and values.

Anthropologist Sydel Silverman’s (1968) materialist analysis illuminates the impacts of the *mezzadria* system on economics and values while offering important correctives to Banfield’s controversial claim of the dominance of amoral familism (Banfield 1958). Banfield studied an agrotown in Southern Italy and suggested that the reason the town, and Southern

Italy more broadly, was poor and underdeveloped was because of an ethos called “amoral familism” (Banfield 1958). He primarily defined amoral familism as heavily prioritizing the interests of the nuclear family, which caused peasants to be incapable of cooperating, saving, making long-term plans, voting wisely, or ultimately improving their conditions. Silverman and other anthropologists identified faults in Banfield’s analysis, especially in the causal relationships he suggested.

Using a materialist perspective, Silverman saw values as a dependent variable, arguing that economic and social conditions create and maintain value systems such as the ethos of amoral familism. Silverman’s work was crucial in arguing against Banfield’s claim that amoral familism caused poverty in southern Italy. She used historical evidence to argue that the agricultural system, especially land tenure arrangements, played an important part in the South’s path to poverty. She constructed a detailed historical comparison between Central and Southern Italy, considering how for at least a century there have been marked differences between these regions in terms of land tenure, capital investment, and organization of labor. She tied these differences to divergent development paths, with Central Italian agriculture becoming more productive and modernized than that of the South.

Silverman describes the *mezzadria* sharecropping system as characteristic of Central Italy and her description is backed by others (Pratt 1980). With the *mezzadria*, the contract between the landowner and a tenant and his family lasted several generations, providing stability. The sharecropping family lived in a farmhouse on the land they worked and the farming unit was the *podere*, a plot of land with a farmhouse (Gaggio 2017). With sharecroppers resident on the farms, “scattered settlement in the countryside contrasted with the density of the hill towns, usually grown around castles built in the early Middle Ages” (Gaggio 2017: 33). In theory, the

sharecropping family kept half of the crops and half the profit from any cash sales, but living conditions were tough and injustices have been documented under the *mezzadria* and figure strongly in the memories of some of my older informants (Krause 2009). Women in sharecropping families usually kept all of the produce from the kitchen garden for household subsistence. The *mezzadria* involved very limited market contact for sharecropping families, little money, and primarily self-provisioning (Pratt 2014).

On the other hand, in the South there was a mix of land tenure types, including estates run by absentee landlords, peasant owners of land plots, and a population of landless workers. The South was primarily farmed by a *latifundia* estate system. A single individual might simultaneously own some plots, sharecrop other plots, and rent other plots, moving to work each plot in a rotation and sometimes traveling long distances. Renting and sharecropping contracts were unstable, lasting only a year with no guarantee of renewal. Farmers also did not live on the land, instead taking up residence in “agrotowns” and traveling to and from the land they worked, although exceptions to this have also been documented by Galt in Locorotondo (1991).

The *mezzadria* contract encouraged the landowner and the tenant to both invest in the land. In the South, since there was no guarantee a family would stay on the land over time, there was no incentive for investment. Instead, investments were made in agrotowns. Organization of labor and supervision were also different between Central and Southern Italy. In the Central area, the landowner generally lived on or near the estate, while in the South, landowners often lived in distant metropolitan centers such as Palermo, Naples, or Rome. Under the *mezzadria*, estates were run by agricultural supervisors (*fattore*) on behalf of the landowner (*padrone*) and the whole family of the sharecropping family head (*mezzadro*) worked on

the farm. In the South, rent collectors took the place of agricultural overseers and sharecroppers worked as individuals, rather than as family units (Silverman 1968).

Importantly, the *mezzadria* in Central Italy organized agricultural land into units of mixed agriculture (*agricoltura promiscua*) which utilized intercropping (Gaggio 2017; Pratt 2014; Silverman 1968). A farm's land included all different kinds of land (olive groves, vineyards, grains, orchards, meadows, pasture, woodland) located close together and forming a single mixed parcel. Rows of vines and olive trees would be divided by long plots of grains and fodder planted in rotation (Gaggio 2017). Such mixed cultivation optimized variation in soil and slope and made working the land easier, although family labor had to be strictly coordinated (Gaggio 2017; Pratt 2014). Family size came to be strictly balanced in relation to the size of the land in this labor-intensive farming style, resulting in paternalistic social relationships between the landlord and the peasants in addition to patriarchal authority within the sharecropping household (Gaggio 2017). On the other hand, in the South, the plots were spread out and irregularly sized, making them difficult to work systematically. In Central Italy, large landowners also commonly grouped their farms into large estates of farms (*tenute* or *fattorie*), enabling sharing of equipment and long tenancies under a unified estate. In the South, land tenancy and inheritance were unstable, as partible inheritance constantly subdivided or reunited land holdings.

Silverman (1968) systematically drew out the consequences of these different land tenure systems. Central Italy was characterized by dispersed rural settlements, large extended families, community work exchange relationships (*aiutarella*), a stable political and class system, and a vibrant community life with many social organizations. On the other hand, in the South, rural areas were largely empty as most people lived in large agrotowns. Small nuclear families,

political relations dependent on patronage, and a weak civic community followed, distinguishing the social and political organization of the South from the Central areas.

Land Reform and Rural Exodus

Italian law formally ended the *mezzadria* only in 1982, although new sharecropping contracts were banned from being signed by the 1960s (Black 2012: 146; Pratt 1980). Large-scale land reform took place in the Maremma and Amiata in the 1950s under the authority of the *Ente Maremma*, the provincial land reform agency (Pratt 1986; 1994). Estates that previously covered a quarter of the province of Grosseto's land area were divided and agricultural cooperatives were formed (Pratt 1986: 33). Despite land reform and increasing agricultural production, widespread rural outmigration still ensued (Gaggio 2017; Pratt 1986). Throughout Tuscany, rural exodus to factory jobs in cities was extensive from the 1950s through the 1970s (Agnoletti 2013; Black 2012; Sereni 2012). Social scientists and administrators documented the rapidly shifting settlement pattern from dispersed rural settlements to concentration in towns and cities. For example, in the Tuscan area of Chianti, two-thirds of residents lived in dispersed rural settlements before the war, while this figure fell to one-third by 1961 (Gaggio 2017: 135).

Between the early 1950s and the early 1970s, the agricultural sector in Tuscany lost two-thirds of its workforce and the rural exodus was led by young people. While 22 percent of the agricultural workforce was under thirty years old in 1951, this figure was only 9 percent by 1971 (Gaggio 2017: 110). Measures aimed at stemming the rural exodus, such as the construction of a major highway between Florence and Siena, actually ended up making it easier for rural residents to commute to jobs in towns and cities (Gaggio 2017: 120). This time period also saw

rapid mechanization of agriculture in Tuscany, with agricultural machines increasing ninefold in units and eleven-fold in horsepower. In line with this, from 1951-1966 electricity utilized in agriculture quadrupled, along with the use of nitrogen-based fertilizers doubling and diesel fuel consumption multiplying by seven times (Gaggio 2017: 110). Tuscan cities grew rapidly during the 1950s and 1960s, and Grosseto was the second fastest growing city in Tuscany (Gaggio 2017: 141). Women especially desired to leave rural areas, creating challenges in marriage markets for farmers' sons (Pratt 1986).

In the wake of land reform, in many pockets of Tuscany there was a "polarization between very small and large properties" (Gaggio 2017: 114). Small-scale farms were increasingly run by their owners, with or without family labor, while large estates were cultivated through wage labor (Gaggio 2017; Pratt 1993). Vine monocropping became the dominant trend throughout Tuscany beginning in the 1960s, especially in areas like Chianti. The winter freeze of 1956 also saw the decline of the number of olive trees in many areas of Tuscany (Gaggio 2017).

While wine production dominated the area of Chianti in the 1970s, the area between Grosseto and Siena attempted other strategies. Thousands of Sardinian shepherds relocated to the region and moved into the farmhouses that had been abandoned by sharecroppers to raise sheep primarily for milk. Historian Dario Gaggio summarized, "Without abundant access to water and locally grown fodder, Tuscan bovines did not have much of a chance in an increasingly competitive European meat market. Sheep, by contrast, thrived, although not everyone welcomed them, their keepers, and the way of life they demanded" (Gaggio 2017: 151). He describes how "visions of a bovine-rich future" that required large-scale capital and

infrastructural investments for irrigation and slaughterhouses “never quite materialized” in the area. Instead, the investments became “haunting rural ruins” (Gaggio 2017: 151, 18).

Lifestyles of ex-sharecroppers were also changing rapidly after land reform. In her ethnography *Around the Tuscan Table: Food, Family, and Gender in Twentieth-Century Florence* (2004), Carole Counihan describes how Tuscan lifestyles during the 1980s were “changing toward modernity, marked by entrepreneurial capitalism, industrialism, urbanization, and the demise of the peasant mode of production” (Counihan 2004: 55). The production of food was largely replaced by the production of goods and services associated with an industrialized economy, the male-headed household was no longer the unit of production but remained the unit of consumption, and conspicuous consumption increased alongside the standardization and industrialization of food (Counihan 2004).

The present landscape of Tuscany has been deeply shaped by the *mezzadria* system (Bevilacqua 1989). As Pratt summarizes, “The *mezzadria* created a landscape that is especially attractive to a recent generation of visitors and settlers: a sharp division between town and country, a rural population resident in imposing stone farmhouses, a mixed and intensive pattern of land-use” (Pratt 1994: 1).

Tuscan cuisine has also been historically shaped by the *mezzadria* system. During the 20th century, Italian eating patterns, social relations, and cultural meaning systems surrounding food and family have changed significantly with the transitions of the world wars, fascism, industrialization, and the globalized agro-food system (Bairati et al 1988; Counihan 2004). While Italian identity has historically been strongly linked to regional food traditions, the globalization of the 1980s has altered the quality of the Italian diet, eating habits, notions of commensality, and the meanings associated with consumption (Counihan 2004). In the Italian

case, these shifts are especially marked by a historic transition from scarcity during the years of Fascism to plenty, a situation which Carole Counihan summarizes as moving from the encompassing statement of “*poco ma buono*” (“only a little, but let it be good”) to “*molto, ma buono?*” (“a lot, but is it good?”) (2004: 177).

Migration and Rural Demography in Italy

Italy has been profoundly shaped by patterns of emigration and immigration, along with population flows between rural and urban areas. Several early anthropological community studies describe local manifestations of a Europe-wide rural exodus following the Industrial Revolution, which spurred migration to urban centers of industry throughout Europe and the United States (Kenny and Kertzer 1983). Emigration from southern European countries to northern European industrial labor markets beginning in the 19th century was met with frictions, as these migrations were associated with working class southern Europeans who were culturally stigmatized, often in racial terms. This fueled the construction of European “cores” and “peripheries” economically, politically, and socially, as Mediterranean countries became sending countries for migrant workers. Such constructions of core and periphery have also figured prominently during the recent European sovereign debt crisis, which has also spurred movements of peoples and drawn attention to unequal power relations between Northern and Southern European member states (Kozaitis 2015). The future of the supranational European Union’s governance and monetary unity of the Eurozone has arguably hinged on the commitment of key countries such as Germany and the willingness of Greece to adopt severe austerity measures.

Within Italy, regional disparities are also marked. Sharp distinctions have been historically drawn between the industrial, “developed,” “modern,” wealthy North and the agricultural, “underdeveloped,” “traditional,” economically disadvantaged South (Bagnasco 1984; Ginsborg 2003; King 1987), a contrast also present in certain social science and political discourses (Banfield 1958, Putnam 1993). These differences are articulated in terms of cultural stereotypes and even racialized discourses, a phenomenon powerful enough for anthropologist Jane Schneider to refer to it as “a neo-Orientalist discourse” (1998). Since the 1990s, such stereotypical images have been backed by an established political party, the *Lega Nord* (Northern League), which reflects the rise of the political Far Right and Islamophobia throughout Western Europe (Bunzl 2007; Swank and Betz 2003). In the discourse of the *Lega Nord*, anti-southern and anti-immigrant sentiments are politically fused in a fierce regionalism that has even called for northern Italy to secede from the rest of the country (Bull 1996; De Matteo 2007). Such frictions have grown more acute with the migrant and refugee crisis associated with the war in Syria.

While Italy experienced emigration since the late 19th century, this trend was reversed in the 1970s, as the country became an entry point or destination of migrants from Africa, Eastern Europe, Asia, and South America (Douglass 1984; Cole and Booth 1997). Italy’s economy came to depend on the cheap, unregulated labor provided by immigrants (Trundle 2014). This dependence is especially great in the realm of domestic service -- considering the country’s aging population and increased employment of women outside the home -- and in agriculture, as Italians have generally sought to distance themselves from farming (Cole and Booth 1997; Zontini 2010).

Italy has undergone rapid demographic change not only due to patterns of immigration, but also due to declining fertility and aging. In a process anthropologist Elizabeth Krause refers to as “the quiet revolution,” fertility declined rapidly throughout 19th century Europe and the decline accelerated from the 1970s onward (Krause 2001). In the 1990s, Italy attained the lowest national fertility level ever documented in the world, with an average 1.2 children per woman (Krause 2001: 576). Such processes are intimately tied to wider shifts in political economy and social life (Krause 2009). In rural Tuscany, the demise of the patriarchal sharecropping family in the mid-20th century was linked to falling fertility rates as couples had fewer children and children sought to leave rural areas (Krause 2001). In the area of Prato near Florence, Krause (2001, 2009) also documented declining fertility as being linked to the shift from a sharecropping agricultural economy combined with masonry, straw-hat weaving, and state-subsidized wet-nursing to a post-war industrial economy based around textiles.

Tourism also figures strongly in Italy’s economy and social life in urban and rural areas. Anthropologist Catherine Trundle summarizes, “as a country with a global reputation for the good life – sunshine, beautiful countryside, delicious cuisine, luxury goods, alluring historical and artistic artefacts – Italy has long attracted affluent migrant groups from a range of countries” (2014: 8). A significant number of tourists from Northern Europe and Britain have become second home owners in Italy, and especially in Tuscany, for residence or vacationing (King et al 2000). In Tuscany, this phenomenon tends to be strongly informed by an image of the region as a much-imagined and romanticized place since the 17th century birth of the European Grand Tour. Since then, the culture, food, and landscape of Tuscany “match idealized middle-class myths of a lost rurality in northern Europe” (King et al 2000: 33). Tuscany became the residence of British writers in the 19th century, including Shelley, Byron, and the Brownings,

who “contributed to the construction of Tuscany amongst the English upper and middle classes as a particularly divine and harmonious environment in which to be a visitor or a resident” (King et al. 2010: 50; Trundle 2014). Images of Tuscany constructed by Anglo-American writers and filmmakers continue to be especially rose-tinted and often rely on essentialized cultural stereotypes and longings to experience cultural authenticity through experiences with people, place, or food (Agnoletti 2013; Lemmi and Tangheroni 2015; Ross 2010; Sims 2009). As Gmelch and Gmelch (2011) document in the Napa Valley wine region, “more tourists today seek direct sensory experiences over passive forms of sight-seeing and entertainment,” which often involves culinary experiences (44).

Since the 1970s, rural tourism has expanded rapidly in Tuscany (Randelli et al 2007). The ability of foreigners to obtain farmhouses (*case coloniche*) in Tuscany was directly related to the collapse of the *mezzadria* sharecropping system after agrarian reform in the 1950s, as farm houses and land were abandoned and put on the market (Pratt 1994; Trundle 2014). While 42 percent of Italians were employed in agriculture in 1950, only 5 percent were by 2000 (Pratt 2014). Property purchases at low prices by Germans and British exploded in the 1960s. The wine region of Chianti attracted investments from some of Europe’s most powerful people in politics, industry, and finance (Trundle 2014). Prices for buying or renting apartments and houses in Tuscany have increased sharply since the 1970s (King et al. 2010).

Presently, in many rural areas of Europe, as locals relocate to cities or approach old age, rural spaces are coming to be repopulated by a variety of in-migrant social actors. Among them, in his field site in northern Spain, anthropologist Jeremy MacClancy finds “organic communards, Indophilic mystics, and addicts digging their way out of their habit” (MacClancy 2015: 1). The recent sovereign debt crisis has also promoted a trend of counterurbanization as educated

young people have few economic possibilities in cities and return to the land, a phenomenon that has been most strongly documented in Greece (Donadio 2012; Gkartzios 2013; Kasimis and Papadopoulos 2010; Van der Ploeg 2016).

FIELDWORK AND THE WORKING FIELDS IN AMIATA



Image 1: Monte Amiata with geothermal power plant in foreground.

Italy is made up of twenty regions, and Tuscany has a reputation for its landscapes of agricultural production and its food culture (Capatti and Montanari 1999). Tuscany's terrain is roughly 66% hilly, 25% mountainous, and 9% plains with a long coast (Agnoletti 2013: 320). The Maremma area of Southern Tuscany encompasses roughly five thousand square kilometers of coastal plain in the administrative province of Grosseto and Monte Amiata is considered to be part of the "*alta Maremma*" (upper Maremma) area. Grosseto is the largest of Tuscany's ten

provinces and it has been and remains the least populated (Pratt 1986: 29). Low population density was due in large part to the presence of malaria in the Maremma coastal plain until the 1930s. He attributes the lack of knowledge of the province in part to the fact that for much of its history, sealed carriage as a protection against malaria would have been the only mode of transport through the province (Pratt 1986).

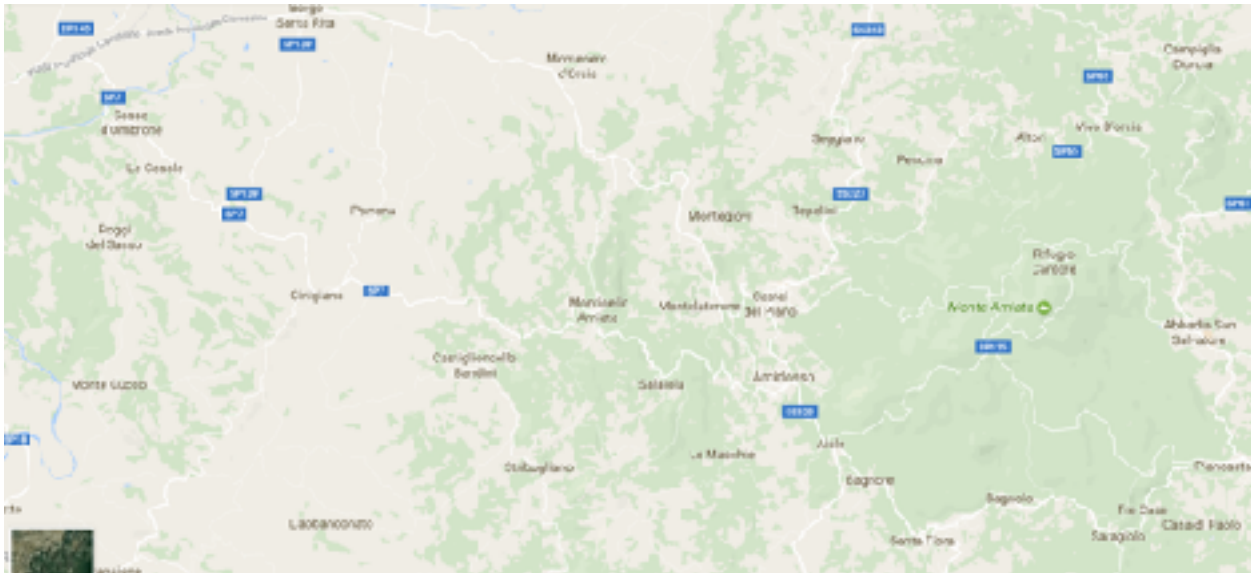


Image 2: Map of Monte Amiata area. Source: Google Maps.

The particular region of Amiata South of the River Orcia was selected for this research for several reasons. First, Grosseto has the second greatest number of farms and the greatest overall acreage of farmland of Tuscany's provinces (Sonnino 2004). Further, unlike other parts of Central Italy, there is existing ethnographic work by Pratt (1986; 1994) which provides a historical account of farming patterns and agricultural change in the region and a solid ethnographic record during the 1970s and 1980s. The area also underwent land reform during the 1950s, which contributed to the formation of small farming units. Despite the historical

trajectory of dispossession of small farms in Amiata, agritourism farms and pluriactive farms have been re-emerging.

Monte (mount) Amiata is a dormant volcano of around 5,700 feet (Pratt 1986) situated in a mountainous and hilly area of southern Tuscany that connects the Maremma coastal plain with the province of Siena and the Val d'Orcia. The area has been inhabited since the Neolithic period and is "justly famous for the beauty of its humanized landscape and the artistic creations of those who have lived there since the civilization of the Etruscans" (Pratt 1986: 20; Fazzi 2014). Amiata is a geo-spatial descriptor revolving around the ecological area of the mountain, rather than a political entity and it spans several municipalities and two Tuscan provinces.

Driving on the main road from the coastal city and provincial capital of Grosseto inland toward Amiata, the mountain dominates the landscape. Several lifestyle migrants who relocated to the area described one particular vista of the mountain from this road as signaling their return "home," as they wound their way back to Amiata from Grosseto's train station that connects with the airports of Pisa and Rome. As one author describes, "The visitor, who from the Maremma grossetana heads to Amiata, sees on the horizon a massive mountain, that at every turn disappears and then immediately reappears, which for a long time falls, not well identified, almost unattainable" [my translation] (Fazzi 2014: 9). The profile of the mountain has been likened to "a giant camel crouching on the ground" [my translation] (Fazzi 2014: 9).

Amiata is known for its plant and animal biodiversity, exhibiting the plant genetic diversity of an ecological "island" (Selvi 1997). The mountain is covered almost entirely in deciduous forests, with bands of vegetation corresponding to altitude. At the area around the foot of the mountain are gardens, vineyards, olive trees and some plots of grain. The middle of

the mountain is dominated by thick chestnut forests, giving way to beech trees that extend up to the summit. In the winter, the mountain draws throngs of skiers.

The mountain is split between two provinces -- Siena to the east and Grosseto to the west. Mining was economically important on the eastern side of the mountain, as significant mercury deposits were exploited from the late 19th century until the mines were nationalized and closed in the 1970s (Pratt 1986). The collapse of the mining industry led to substantial unemployment and an influx of workers into the forestry service, making the Comunita Montana the largest employer on the mountain (Pratt 1986: 41). On the other hand, the western side of the mountain in the province of Grosseto, the focus of this study, consisted of agricultural villages. The towns on this side of the mountain all generally have historic city centers, a church, town squares with bars and restaurants, small shops, and sometimes grocery stores.

Monte Amiata, along with other mountainous areas of Central Italy, has been characterized by peasant or smallholder agriculture, or "a category of agriculturalists who are neither capitalist farmers nor full-time wage laborers" (Pratt 1986: 58; Netting 1993). Such areas have seen high degrees of out-migration and rural depopulation, sharing similarities with mountainous agricultural zones in the Northern Alps and the South (Pratt 1986). Pratt describes three distinct ecological zones in Amiata, corresponding to historical subsistence patterns. Mountain zones are found above 2,000 feet on the slopes and have limited land that is suitable for farming. While some land was cleared for potato and rye cultivation in the past, by the 1980s, Pratt reported usage mostly by Sardinian shepherds. The zone of primary interest for this study is the intermediary zone of hills and valleys found between 1,200 feet and 2,000 feet, which is the upper limit for vines and olives. With intensively cultivated small plots, this has

been “the area of the small peasant proprietor” historically (Pratt 1986: 38). Residents in these zones primarily live in villages such as Seggiano, Montegiovi, Montelaterone, and Monticello, which have similar social characteristics even though they are located in different municipalities. Lastly, the Maremma plain extends westward to the coast, where grain farming has been predominant.

Data on the agricultural systems in this area most importantly come from the anthropological fieldwork of Pratt (1994, others) and Italian historical works (Fazzi 2014; Giannelli 2011, 2014; Nardini 2011; Piazza 1991; Clemente and De Simonis 2011). The river Orcia forms part of the border between the two provinces of Siena on the northern side and Grosseto on the southern side. Anthropologist Jeff Pratt (1994) has highlighted how the provinces of Siena and Grosseto have taken markedly different trajectories in terms of land use, labor organization, and agricultural production since land reform in the 1950s. The differences stem from divergent enactment of land reform on each side of the river. Land reform was enacted aggressively on the southern Grosseto side, as estates were broken up into small farm units. The farm units were generally too small to benefit from mechanization and most farms moved away from diversified production to specialize in cereals production for a volatile international market, reducing the need for labor and contributing to the vulnerability of the local economy (Pratt 1994: 21). Off-farm employment, rural exodus, and skilled wage labor became trends in the area following the 1980s plummet in grain prices (Pratt 1994: 21).

On the other hand, on the northern Montalcino side of the river, land reform was not enacted and the estates either disappeared or continued to be worked with wage labor. The trend of rural exodus was strong in the area, and Pratt (1994: 21) documents that the population in the township of Montalcino fell by half between 1950 and 1980. In fact, the

Montalcino wine boom in high quality Brunello production for an international market was the result of the “investment, wine-making expertise, and some very skilled marketing operations” of a few landowning families in the area (Pratt 1994: 21). The Montalcino region shares a similar history with the famous Chianti wine region in terms of having intense capital investment in large abandoned estates that had not been divided by land reform. In both regions, investment and specialization in high quality wine production on estates relying on wage labor developed. In the early 1990s, Pratt (1994) laid out the situation as follows:

The ownership of the new vineyards reveals a complex situation, but three quarters of them are now in the hands of North Italian and non-Italian companies. Since 1965 there has been a fifteen-fold increase in specialized vineyards and Brunello production. The largest estate covers 3,000 hectares and is owned by an American company, Villa Banfi, which has spent more than 100 million dollars in the last ten years developing the largest single investment programme for the production of quality wines, in Europe if not the world. Montalcino has now become a land of unusually profitable agriculture, based almost entirely on wage-labour (21-22).

On the southern Amiata side of the river, farmers were left to navigate the consequences of land reform and widespread rural emigration (Pratt 1994; 2014a). Production was mechanized for international markets, and even as cooperatives pooled machinery, farmers felt the price squeeze. They also felt a growing dependence on a cash income with the modernization of houses and consumption patterns, which was also echoed by my informants of this generation. While farmers in Amiata began buying tractors in 1960s in the name of

independence, the farms were generally too small to make it a worthwhile investment (Pratt 1994: 75). Eventually, the options for farmers became joining the rural exodus, working for large wine estates in the area for a wage, or taking on other farm diversification strategies (Pratt 2014a). Bureaucratization was also becoming an additional challenge, a sentiment echoed by many of my informants. For example, in 1987 one of Pratt's informants complained, "People used to come round these farms and buy pigs and eggs but they do not come any more. And now you need a certificate to sell eggs. Now we just throw the eggs to the dogs. It is a disaster" (Pratt 2014a: 76).

The proportion of Italians working in agriculture dropped from 42% in 1950 to 5% in 2000 (Pratt 2014a: 47). In Tuscany, the most recent trend is even more marked. Between 2000 and 2010 the number of farms in operation has decreased by 40% and the amount of land devoted to agriculture has decreased by 12%. In the provinces of Grosseto and Siena, the number of farms in the same time period have decreased by 27% and 35% respectively (Pratt 2014a: 47). Overall, there has been decreasing household production with modernization, urbanization, changing consumption patterns, and the rise of supermarkets (Collier 1986; Counihan 2004, Rogers 1987). Local sales of agricultural products have also decreased with increasing government regulation and bureaucratization in the period following land reform, although there are signs of this changing more recently. Since the 19th century, it is estimated that monocultures and forest expansion in Tuscany have resulted in a 45% reduction in biodiversity (Agnoletti 2013: 321).

In Amiata, there has been a sharp decline in livestock production. The market was once entirely local with a few buyers in the district. One of my informants frequently mentioned how pervasive livestock rearing was in the region, since his father was a buyer and he often

accompanied him to farms. However, the meat supply chain has been mostly reorganized to wholesale, relying on the lower prices of faraway suppliers (Pratt 2014a: 76). The main local Tuscan cattle breed, the *Chianina*, is not amenable to the quick fattening required of industrial livestock production. So the stalls have been mostly filled with breeds imported from France or Poland that will fatten quicker. Of course, these breeds also are fed with industrial feed, which constitutes an additional cost for farmers. Pratt referenced a case that tried to follow this pattern and went bankrupt. He writes, “they went bankrupt in five years, though by that point they were largely detached from a local farming economy: they were making money only for French cattle breeders, American soya growers and the banks” (Pratt 2014a: 77).

There was an overall loss of vineyards in Amiata in the 1980s as farmers focused on commercial wheat. But in the 1990s, curiosity to attempt to earn wine prices like nearby Montalcino grew. The DOC (protected geographic origin) system created in 1998 supported this trend of value-added wine production. Recently, Pratt has suggested that some wine producers have been successful but most have failed (2014a: 77). One of my informants also told me that many people had invested a lot in vineyards and failed. With low-cost wine being sold at supermarkets, there has also been decreasing purchase of household table wines from local producers. Olive oil has followed a similar trajectory as wine, but the situation has not been quite as dire since there is a price premium for high quality Tuscan oil. But again, supermarkets increasingly source oil from Spain for half the price of local oil, and household oil is less commonly purchased from local producers (Pratt 2014a).

As I have described, durum wheat production in Amiata has been very vulnerable, as Pratt summarized: “Even fluctuations in the exchange rate of the Canadian dollar have a direct impact on Tuscan livelihoods” (Pratt 2014a: 77). Large investments were made by cooperatives

for modern technology investments, such as self-leveling combine harvesters and computer-controlled grain silos. While there was a boom in the early 1980s, volatile global markets and increasing input costs have made grain monocropping a difficult endeavor. Pratt summarizes, “now they wonder whether the price squeeze will ever relax its grip, and if there is any future for this kind of arable farming in the district” (Pratt 2014a: 78).

The province of Grosseto is viewed as “underdeveloped” regionally and nationally, and the agricultural and food industries have been highlighted as important to the regional economy and sources of development potential (Belletti and Neri 2010; Pacciani and Toccaceli 2010). From a development perspective, farms in the province are acknowledged to be significant in number and entrepreneurial and innovative, with a significant number of younger farm operators (Pacciani and Toccaceli 2010). During the mid-nineties, rurality was adopted as a regional development “paradigm” in the province, rather than being a marketer of “backwardness and marginalization” (Pacciani and Toccaceli 2010: 14).

Overall, the general picture of farming in Amiata has been characterized by the transition from an integrated farming system and a local food system fifty years ago to presently highly specialized farms that depend on industrial inputs (Pratt 2014a: 78). Pratt summarizes, “Each sector is integrated into widening international markets, and has to be able to compete with prices set by those with the best natural conditions, most efficient technology or cheapest labour” (Pratt 2014a: 78). This represents constricting strategies for small farmers and a general loss of autonomy (Pratt 2014a). There has been a steady exodus from the land since the 1950s in this region and throughout Italy (Black 2012: 147). A rise in immigrant labor in the Montalcino estates has also taken place, which also affects work possibilities for locals. Pratt writes, “...it is not just goods which travel and transform this rural society – there is an

international labour market too” (Pratt 2014a: 78). I also discuss the presence of migrant farm workers even on small farms in Amiata.

Current Small Farm Trajectories in Amiata

As anthropologist Tracey Heatherington has summarized of the wider situation in Europe, “Ideas of integrated rural development have replaced earlier visions of agricultural modernisation that dominated the early through mid-twentieth century. Efforts to manage and transform rural European landscapes now turn to heritage branding of specialty foods and authentic crafts, together with agrotourism, ecotourism and biodiversity conservation. Cultural landscapes and agricultural practices across Europe are now enfolded by a dominant vision of ‘sustainable development’ (Heatherington 2011: 3). Amiata also reflects this reality. Based on the history of agricultural transformations outlined above, there are five key options that small farmers in Amiata utilize most frequently. First, many small farmers have opted to specialize in wine or olive oil production for international niche markets. Agritourism is another common strategy. Further, a significant number of small farmers have decided to become certified organic. To a far lesser extent, small farmers sometimes decide to specialize in heritage breeds of livestock and crops. Each strategy is described in turn below.

Niche Production of Wine and Olive Oil

As throughout Tuscany, wine specialization has become a dominant trend since the late 1990s in Amiata. Of Tuscany’s provinces, Grosseto has experienced the greatest percentage increase in land area devoted to wine production between 2000 and 2006 (Marescotti and Nunziatini 2010: 296). Wine production has become one of the strongest and most “dynamic”

sectors of the province's agricultural production (Marescotti and Nunziatini 2010: 308). The majority of *agriturismi* in Amiata are vineyards, often with *denominazione di origine controllata* (DOC) status that is intended to add value on the European and international markets. The *Sangiovese* grape is dominant in Amiata and throughout Tuscany, but other varieties are also cultivated for blending. While much of Tuscany specializes in red wine production, the province of Grosseto produces around 50% white wine varieties, the best known being *Vermentino* (Marescotti and Nunziatini 2010: 301). Between 2006 and 2007 in the province of Grosseto, the number of grapes collected increased by 4.17% and the amount of wine produced increased by 11% (Belletti and Neri 2010: 203).

There are several territorial certifications for wine production in the province of Grosseto. In Amiata, the DOC Montecucco was established in 1998 and by 2007, it constituted 22.6% of the total DOC certified wine produced in the province of Grosseto (Marescotti and Nunziatini 2010: 303). In descending order of strictness, wine production is territorially certified by DOCG (*denominazione di origine controllata e garantita*), DOC (*denominazione di origine controllata*), and IGT (*indicazione geografica tipica*) (Belletti and Neri 2010). DOCG is the most stringent certification, requiring tasting by a committee to guarantee the origins and quality of the wine, while the geographic zone of the wine is small. IGT certification was created for producers who could not meet the requirements for DOC certification, covering a larger geographic area and having less restrictive conditions of production. As of 2010, nearly 95% of wine produced commercially in the province of Grosseto was certified to guarantee its provenance and quality by one of the eight DOC labels, the two IGT labels, or the single DOCG label (Belletti and Neri 2010: 203; Marescotti and Nunziatini 2010: 292).

Olive oil production is also important in the province of Grosseto, both economically and

environmentally (Belletti 2010). Grosseto is the second largest producer of olive oil in Tuscany (Belletti 2010: 312). Similar to wine, olive oil production is territorially certified through *denominazione di origine protetta* (DOP) and *indicazione geografica protetta* (IGP) status. The *olivastra seggianese* cultivar of olive tree is autochthonous to Amiata, highly valued for its antioxidant properties and vibrant flavor (Flamini et al 2003). It is territorially certified and protected by the DOP Seggiano, which dictates, along with other specifications on acidity and processing, that the oil can only be produced in Amiata and must contain at least 85% of the *olivastra seggianese* variety (Belletti 2010: 326). In 2007, of the total volume of IGP Toscana olive oil sold outside of Italy, 72% was sold outside of the EU (Belletti 2010: 325). Territorial certifications such as DOP and IGP are especially important in the face of emerging competition on the international olive oil market from Spain, Greece, and North African countries (Belletti 2010: 312).

Olive oil production showed a negative trend from 2005 to 2007, with production decreasing by around 33%, due primarily to remarkably unfavorable weather and pest conditions for the 2007 harvest (Belletti 2010: 315). However, a substantial recovery of the sector was reported by 2008 (Belletti and Neri 2010: 203). Olive oil must be processed at an olive pressing facility (*frantoio*) and some farms have their own processing and bottling facilities, while others take their olives to a facility for processing and bottling.

Efforts to promote Amiata's wines, olive oils, and other typical products have taken place most notably through two avenues. First, producer's consortiums such as the *Consorzio di Tutela DOC Montecucco* were designed to regulate the branding and production methods of DOC Montecucco wines while promoting commercialization. Second, the *strada del vino Montecucco e dei Sapori d'Amiata* (the Montecucco wine and tastes of Amiata route) links

producers with tourist routes through signage, promotion, and publicity . Similar taste routes exist throughout Italy (Grumo 2012; Mezzato 2015; Piermattei 2007) and the province of Grosseto has three wine and taste routes, including Amiata's (Marescotti and Nunziatini 2010: 293). In Tuscany especially, a close relationship has been documented between wine production and agritourism, with wine makers being among the earliest agritourism participants (Paolini 2000). Enotourism has been highlighted as a vehicle for rural development (Artista 2005).

Agritourism

Agritourism is a significant strategy for small farms in Amiata and the region of Tuscany has a reputation for its rural tourism (Adua 2007; Balestrieri 1997; Randelli et al 2011). The number of agritourism farms in the province of Grosseto increased from 141 in 1995 to 348 in 2000, and by 2007, there were 877 agritourism farms (Belletti et al 2010). In Italy as a whole, agritourism has been growing steadily including in recent years and despite the global economic crisis of 2008 (Idda et al 2001; Maggi 2016).

While many terms and characteristics have stood in for or described the phenomenon of agritourism in the literature (Phillips et al 2010), for the purposes of this research, the term "agritourism" (or *agriturismo*, plural *agriturismi*) is used consistently and can be defined as "rural enterprises which incorporate both a working farm environment and a commercial tourism component" (Fennell & Weaver 1997: 357 in Lyon 2013: 128). A "working farm" is broadly defined to mean a farm where agriculture is being practiced, including cultivating the soil to produce crops or rearing animals for sale or consumption (Phillips et al 2010). As part of agritourism, farms may offer meals, farm products for tasting or sale, activities such as

horseback riding or guided hiking, farm tours, or a venue for group retreats and workshops. Farms may also allow guests to participate in certain areas of agricultural work, such as the harvests.

Tourist desires for 'authentic' experiences through agritourism are most often met through the location of the farm, its culinary offerings, and organized activities such as farm and local tours (Agritourism National Observatory 2010). Farmers themselves and rural landscapes play a substantial role in meeting these demands (Cevasco 2005). It has been noted that this construction of authentic rurality is especially important in Tuscany and in areas that are far from cities of cultural interest and the sea, forming a significant part of tourist expectations for the region (Lo Surdo 1998).

As this research documents, *agriturismi* may be run by a range of owners and operators with varying degrees of farming background, education, economic resources, and diverse family and household configurations. The farms are characterized by a range of goals, management styles, and labor arrangements. Agritourism also includes a significant number of small farms combining part-time farming with other non-farming streams of income in Amiata. While many agritourism farms in Amiata are vineyards or olive oil producers, others produce chestnuts, honey, herbs, grains, and livestock. Some conduct little or no agricultural production for market sale.

Italian law defines *agriturismo* as "activities of hospitality performed by agricultural entrepreneurs and their family members that must remain connected and complementary to farming activities" (Legge Quadro Nazionale sull'Agriturismo 1985, art. 2 in Sonnino 2004: 286; Bartoli 2015). Regions and provinces have the power to pass legislation to regulate agritourism (Belletti et al 2010). Several of my informants told me that agritourism enterprises must earn

their primary income (greater than 50%) from farming activities and report this in their accounting books. One farmer, when I asked him about his farm's income from agritourism, responded "*diciamo 49 percento*" [let's say 49 percent], with the glint of a wink. In terms of agritourism regulations, a relaxing of policy restrictions has been noted (Ciervo 2013). For instance, "from 1990, it [agritourism] underwent a gradual and progressive separation from agriculture, becoming in many cases an alternative to it because of a sort of 'urbanization' process of services offered" (Ciervo 2013: 325).

Agritourism took root in Italy in 1965, when a group of young farmers associated with the Confagricoltura association founded Agriturist, the National Association for Agritourism, the Environment, and Territory. This organization was inspired by the French group, Agriculture and Tourism and wider curiosity in agritourism was said to be fostered by some Italians experiencing agritourism in other European countries, especially Austria and Switzerland (Germini 1990). A conference in 1968 in Florence set the foundations for the agritourism movement, which explored how to valorize regional gastronomic traditions and protect the agrarian landscape through agritourism (Lo Surdo 1988; Maggi 2016: 14). During the 1970s, two other national agritourism associations were founded, Terranostra associated with Coldiretti and Turismo Verde, which was initially known as Altruist and associated with the Confederation Italian Agricoltori. Agriturist, Terranostra, and Turismo Verde remain the key associations promoting agritourism in Italy, and since 1981 they have collaborated for lobbying and research under the umbrella of the group Anagritur.

Compared to Northern European countries, agritourism was founded and developed relatively late in Italy (Di Muzio et al 2000; Lo Surdo 1988). In the 1970s, Italian farmers experimented with supplementing income sources, including through agritourism, as the

agricultural workforce decreased. Beginning in 1973 in Trento and Alto Adige, the regions of Italy began making laws to regulate agritourism enterprises (Maggi 2016; Lo Surdo 1988). In many regions some of the earliest agritourism were wine makers (Paolini 2000), but in Sardinia as early as 1977 agritourism farms were meant to provide work for women in rural areas (Idda et al 2001).

Agritourism in Italy grew rapidly throughout Italy by 65% between 1997 and 2004 (Auda 2007). The number of agritourism farms has increased steadily throughout Italy from 2005 to 2015 (ISTAT 2016). Tuscany is the leading agritourism region nationally in terms of the number of farms (Auda 2007) and tourism in Tuscany continues to thrive. In 2015, record numbers of tourists visited Tuscany, estimated to include 44.8 million in officially reporting structures and another 43.5 million in unofficial tourist structures (IRPET 2016). Between 2014 and 2015, the number of agritourism farms in Tuscany increased by 5.1% (ISTAT 2016). Data for 2013 estimates that of the total number of structures for hosting tourists in Tuscany, nearly 33% are agritourisms, with 17.9 structures for every 100 square kilometers on average (Bartoli 2015: 151). In Tuscany in 2013, Italian guests stayed in agritourisms for on average 3.68 days in duration, while foreign guests stayed for 6.69 days on average (Bartoli 2015: 152).

In Amiata's province of Grosseto, agritourism accounts for a significant portion of that of the region of Tuscany and has steadily increased since the 1990s. Of Tuscany's ten provinces, Siena and Grosseto had the greatest increases in the number of agritourism farms between 2006 and 2007. At the end of 2007, Grosseto had 22% (877) of agritourism farms and 19.5% (9,500) of the number of beds in the region of Tuscany, representing 6.3% and 7.3% increases from the previous year respectively (Belletti et al 2010: 478). The number of agritourism farms has grown exponentially (621%) from 141 in 1995 to 877 in 2007 and the number of beds

during the same period increased by 793% in the province (Belletti et al 2010: 478). The province of Grosseto has seen a 4.6% increase in overall tourism in 2015 compared to the prior year (IRPET 2016).

Despite the low population density, remoteness, and economic disadvantage of Amiata, agritourism has become widespread. Compared to the rest of the province of Grosseto, Amiata has roughly three times as many tourists and four times as many overnight guests (Belletti et al 2010: 484). According to my informants, agritourism has undergone rapid growth over the past twenty years. As one notably summarized, “There were only three or four *agriturismi* initially [in the mid-1990s]. Now there are more than three hundred...Now there are more *agriturismi* than farms!”

Rural tourism in Amiata did not boom without the active support of the province of Grosseto in a “systematic political effort” (Sonnino 2004: 289). In the mid-1990s, coastal tourism in the province had resulted in significant ecological costs due to population pressure and over-fishing, causing dangerously high concentrations of phosphorous and ammonium, which led to algae overgrowth. Agritourism became a way for the province to shift tourism inland away from the coast. These political efforts seem to have been effective over the past twenty years, given the rapid expansion in numbers of inland *agriturismo* farms (Sonnino 2004).

Organic Farming

Many small farms in Amiata use organic production methods or are certified organic. Others describe their suspicion of formal organic certification as “a trap” even though they use agro-ecological production methods, an issue discussed in the ethnographic portraits. Italy is one of the largest organic (*biologico*) producers in Europe, but most organic products are

exported to other countries and organic is more or less a niche market in Italy (Black 2012; Berardini et al 2004; Miele 1998). In 2013, Italy's organic production amounted to 10.3% of its total agricultural area and included 45,969 producers (Swain 2016: 582). Organic farm tourism has been a subset of agritourism in Italy since the 1980s (Idda et al 2001; Lo Surdo 1988).

Heritage Breeds and Typical Products

Increasing numbers of initiatives in the province of Grosseto have been dedicated to valorizing regional and local food products (*prodotti tipici*) (Burgassi 2010) and such efforts are also present in Amiata. Similar initiatives are common throughout Tuscany and are supported by transnational interests such as the Slow Food Movement and the EU (Belletti et al 2006). These dynamics are described in anthropologist Michela Badii's ethnographic study of the politics and valorization of typical food products in the Valdarno region south of Florence (Badii 2012). In her ethnography, Badii (2012) demonstrates how patrimony surrounding food comes to define the parameters of belonging and identity, erecting boundaries of inclusion and exclusion for both food products and actors.

As previously discussed in relation to wine and olive oil production above, typical food products are protected by the territorial certifications of DOP (*denominazione di origine protetta*) and IGT (*indicazione geografica protetta*), which have been regulated by the EU and European Community since 1992 (Burgassi 2010). Of the 836 DOP or IGT certified products in the EU in 2008, 174 came from Italy, making it the country with the largest number of territorially certified food products (Burgassi 2010: 427).

Among other products, the province of Grosseto includes production of DOP certified *pecorino romano* (sheep cheese) and IGP certified salamis, *Chianina* beef, and olive oil (Burgassi

2010). Amiata is known for its biodiversity and a range of heritage breeds and crops are cultivated (Fratini et al 2014; Giorgetti 2011). Chestnut cultivation has been especially important in Amiata, serving as “the bread of the poor” [my translation] (Fazzi 2014: 84). Chestnuts in Amiata have been IGP certified since 2000 as La Castagna del Monte Amiata IGP and sell for high prices (Burgassi 2010). The IGP includes three local varieties of chestnut — “*bastarda rossa*”, “*cecio*”, and “*marrone*.” The “*marrone*” are worth the most and are used in the confectionary industry to make the famous *marron glacees* (Burgassi 2010: 438). Amiata’s chestnuts are also processed into flour in order to be sold year-round. Northern Italy is a primary market for Amiata’s chestnuts, where there is a high demand (Burgassi 2010).

In Amiata, some established farmers maintain some production of heritage breeds and crops and a few neo-rurals have decided to specialize in these breeds. The organization GenomAmiata attempts to protect the biodiversity of the area by encouraging farmers to propagate heritage breeds and crops. However, established farmers often complained about there not being an appropriate market for such products, especially meats.

The Slow Food organization is also involved in protecting heritage and local food products through its *condotte* in Italy and “*presidia*” globally. Slow Food’s presidiums aim to protect small producers that cultivate heritage breeds and crops or use artisanal methods of production. The Maremmana breed of cattle, once in serious danger of extinction, is one such breed that is protected by Slow Food’s initiatives and is raised in Amiata. Slow Food has also sponsored farmers markets selling local and heritage products throughout Italy (Badii 2012; Burgassi 2010).



Image 3: Tuscan *Chianina* cattle with Monte Amiata in background.



Image 4: Chestnut festival in a nearby hill town, October.

RESEARCH METHODS

Ethnographic Research on Farms and Agritourisms in Amiata

In this research, I largely follow an ethnographic approach that was embraced by Daniel Miller (2008) in presenting a series of richly described life portraits. He writes, “You can read this book as you might move through a gallery. You should pay attention to the details, but then consider each composition as a whole, and finally ponder how each contributes to the pattern represented by the book as a whole” (Miller 2008: 6). In a similar vein, I balance my attention between “thick” ethnographic description (Geertz 1973) and anthropological interpretation and analysis of patterns. I have changed all participants’ names to pseudonyms in order to protect their identities, and in some cases I have changed some minor details of people’s lives. In order to increase anonymity, I have also created a few composite characters.

This work is based on the data collected during twelve months of ethnographic research in Amiata during fall 2014 and fall 2015, along with a pilot study conducted in summer 2012. I used the classic anthropological methods of in-depth interviewing and participant observation, supplemented with a farm survey and life histories. My sample included men and women of all generations and the boundaries of my sampling were set to roughly coincide with a portion of previous ethnographic research by Pratt (1994) to include a heterogeneous population in the province of Grosseto. The area spread out roughly 25 kilometers (15 miles) in all directions from the town of Casteldelpiano.

I used a combination of snowball sampling and convenience sampling to locate participants, with the goal of representing a diverse range of farming strategies and farmer backgrounds (Bernard 2008). I sought balanced representation between rural in-migrants, established farmers, and established farmers with highly educated children involved in farming. In order to participate, farms had to cover less than 50 hectares (123 acres) which is the classification system historically used in this region to characterize 'small' farms (Sonnino 2004). I located farms through an informal survey of the area, farm promotional materials including websites, and word of mouth. Initial contact was made by a phone call, an informal farm visit, or an introduction through my contacts. I interviewed or worked on 27 farms and this sample expanded outward to include less formal interactions with other farmers and residents, as is typical in ethnographic research. I visited many more farms without interviewing extensively.

Participant observation is a classic anthropological method for exploring the shades of meaning of social practice and the difference between discourses and everyday practice. Participant observation in public and private spheres allowed me to access insider information on how farm households fulfill daily needs, conduct agricultural production, and interact with broader socio-political contexts. During my fieldwork, I lived with Elsa, a forty-year-old Spanish woman who served as a key informant and friend. She produced chestnuts and organic lavender on her land, in addition to keeping chickens and a small garden for herself and her guests. At times, I shared common spaces with either Elsa or her tourist guests, which gave me some access to the experiences and perspectives of tourists even though my primary focus was on producer livelihoods.

My participant observation working on farms served as my primary source of data collection. I also participated in the life of rural spaces through my encounters in grocery stores,

restaurants, bars/coffee shops, and festivals. I spent time in households, on farms, and in public community spaces. Throughout my fieldwork, I worked on farms while talking with informants. I spent the most time – several months – on Beppe Gaspari’s mixed farm, an experience I describe in Chapter 3. On other farms, I participated in the grape and olive harvests, which allowed me to access rituals surrounding work and celebration of abundance during these times. This provided a glimpse into how farms mobilize short-term labor through social networks, since the grape and olive harvests traditionally involved wide reciprocal labor exchange through extended networks, culminating in community harvest celebrations.

As time and opportunity permitted, I attended meetings of associations of growers and local rural planning units in order to gauge how farming systems and rural development converge in policy and discourse. These events included the conference on typical regional foods called “*Amiata Sul Piatto*,” and a session run by GenomAmiata (the association for the protection of biodiversity in Amiata) on efforts to promote cultivation of indigenous crops and livestock breeds. I attended protests, film screenings, and a panel discussion on the controversy surrounding geothermal energy plants in Amiata. I also interviewed the owner and an employee of a migrant farm worker service and spoke informally with veterinarians and workers at the local slaughterhouse and representatives of the agricultural union.

I conducted open-ended and semi-structured interviews with farmers, and sometimes their family members, in order to explore attitudes toward various aspects of agricultural production and household organization. These interviews took place with multiple generations involved to varying degrees in agricultural activities. In order to understand the origins and context of values and agricultural decisions, I collected brief life histories from some of my participants. Interviews ranged in length from 45 minutes to 2 hours, but I often would spend

entire days working and spending time with farmers. Most interviews were conducted at the farms or in the homes of interviewees.

Since I opted not to record interviews, preliminary data analysis began during fieldwork. I kept a rigorous schedule of note taking and preliminary analysis at the end of each day, which allowed me to accurately record my findings and assess future lines of questioning. I analyzed data independently using Dedoose, a qualitative data analysis program. To code my field notes and interview transcripts, I used a deductive or theory-driven approach. However, especially in the initial interviews I also relied on inductive, line-by-line reading of my field notes in an iterative process to generate themes, discern patterns, and identify potential sources of bias. I utilized strategies outlined by Ryan and Bernard (2003) in order to distinguish themes in my data, especially repetition, indigenous typologies, and metaphors. A priori themes that were examined through content analysis for in-depth interviews, life histories, and field notes included farm management style, diversification strategies, material resources, class indicators, educational background, household dynamics including gender relations, and experiences with agritourism.

I also collected quantitative data through a verbally administered survey of farm families for cases in which farm economy data was accessible. I used theory, the initial open-ended interviews, participant observation, and insights from my previous field research in order to construct appropriate survey questions. This strategy allowed my qualitative data to inform the structure of my quantitative survey. Survey questions addressed measures of basic demographics, farm productivity and profitability, history of land use, household structure, and involvement in other farm activities. Qualitative items will question expectations for the future,

challenges to farm livelihood, and aspirations for the farm enterprise, household, and its members. Survey data was analyzed using basic statistical methods in Excel.

Conclusion

In summary, current claims of re-peasantization must be considered in relation to historical context and Amiata's linkages with EU agricultural and rural development policy, global commodity markets, and flows of international tourists, lifestyle migrants, migrant workers, and investors. Both the ongoing struggles of established farming livelihoods and the growth of agritourism have been noted in Amiata and are highlighted in the next chapter. The strategies of established small-scale farmers in Amiata — including specialization in wine and olive oil production, agritourism, organic farming, and heritage breeds — are discussed through case studies in the next chapter. The methods used in this study contextualize the strategies and lived realities of farmers by providing richly described portraits of farming livelihoods and contexts of decision-making.

PART II

TRANSFORMATIONS OF ESTABLISHED

FARMING LIVELIHOODS

CHAPTER 3: TENSIONS, STEREOTYPES, AND IDENTITY IN AGRITOURISM ENCOUNTERS: THE CASE OF BEPPE GASPARI

Established farmers in Amaita have diverse styles of constructing agritourism and navigating the tensions of these encounters. Based on my extended time on Beppe Gaspari's farm and interviews and participant observation with other established farmers, patterns have emerged in how established farmers navigate agritourism. Ethnographic vignettes of Beppe's *agriturismo*, along with observations from other established farms, serve to highlight several key practices and discourses in relation to class *habitus*, identity, use of stereotypes, and invocation of local cultural categories in the context of farming and agritourism.

First, established farmers are inculcated with a class *habitus* that can be contrasted with that of neo-rural residents. I outline indications of these class-based differences, suggesting that these class differences are almost always symbolic. In some cases, these class differences may be underwritten by economic realities and access to resources, as well. In my discussion of the symbolic division between established farmers and neo-rurals in relation to the work of agritourism, I highlight a phrase used by my informant Franco Marino (whose farm is discussed in the next chapter), an established wine maker, when he said that to have an *agriturismo* one must "*fare una figura*" (roughly translated as "to make an impression"). This discussion points to the practice of agritourism as a type of cultural performance that requires certain skills and dispositions that the older generation of farmers often does not command.

Second, conducting agritourism is often fundamentally at odds with the dispositions that are fostered by the agrarian values and *habitus* of established farmers. In terms of ideology, established farmers tend to value independence and autonomy, which they express in their discourses with tourists or their self-narration of their encounters with tourists. In a material sense, the values of independence are present in their generally conservative farm decision-making and avoidance of taking on debt. Established farmers often avoid agritourism, or when they do take it on, often encounter frictions and tensions with their guests and the demands of agritourism, as illustrated by Beppe's frequently repeated phrase, "*rompere i coglioni*" or "breaking one's balls." His deeply held values of autonomy and independence are violated by the demands of tourist guests. Another phrase, this time in dialect, is an expression that reinforces this position – "*non importa una sega*" (literally, "it doesn't matter a saw").

Agritourism also involves judgments that are often articulated in terms of stereotypes in both directions of the encounter, between hosts and guests and vice versa. This represents significant boundary-work between different class-positioned and culturally-positioned individuals and groups. These cultural distinctions and stereotypes are especially acute and representative of deeper tensions between Northern and Southern Europe during the recent European economic crisis.

Lastly, it is important to take into account insider Amiatan cultural distinctions between people from the province of Grosseto as "*rozza*" or "rough" and those from the province of Siena as "*intelligenti*" or "intelligent." Historical processes underpin this distinction and it holds implications for identity formation, belonging, and self-marginalization of established farming livelihoods in the present. I also tie constructions of neo-rurality and self-marginalizing constructs of established farming livelihoods to Michael Herzfeld's concept of the "global

hierarchy of value” (2004). This leads into a discussion of the implications for class trajectories and the future of farming livelihoods and rural development policy in Amiata.

Ethnographic Portrait: BEPPE GASPARI AND FAMILY, between farm, family, and business

“*Fai di paura!*” [“do fear”], Beppe shouted to me, urging me to scare the oblivious, grazing cows onto a path in the direction of the farm. It took us nearly an hour on foot to locate the vagrant cows, and I no longer had a sense of our distance from the farm. Unsure how to appropriately motivate the cows to move, I extended my arms and moved toward them, hoping to seem imposing to the imposing animals.

“*Attenta alla Maremmana!*” he bellowed, “*li, vai li!*” He urged me to approach from a different direction and watch out for the breed of cattle indigenous to the Maremma. The female’s characteristic oversized, lyre-shaped horns were notoriously dangerous. In the past, this breed of cattle would have been herded on horseback by *i butteri* (mounted herdsman), contributing to the image of the Maremma as the Tuscan “Wild West.” On foot and face to face with the thousand pound beast, I acknowledged the sensibility of mounted herding. Ecologically, this *Maremmana* was exercising its particular adaptive capabilities by foraging on marginal, abandoned land.



Image 5: *Maremmana* cow

Beppe's farm contains a mix of autochthonous breeds, such as the *Maremmana*, and imported industrial breeds, and he utilizes both pasture and confined feeding. The group of a dozen cows had wandered onto land across the river from the farm. While doing his regular visual scan of his property and the surrounding land that morning, Beppe paused and squinted, spotting them in a plot of pasture by an old farmhouse across the valley. In the past, there was an intentional community and *agriturismo* there, but it had been abandoned for at least ten years, given over to brambles. Land abandonment is a reality in this area, and we experienced it firsthand that day, fighting through the overgrowth to reach the cows. That morning we hurriedly fed the other animals at the barn and set out to retrieve the cows.

We were armed with our *bastoni* (walking sticks) against the much-feared vipers, and Beppe wielded a crescent-shaped sickle. He walked ahead of me, slashing down the overgrown *more* (blackberries) to clear some semblance of a path. He performed this work shirtless and in cut-off Levi's with admirable resolve, as the thorns left a collection of bloody gashes, which he assured me were "*niente*" (nothing). He joked about how we were really in the jungle.

As we walked, Beppe was attuned to any potential indicators of the whereabouts of the cows, searching for tracks in the mud or droppings and listening for sounds. At one point, Beppe suddenly stopped under an oak tree, turned his head to the sky, closed his eyes, and took several deep, slow breaths. At sixty-eight years old, I thought the extreme heat was getting to him or the path was too strenuous and I offered him some water. He instructed me to take a deep breath, telling me *“si respira bene sotto le quercie,”* [you can breathe well under the oak trees]. That day was among the hottest in a record hot European summer, and we needed all the oxygen we could get.

In fact, the cows had been led away from the farm by the temptation of cool river water and the possibility of greener pasture. With the heat, Beppe’s pastures were dry and his well was nearly depleted. He supplemented their foraging with bales of hay, but it was costly and difficult to keep up with the needs of the large groups of pastured cows, donkeys, and sheep. We also spent a good deal of time delivering water to the donkeys and horses on other plots of land almost daily. In all his years farming, Beppe had never experienced such extreme heat and dryness as this summer. In the past few years, he noticed the weather becoming hotter and less predictable, telling me that *“il mondo e’ cambiato, capito?”* [the world has changed, you understand?]. He also relayed how long ago, Davide Lazzaretti, the so-called “prophet of Amiata,” predicted that soon winter and summer would be essentially the same. Although he did not use the term “climate change,” Beppe was noticing its effects on his farm. I recalled how I had recently visited Monte Labbro, an important site in Amiata where Davide Lazzaretti, a farmer and cart driver in the 19th century, had founded and led the Giurisdavidica mystical and utopian socialist movement, which saw a good deal of support from farmers in the area (Clemente 2011).

Just days earlier, my morning newspaper scanning and lunchtime news watching with Beppe were consumed by attention to the unprecedented disaster of a massive fish kill in the Orbetello lagoon on the Maremma coast, just 100 kilometers from Amiata. Due to the extreme heat, more than 200 tons of fish had suffocated from lack of oxygen, producing a natural disaster with economic losses upwards of 20 million euros.



Image 6: Cows and donkeys eating hay in dry summer pasture



Image 7: Bringing hay to the animals



Image 8: Hungry cows

Normally relatively carefree as he worked – making jokes, talking to himself, or singing – Beppe’s constant worry about the availability of water was palpable. He checked the well level daily and reported his findings to me. He admitted that having more than five hundred animals

left without water would have dire consequences for the farm. On occasion, he would lightly chastise me for giving the farm dogs fresh water. “*Basta, basta, siamo praticamente senza acqua*” [enough, we’re practically without water], he would say. When I returned home that evening after retrieving the cows, Elsa also told me that the public water in town was being restricted for a few hours each day, and that the well on her property was also beginning to run dry. We would have to limit our usage and her garden would suffer. In Southern Spain, her family also reported that water was being restricted.

“*Vai, vai, fai di paura!*” Beppe urged me on. This was my first time attempting to herd cows, and I was terrified that I would send them in the wrong direction, or worse, disperse them in all directions. “*Senza paura,*” he encouraged me with one of his favorite phrases (“without fear”). I would hear this refrain as I took on any number of unfamiliar farm tasks. I batted my *bastone* back and forth in the high weeds, and edged toward the cows in the direction Beppe had instructed. I watched, relieved, as the cows lazily lifted their heads and converged onto the path in a miraculously organized pattern, presumably moving toward the farm. Beppe exclaimed “*brava!*” and kidded that this is how we do *la transumanza* (transhumance) in Amiata. Little did I know then that much of my time that summer and autumn would be spent rounding up cows, goats, and sheep with Beppe and repairing fences. Despite quickly becoming comfortable with each other through our daily work on the farm and shared meals, it was just days before that I had first met Beppe Gaspari in town.

Elsa had come along with me because she was curious about the new *braceria* (grill) in one of the larger nearby towns and had heard of the Gaspari family since they own a good portion of the other side of the valley. Unfailingly social and eager to make connections with locals, she happily accompanied me to the family’s restaurant. After asking around for Umberto

Gaspari, Beppe's brother, we were told he was finishing up some business. We sat at a table and waited for a half hour. Eventually, Umberto drove up in a Jeep and hurried into the restaurant. He was in his early 60s and wearing khakis and a Ralph Lauren button-down shirt with the sleeves rolled up. My first impression was that this man certainly did not look like someone who spends much time farming. Umberto did not acknowledge his tardiness and gave off a business-like air of efficiency as he sat down, expectant and crouched slightly forward over the table, poised to answer my questions. Unlike others I talked to, he did not open with any perfunctory small talk or questions.

Umberto diligently and efficiently answered my questions about his family's history, the farm, and their production, but it was clear that he was eager to move on to his other tasks. While we were talking, people showed up or called his cell phone on several occasions, and he had to step out. Fortunately, the business-like formality would be broken later with the arrival of his brother, Beppe. Umberto and Beppe have two *agriturismi* and a farm, along with the *braceria*, and a small food shop with a butcher. They are also in the process of renovating and opening a modern bed and breakfast in a prime location in town. I was starting to understand what Elsa and others had said about the wide extent of the family's ownership in this corner of Amiata. As a friend of Beppe later said to me in private, "these Gasparis, they have money," as he rubbed his fingers together.

In the past, the *mezzadria* sharecropping system operated in this area, but it was not controlled by a single large landowner as it was in the nearby township of Cinigiano. The farm had been in the family for generations, and the grandparents on both sides worked as sharecroppers while living in the farmhouses. During land reform in the 1950s, the family was able to buy the land and two farmhouses. The father of the Gaspari brothers worked as a cattle

broker throughout the nearby provinces. While the grandparents lived in the farmhouses, Beppe and Umberto grew up in a nearby town but always had a good deal of contact with the farm. As the grandparents aged, the brothers eventually took over the farm and opened a butcher shop. In the early 1990s, they diversified to open their first *agriturismo*, added the second in 2002, and in the past year, they opened the restaurant and prepared to open the bed and breakfast.

The farm now contains a mix of more than five hundred animals including cows, sheep, pigs, goats, donkeys, horses, chickens, and the special breed of Maremma sheep dogs. They produce wine and olive oil primarily for their families and have a large number of chestnut trees, a highly valuable commodity in the area. They also harvest local varieties of fruits and nuts, including peaches, apples, plums, and walnuts. Beppe sees to the farm and always has, while Umberto has been a butcher and has also morphed into the primary businessman behind their ventures. Umberto and Beppe were among the earliest group of farmers to diversify into agritourism in Amiata in 1995, receiving EU funding support. The capacious *agriturismi* farmhouses are divided up into apartments with shared communal kitchen and dining areas and the facilities are able to sleep 16 and 20 guests at full capacity. Most of the meats in their restaurant and shop are sourced from the farm, a point of pride for the brothers. Umberto butchers and preserves the meats in the traditional way, as his grandfather taught him, and I heard them complimented on several occasions for their *prosciutto*, *salsiccia*, and *salumi* by patrons of the restaurant, guests in the *agriturismo*, and patrons of their shop.



Image 9: Fresh batch of *salsiccia*

Umberto and Beppe are both married and live in apartments in town. Their wives work office jobs and they have grown children who live apart from their parents. Umberto has a daughter in her mid-30s and a son in his mid-20s and neither is married. His daughter, Elena, works long days in the restaurant and in the past helped Beppe on the farm. When we first met that day, she admitted to me and Elsa that while she liked working in the family business, she also felt “trapped.” She had already worked eight hours in the restaurant that day by 5pm and did not know when she would be able to go home after serving dinner to a busy crowd that night. She confided that she was not sure if this work would be sustainable for her, and that she was drawn to the freedom and independence an external job would afford her. While she works mostly in the restaurant, she also helps with the farm and handles bookings for the *agriturismi* and the bed and breakfast. When I asked her about what work she did, with a chuckle, a sigh, and a puff on her cigarette her response was “*tutto*” (everything). She told me that she was fantasizing about a vacation of sunshine and rest in Tenerife.

Umberto's son, Paolo, is finishing a degree at the well-respected University of Siena to learn how to manage the business and accounting aspects of the family's ventures, but he also spends a good deal of time working in the restaurant when he is in town during university breaks and the summer. Umberto's wife, Simona, also helps occasionally in the restaurant on weekends or busy evenings. Beppe has two sons who both have their own children. He described them as having opposite personalities. The younger son, Eduardo, is like Beppe and "*poco serio*" (not very serious) while the elder son, Matteo, is studious and "*bravo*" (good). Eduardo lives in Amiata and does a combination of substitute teaching and collecting and re-selling of old cars. Matteo moved to the city of Grosseto to work as a pharmacist where he has a wife and young son. Beppe's wife, Clara, often goes to spend time with her grandson, but Beppe remains tied to the daily rhythms of the farm, a source of exasperation for Clara.

Beppe wandered into the restaurant toward the end of my conversation with his brother and shouted to his niece to make him an espresso. He joked to his brother, asking him where he found me and Elsa and kissed our hands in an exaggerated fashion as he greeted us. Umberto took this opportunity to make his exit, leaving us to talk with his brother. Beppe instinctively offered us a glass of "*his Brunellino*" and was delighted when we complimented the taste. He took this as a cue to refill our glasses. Unlike his brother, Beppe looked like a farmer. He wore a plaid shirt with worn jeans and worn boots, and the thick-knuckled fingers of his worn hands clasped the flask of wine. His face showed the signs of a life of exposure to the sun and the elements, but his bright blue eyes lit up his face.

Beppe and Umberto both spoke the heavy local dialect of the nearby village where they grew up, and neither made any effort to speak standard Italian or slow down for my benefit. They were patient as I asked for necessary clarifications, and Beppe would later show his delight

as I started to incorporate some of the local terms and phrases in our conversations. Beppe was curious about our backgrounds and lives, and also happily answered questions about the farm. He seemed very relaxed, and assured us that as a farmer, he does not overwork himself like other farmers who rise at dawn. He wakes routinely at 8am and comes to the restaurant to have a cappuccino, a pastry, and to scan the newspaper and greet the regulars. He works until lunch, usually eats in the restaurant, and then passes the afternoon playing cards at the bar in town. He then returns to the farm to work for three or four more hours in the evening once the afternoon heat has passed.

After chatting for a half hour and convincing Beppe we had had our fill of the heady red wine, I asked Beppe if it would be possible to visit the farm and *agriturismi* sometime. I expected he would give me some indication of when to call him to set up a time to meet. But instead he said, "*Certo, andiamo!*" ("Sure, let's go!"), surprising me with his availability and eagerness. He downed his espresso with a toss of his head and we followed him out to his pickup truck, which housed a dizzying array of sundry items in the seats and back. We set out for the *agriturismo* and so began my summer and autumn spent on the Gasparis' farm.

During this time, I spent extensive time with Beppe, his family, his friends, and his agritourism guests. My field notes describe tasks as varied as daily tending to animals, tracking and herding, repairing fences, administering vaccines, operating the tractor, helping to serve in the family's restaurant, interacting with agritourism guests, transporting bulk wine, helping to clean the stream-fed swimming pool, loading and transporting animals to the slaughterhouse, castrating pigs, scouting out hay suppliers and animals, visiting the agricultural union, and running assorted errands with Beppe. In between these tasks, much time was also spent together eating, talking with family and friends, hearing stories and jokes, celebrating birthdays,

searching for mushrooms and wild foods, visiting local points of interest, fishing with our hands, playing cards, drinking coffee, scanning the newspaper, participating in local festivals, eating *gelato*, and otherwise sharing in the intimate spaces and rhythms of daily life.

Situating Myself as an Anthropologist on Beppe's Farm

Beppe's farm is unique in several senses. Most significantly, it is a mixed farm with a range of animals and crops similar to the Galli farm I describe in Chapter 4. Beppe's farm is larger and more extensive, also integrated with other businesses and two *agriturismi* (Beppe's own self-comparison with the Galli's farm is discussed later in this chapter). Such farms have become rare in Tuscany with the hegemony of industrial agriculture, crop specialization, rural exodus, and increasing neo-rural presence.

There has been a particular loss of grazing pasture in Amiata, and throughout Tuscany, with the decline of livestock rearing. Beppe's farm is one of few that continue to raise a range of livestock while producing primarily for local markets. Still, his farm is far from removed from global flows and the structures of the agro-industrial complex. Beppe depends on other local farms to supplement forage and on an industrial feed supplier for the confined cows and pigs. He also administers antibiotics to the animals when he deems it necessary. Beppe is not not motivated by agro-ecological values, although he does use some long-standing farming methods that are ecological sound. His farm is also linked with global flows of tourism, as he has two *agriturismi*. While Beppe produces wine for the family's households and for sharing with guests, his vineyard and olive plots are a few kilometers away from the *agriturismi* and do not figure centrally in his production. Instead, the *agriturismi* are immersed in the animal

pastures and located close to the barn.

Unlike many farms that offer agritourism, first and foremost Beppe's farm is an agricultural production unit. The farm's earnings are gained from meat/animals (60%), chestnuts (35%), and oil (5%). Seventy percent of total income is drawn from agricultural production, while 20% comes from agritourism. This calculation does not include off-farm labor of wives and children. Beppe and his brother have two separate *agriturismi* in different farmhouses located near to each other but on different plots of land. Their family has owned the land across generations, and their ability to maintain the two farmhouses stems from their family's history on this land and the sharecropping system. The scattered nature of their various smaller plots also reflects gradual accumulation over time and a pattern of farming small plots that are "*tenuta come un giardino*" [kept like a garden] in this area (Pratt 2014: 49).

Beppe also had particular attitudes toward me as a researcher and my presence on his farm. While other farm owners typically treated me as a guest and seemed mindful of my presence as a researcher, Beppe treated me squarely as a farm hand. Typically, farm owners would offer me a tour of their farm when I interviewed or worked with them. But when I arrived at Beppe's farm, he did not show me around. Instead, we launched into the day's work and he expected me to learn through immersion. He informally encouraged me to "*fare come a casa tua*" [make yourself at home]. The space of the farm was a chaotic, unfamiliar terrain to me. Dozens of chickens, cats, and dogs wandered freely under foot amid rejected scraps of leftover human food – the head and tail of a swordfish buzzing with flies, French fries, lemon wedges. My first week at the farm was disorienting, as I adjusted to the animal menagerie and the sights, sounds, and smells of life and death on the farm.

I suspect that Beppe was friendlier with me than he would have been with a hired

farmhand, and he was always eager to answer my questions or offer information. Despite my relative lack of knowledge and skill, he benefitted from having voluntary assistance, even if unskilled. Many of the farm tasks simply required two sets of hands or another body, and it was not easy for Beppe to pull his niece away from the restaurant or convince his son to help out. A middle-aged man who used to work for Beppe and his brother in the butcher shop complained to me that Beppe was “*duro*” and his brother was even worse, meaning that they were harsh or difficult to work with. Another previous farm hand echoed these sentiments.

At times, I commiserated with these employees’ assessments of Beppe. I found Beppe to be intrusive, demanding, and bossy, and I had to adjust to his manner. Following his instructions that were given in heavy dialect in the unfamiliar farm environment was challenging, especially at first. On occasions, I also had strong reactions to the way he treated animals. After days spent with Beppe – sometimes twelve hours at a time – I sometimes felt physically and mentally drained.

At the same time, Beppe was also very hospitable and generous with me, which was often food-related. He offered me meals in the restaurant and welcomed me into his home to meet his wife and eat with his family. He often sent me home with eggs from the farm, chestnuts, or cuts of meat from his family’s butcher. Despite my best efforts, if we ever stopped for *gelato* or an *aperitivo*, Beppe insisted on paying. He had a remarkable memory when it came to paying for things, and on the rare occasions he was not carrying cash and I paid for parking at a market we visited, the donation at a church, or some water at the bar, he promptly remembered and insisted on paying me back the exact amount. I was unable to unravel if this had to do with his ideas of hospitality, wanting to show appreciation for the farm labor I offered, attitudes he had about not wanting to owe anyone, or me being a young female outsider.

When Beppe introduced me to people, he referred to me as “his *operaia*” (hired worker), placing me in the same category as he would a typical “blue collar” laborer. This prompted a particularly strange reaction from Beppe’s previous assistant – a brawny young man – who at first seemed to take this to mean that a female had replaced him after Beppe had fired him some months earlier. Despite my clarifying the aims of my research on several occasions in some detail, when speaking to people in greater depth, Beppe consistently simplified my research goals into me being an American student who had come to learn how to farm “the old way.” One of his friends incredulously expressed that he simply could not believe that I came all the way from the United States “to seek out Gaspari.” I eventually allowed these misperceptions to rest after my correctives repeatedly failed.

Beppe’s role as a key informant should be highlighted. He served as a kind of gatekeeper to the “old world” of male dominated farming. Without my affiliation with Beppe and his endorsement of me as “*brava*” (good), access to this world would have been very difficult, as documented by Pratt (1986, 1993). My gendered positionality is further discussed later in Chapter 6.

AGRITURISMO AT BEPPE’S FARM

Vignette 1: The Pool Incident

After our morning of work on the farm, Beppe and I went up to the spring-fed well by the farmhouse to collect water to take to the donkeys and horses. The *agriturismo* was being rented by a group of British guests – a woman with children and her parents. The woman yelled out to us in a stern tone. Beppe hollered back to her in rapid-fire dialect-punctuated Italian, and

it took some minutes for him to accept that she failed to understand what he was saying. This situation was familiar to me, since Beppe often spoke rapidly in dialect to foreign guests who spoke little or no Italian. Most often, he seemed to think that adding volume would facilitate understanding. Unable to even indicate their confusion to him at times, I often ended up being recruited by the guests to step in and translate. I wondered how Beppe managed at other times without being accompanied by an English speaker.

Finally, Beppe informed me that I would translate. I dutifully listened to the woman's story before translating back to Beppe, who loudly interrupted sporadically, adding to the confusion. She told me that at one o'clock in the morning, four young people came to swim in the pool and were making a lot of noise, waking up the whole family. One of the girls kept yelling, "Eduardo, Eduardo!" (the name of Beppe's son). As the noise persisted, the guest yelled out the window for them to stop, threatening to tell Beppe. By the conclusion of the story, she seemed rather pleased with herself for standing up to the raucous revelers and forcing them to leave. She looked at Beppe and me expectantly.

As I related what had happened to Beppe, he shrugged his shoulders in an exaggerated way and said bluntly to us both, "*E allora?*" (What of it?). While I felt it would be appropriate to offer some sort of apology to the guest for the disturbance, Beppe did not share my sentiment. I was put in the awkward position of having to translate his indifference to her or offer my own apology. Beppe did not wait long enough for me to decide, and we departed awkwardly with me trailing Beppe and wishing the guest a peaceful evening. As we drove away, he grumbled to me, "If someone wants to swim at night, so what? It's not that the pool is exclusive. It's better to have fun than not, right? They were probably drunk and having a good time after the festival in town. She tells me this, but what do I care? Why does she have to break my balls?"

Vignette 2: Beppe and “La Professoressa”

In the late summer, a widowed professor from Rome and her eight-year-old daughter arrived to stay in the *agriturismo* for a week. Valeria (who Beppe variably termed “*la professoressa*” or “*la dottoressa*”) and her daughter, Nina, came down to the farm one morning to see the animals. Beppe immediately poked fun at how “*la professoressa*” felt ill at ease in the chaos of the stable and did not want to get dirty. She carefully placed her handbag in the cleanest spot she could find, but later clutched it up as a cat began to paw at it. Nina was curious about the animals, but also wary, only approaching them with marked caution. She especially took to the kittens.

After consulting with her mother, Nina approached Beppe and meekly asked, “Signor Beppe, may I take one of the kittens up to the house for a little while?” Beppe lightly scoffed, “I am Beppe. Signor Beppe doesn’t do anything for me.” Then he softened somewhat, “Of course, do as you’d like! You can even take them all!” As they went back to the house, Beppe offered a commentary to me as had become common after such encounters. Had I not been present, I could easily imagine him mumbling the remarks to himself. He seemed baffled that the little girl would ask his permission to take the kitten. He stewed to me, “Of course, if you want, just do it! Why do I care if you take the cat? *Non importa una sega*” (literally “it doesn’t matter a saw,” a vulgar local way of saying ‘I don’t care’). When I suggested she was probably just trying to be polite as she had been taught, Beppe shot back, “Polite, who cares about politeness? Why does she have to break my balls? ‘Signor Beppe, Signor Beppe!’ I don’t respond to this. It’s better if you call me *turzo* (stupid, in dialect). This I can understand better because we’re *la gente rozza in campagna* (the rough people in the country).”

That evening we made our rounds to the farmhouse, bringing clean towels. When Valeria

asked for more clean towels that morning, Beppe stewed to me, “We aren’t a five-star hotel. There is a washer in the house, do some laundry!” At lunch that day, when Beppe snidely told his brother that “*la professoressa*” demanded fresh towels, Umberto responded with the same phrase – “What does she think we are, a five-star hotel?” Beppe responded, “Exactly. She is a real ball-breaker, the professor.”

When we brought the towels, Valeria thanked us and offered us a glass of wine. Beppe eagerly accepted. She spoke mainly to me as we sat outside at the picnic table and sipped our wine. She told me that her daughter wants to come to Beppe’s *agriturismo* every summer since she likes the animals and has happy memories of being there when her father was alive. Valeria was considering staying longer since her babysitter in Rome would be on vacation for another two weeks, but she needed Internet access for her research and there was not any connectivity in the farmhouse.

When Valeria’s brother and his family arrived from Rome a few days later, Beppe scoffed at the way their cars were parked in the driveway. “Romans think they are the owners of everything,” he muttered, “like they are Christ on Earth.” As we maneuvered around the cars to fill the jugs of water, his frustration faded to amusement – “*I romani sono un po’ stronzi, che dici?*” (Romans are a little shitty, what do you say?), he asked me with a chuckle.

In the coming days, a few more complaints arose from the agritourism guests, since both farmhouses were booked almost to capacity. One woman had a bite on her ankle that became quite swollen. She was worried it might have been a scorpion bite, but Beppe wrote it off as a spider bite and told her not to worry. Valeria complained about the television not working and Beppe reacted with indifference. She also lamented that the water in the shower was cold. Beppe explained that because it runs on solar power, if it is used too early in the morning it

would be cold. After listening to these complaints, Beppe again pejoratively grumbled to me how “*la dottoressa*” (“the doctor” reflecting her degree, while previously he had called her “the professor” defined by her role) “breaks his balls.” He complained that his brother, wife, and the Romanian woman who helps in the *agriturismo* also “break his balls” and that I was “*l’unica che non rompe i coglioni*” (the only one who doesn’t break his balls). He told me that I am “precise” and “intelligent” like the professor, but that I do not “break his balls.”

Toward the end of Valeria’s stay at Beppe’s, a Belgian couple also staying in the *agriturismo* offered to take her out to dinner with their children. They decided to go to Beppe’s family’s restaurant in town and invited me and Beppe to join them. We sat on the patio and the atmosphere was jovial, as a town festival was taking place. Beppe animatedly greeted many passersby. He sporadically wandered into the kitchen or butcher shop and would reappear with plates of meat or cheese to share. After we ordered, Beppe took the kids into the butcher shop to see the sausage being made by his brother and a young Albanian employee. I accompanied them for a few minutes, and was surprised to find Beppe encouraging them to taste the raw meat.

When I returned to the table, the Belgian man asked me, “What do you think about this wine, do you think it’s special?” Without waiting for my response, Valeria jumped in and asserted that not only was it “not special for Italy” but it was certainly “not special for Tuscany, since Tuscany has some really nice wines.” They unanimously determined that they were disappointed and would approach Beppe about the wine, but first looking for some sort of positive reinforcement from me. When Beppe and the children returned, the awkward burden of telling Beppe about the inferior wine fell on Valeria. Beppe listened, shrugged, and turned to go into the restaurant. His reaction was impossible to read, until he returned with a large flask

of wine. He explained that this was “his *brunellino*.” They seemed contented, saying that it was better than the last wine.

As we ate, the Belgian couple jokingly asked me the name of the cow they just ate, since they had ordered the *tagliata* (sliced steak). The Belgians told me I “wasn’t a typical American” and that I “listened well.” They perceived “typical Americans” as being loud, occasionally impolite, and talking too much. They invited me to come visit them for a drink or dinner sometime. During dinner, Valeria – the only native Italian speaker at the table aside from Beppe – often rolled her eyes at comments Beppe made. At times she seemed exasperated, but in a light, amused way, especially as her cheeks became rosy from the wine. When I asked Valeria about a phrase Beppe had used at the table and whether it was in dialect – “*mettere in naso*” (literally, to put something in your nose, meaning to smell something) – she responded that it was not Tuscan or local dialect, but simply “bad Italian.” During a quiet moment at the table after our leisurely dinner, Valeria asked me, “where’s Beppe’s wife?” I explained that she was very nice but was usually at home. “Poor wife,” she responded.

After dinner, Beppe insisted we explore the town festival and go for a *grappa*. As we strolled, Nina got very excited by the bumper cars but needed an adult to accompany her. Her mother laughed and refused, and I was elected. We zoomed, sputtered and bumped around, as Beppe watched us and laughed. Afterwards, Beppe insisted we go to hear the street band playing in one of the *piazze*. He jokingly danced with the kids, telling us that he “danced like a bear.” He made a show of inviting Valeria and me to dance. Valeria sighed and looked to me, saying “*Noi siamo le persone serie. Beppe e’ poco serio*” (we are serious people. Beppe is not serious).

Vignette 3: “I really don’t think Beppe cares...”

One afternoon I was sitting in the living room of Beppe's home with his sister-in-law. Beppe and I had stopped at his home so he could shower after cleaning the stalls before we went for lunch at the family's restaurant in town. Crocheted blankets were draped over the sofa and chairs, all facing a television. A carefully kept liquor cabinet also housing madonnas and keepsakes was positioned at the opposite end of the room. I noticed that one of the family photos on the wall pictured Beppe's niece and nephew on a donkey at the farm with their grandparents. Beppe's wife, Clara, was washing dishes in the kitchen.

Clara's sister, Sabrina, wore noticeably more trendy clothing than the housedresses her sister often wore. In contrast to Clara, she also wore makeup and her hair was modishly cut and colored. Her nails were also painted, and I thought to myself that she must pamper herself. She stood in stark contrast to her sister, who always appeared to be working at her part-time office job or working at home. Even when we sat down to eat at Beppe's Clara was still at work, bringing dishes to and from the table and cleaning up immediately afterwards.

Sabrina told me that she had spent partial summers in England for the past few years with her husband and college-aged daughter, since she wants her daughter to learn English. Sabrina also taught English before retiring. While their family is from near Venice, Sabrina now lives in Bologna where her husband works as a professor and engineer at the well-known university. Sabrina asked how my research was progressing and inquired about what I would do after finishing my doctoral degree. "Will you go into academia or just...be in the fields?" she asked me, with a slight hint of condescension.

Changing topics to Beppe's farm, I mentioned how Beppe seemed to enjoy his work on the farm and was always cheerful each morning. She did not acknowledge his enjoyment of the work or compliment Beppe's work ethic. Instead, she told me that Beppe has always done farm

work and that is the work he knows. She told me that once Beppe is unable to work, the farm will likely be closed since none of his or his brother's children are interested in taking over the farm. Umberto's daughter, Elena, had worked on the farm until a year ago, but then she "took another path" once the restaurant opened, opting to work there instead. Sabrina suggested that when the kids were young they were content enough helping on the farm, but after the age of twenty or so, "you don't want to be treated like a kid anymore." I was unsure if she was making reference to Beppe's nature being difficult to work with or a vision of farm work being some sort of an avoidance of adult life. I thought back to when I asked Beppe about who would take over the farm eventually and his response was, "who knows?" He told me that when he was young, his son enjoyed working on the farm and using the tractor but that the university had "ruined him."

As we started to talk about the *agriturismo* Sabrina took a deep breath and began to shake her head. She firmly told me, "If you're going to have a business like that, you need to take steps to be sure the place is ready for guests. The house must be ready and checked in advance." She explained that she had been giving Beppe and Umberto a hard time because the guests were complaining the other day about the light bulbs being out in the house. She told them that necessities like this must be checked by whoever is cleaning the house in advance, not by the guests.

Her frustration rising, she continued, "and it's not okay to just say, 'well, we're in the country so anything goes.'" She cited the example of guests complaining about scorpions in the house and Beppe almost mocking their concern. Sabrina argued that a good host must be apologetic, understanding, and offer some explanation and appropriate recourse. She also criticized Beppe and Umberto for not making it clear on their website what guests can expect in

the *agriturismo*. She concluded that in terms of receiving positive guest feedback online, “I really don’t think Beppe cares. Umberto, maybe a little more...but maybe not.”

“Fare una Figura” and the Art of “Making an Impression”: Established Farmers’ Class Habitus and Trajectories

The material realities of established farming systems and household organization in Amiata were conceived of by Beppe and others in part in terms of the label of “*rozza*” (rough or backwards). I provide an interpretive sketch of the range of cultural meanings of “*rozza*” in a following section, but in this section my interest is in linking this label to economic resources, farming style, and ideas of class differences.

In terms of farming style, resources, and household organization, the farms of Beppe and several farmers of his generation are positioned on a spectrum between the farms they would deem most “*rozza*,” like the Gallis who are described in Chapter 4, and the numerous neo-rural *agriturismi* described in Chapter 5. The ethnographic portraits in the next two chapters demonstrate that there is no homogeneity in the farming styles and household organization of established farms or of neo-rurals, although meaningful patterns of similarity have emerged. Farms like the Gallis – who may be most closely related to what other scholars call “peasant farming” (Ploeg 2008, 2016) – are positioned at one end of the spectrum, while rural tourism enterprises that barely conduct agricultural production such as Carlo stand at the other end.

The case of Beppe (who shares similar circumstances with at least two other established

farmers I encountered in Amiata) is especially illustrative of how categories of class are not unitary. As I have described, Beppe's farm and *agriturismo* are not cultivated with a close attention to aesthetics in the way that neo-rural *agriturismi* are. The visual elements of the farm can be seen as chaotic and disturbing. Beppe does not live in one of the farmhouses, but rather in a modern apartment in town with his wife who has an off-farm job. In fact, his wife has nothing to do with the farm, a distinction he often mentioned. His son may occasionally help at the farm, but I observed his reluctance, unreliability, and Beppe's frustration. While Beppe's sons do not live at home, his youngest son who lives in Beppe's hometown often shares meals with his parents.

Beppe and his brother's family have strong connections to town, where their restaurant, shop, and bed and breakfast are located. Beppe will get cleaned up and dressed up in the evenings when he eats in the restaurant or has a *digestivo* at the bar with friends. Beppe has embraced aspects of the modernization paradigm of agricultural development in his farming, as well, relying on industrial feed supplements for the livestock he is fattening and antibiotics for the animals when he determines they are necessary. Especially in his pig operation, Beppe makes use of certain factory farming practices on a smaller scale, including keeping them in close quarters, using gestation crates in an area with little natural light, and clipping the teeth of piglets. Yet, many of the animals, including the cows, are pastured, and Beppe still uses the old 1983 tractor he has used for decades. It is clear that Beppe has inherited much farming knowledge from his grandparents who worked the land before him and from other local farmers. He has an intimate knowledge of the weather, local plant and animal life, and how lunar cycles affect different aspects of farming. He also makes use of what materials are available to repair fences or use around the farm and he often picks up discarded materials.

In suggesting that established farmers and neo-rurals embody different class *habiti*, I follow Bourdieu (1977, 1984) in his insistence that members of a social class adopt similar dispositions toward their social worlds, which he calls *habitus*. Aspirations, practices, tastes, and lifestyles (1984) come to be shared by those with similar class *habiti*, while structural conditions affect these but are not deterministic. I adopt the class indicators used by Hetherington (2005) in his comparison of organic and conventional farmers in Nova Scotia. These include where the farm operator grew up, off-farm employment, and educational background.

There are marked differences between established and neo-rural farms in their “cultural capital” and ability to take on agritourism. Established farms benefit significantly if their children become trained and adept in neo-rural forms of mastery -- such as niche or organic production or marketing --- and if they remain involved in the farm. I have seen in several cases how these neo-rural values come to supplement the agrarian values of their parents. This involvement seems to be crucial for farm success with international tourism and commodity markets and creates a significant difference in their trajectories in terms of farm succession. For instance, Beppe and his brother inherited two farmhouses and a significant amount of land and stuck together, their land holding and business endeavors constituting local sources of power and privilege. However, their children are not interested in being involved in the farm, although they do help in the restaurant and with bookings for the agritourisms. Despite their relative privilege in some economic senses at the moment, the farm is likely to close or be sold after Beppe is unable to work.

Farm diversification is a key to success, but the ability to diversify successfully is largely underpinned by certain forms of cultural capital and masteries of class-based forms of

distinction. I have observed significant differences in what Bourdieu would call symbolic capital (Bourdieu 1986) and “claims of distinction” (Benson 2009), especially in terms of established farmers’ ideas of the possibility of taking on agritourism. Several established farmers who had the space to take on agritourism opted not to, suggesting that the barriers to their participation in agritourism are not merely economic.

Most notably, Franco Marino used the expression “*fare una figura*” or to “make an impression” in describing what is required by agritourism. While Beppe and his brother attempted to host tourists, they were either uninterested in or incapable of making the sort of impression on tourists that was necessary for the visitors to have a positive experience. He may have been referring to dispositions that were at odds with agrarian values of independence and autonomy in this area, in addition to manners, hosting skills, presentation of self, and the emotional labor of hosting. In this sense, my findings on differential access to agritourism between established and neo-rural farms echoes Hetherington’s (2005) finding that “the boundary between organic and conventional farmers follows, in many respects, the same logic as the boundary that separates economic classes and derives from the class backgrounds of the people involved” (46).

“Romans think they’re the masters of everything...”: Stereotypes and Boundary-Work in Agritourism

Agritourism, like other tourism encounters, can be seen as a type of cultural performance. Group interactions through agritourism are rife with stereotypes and

articulations of difference between regions within Italy and between Northern and Southern Europe, which are variously inflected with class and character judgments and are informed by long-standing historical patterns. Some of these stereotypes are stated directly between hosts and guests, while others only emerge in the “back stage” spaces of hosting (MacCannell 1973). These discourses of cultural difference reveal subtle but insightful perceptions of class, identity, belonging, and marginality during a time when the political identity and sociocultural construct of Europe faces significant pressures and tensions amid the Eurozone crisis (Kozaitis 2015; Knight 2015; Knight and Stewart 2016).

Anthropologically, stereotypes – beyond their potential indication of prejudice – are instructive for understanding fissures of perceived cultural difference and meaning in concrete cultural and discursive contexts (Brown and Theodossopoulos 2004; McDonald 1993). As Maryon McDonald writes: “a lack of fit between category systems regularly provides a real, observational, experiential basis for judgments. Anthropologists can talk of misunderstanding or misinterpretation, therefore, whilst at the same time acknowledging the authenticity, persuasiveness and autonomy of the discourse of representation for those claiming to do the representing, and of the experiential or empirical reality it can have for them” (1993: 233). Several instances of judgments made during agritourism encounters allowed me to see glimpses of what anthropologists aptly refer to as “the social life of stereotypes” (Herzfeld 1997), “stereotypes in action” (McDonald 1993), or “stereotypes-in-use” (Brown and Theodossopoulos 2005: 7).

As I outlined in one of the vignettes of Beppe’s *agriturismo*, a two-directional pattern of judgment arose between Beppe and Valeria, the Roman professor, which was maintained during the duration of her stay. Most often, these judgments were not expressed blatantly between

the two parties, but rather expressed to me as someone rather ambiguously positioned between the two parties but able to relate to both. I had worked at Beppe's daily, and we became close by spending days working together and sharing meals. But conversely, I was an academic – a fact Beppe often underplayed by referring to me as “his worker” – which made me relatable to Valeria and her professional world of the Roman university. In Beppe's case, these assessments were also voiced in the more intimate sphere of his family's restaurant to his brother, for instance. This brought to mind the parallel of Herzfeld's Cretan artisans being polite to their high-status customers during transactions, but then proceeding to mock them behind their backs (Herzfeld 2004).

I noticed how Valeria identified almost immediately with me once she found out I was a doctoral student. On occasion, she would speak to me in English, barring Beppe from understanding our conversation and putting up a discursive boundary. She claimed me, along with herself, to be a “serious person,” which she opposed with Beppe who was “not serious.” She criticized Beppe's Italian, calling it “bad” or vulgar and suggesting that the linguistic difference does not stem from dialect. Her judgment suggested that Beppe's manner of speaking stemmed from his relatively uneducated, rural background, which he would share with others of his class *habitus*, rather than simply those speaking the local dialect. In a way, she was robbing Beppe of the ability to have an element of “culture” – a linguistic dialect – since she often hinted to me that she saw him as an uncouth person without culture. She also subjected Beppe's marital relations and intimacy to scrutiny. She was critical of the fact that Beppe's wife did not accompany him for dinner or socializing in town, which is at odds with her experience of marital relations and gender roles in the urban environment of Rome.

This distinction resonates with Herzfeld's idea of stereotyping being “a discursive

weapon of power” since it “always marks the absence of some presumably desirable property in its object” (2005: 202). It also points to how linguistic usage, conversational conventions, and manners can serve as markers of difference and contribute to the formation of stereotypes (McDonald 1993). Such manifestations of stereotyping are deeply connected to ideas about proper manners and forms of sophistication and distinction.

At the same time, Beppe referred to Valeria as unreasonably demanding, fussy, and a “ball-breaker,” with her demanding nature reflecting her class privilege and sense of entitlement. Interestingly, when he was most frustrated with Valeria he would refer to her as “*la dottoressa*” (the doctor), indicating her higher education degree credentials, rather than “*la professoressa*” (the professor), indicating her profession. He made a clear statement of his judgment of Romans by saying: “Romans think they are the masters/owners of everything...like they are Christ on Earth” and “Romans are a little shitty.” His use of the term “*padrone*” in this assessment is curious. The title can be most closely translated as “master” or “lord,” since it was used to refer to the land-owning elite under the sharecropping system. This reference to class divisions between the elite and sharecropping families of the past in the context of contemporary tourism is suggestive of perceived power differences between tourists and their farming hosts. Beppe’s statement was also specific to Romans, potentially reflecting the strength of the Communist Party in Amiata and throughout Tuscany (Pratt 1986).

The stereotyping and frictions that emerge in agritourism encounters also occur, though to a lesser extent, with neo-rural hosts. For instance, Elsa (a young Spanish woman discussed in Chapter 5) was hosting a young woman from Northern Italy who was very critical of her for not being present at the time of her arrival and she had other complaints about Elsa’s disorganization. She suggested that Elsa visit “the North” or Switzerland in order to see how

efficiently agritourisms are run there. She said that informality and “disorder” may be common here, but it would “never happen” in the North. This echoes deep-seated historical divisions, perceptions of difference, and inequalities between the Italian North and South (Schneider 1998). In this encounter, I saw how perceptions of “northern” and “southern” characters ran up against each other. While the northern Italian guest saw Elsa, from Southern Spain, as disorganized and impulsive, Elsa complained to me that the guest was “cold” and “snobbish” with her culturally superior attitudes.

This encounter reflects how the diffuse categories of “north” and “south” remain politically and culturally salient, being historically associated with categories of identity and inequality. The distinctions drawn here transcend beyond northern and southern Italy. In this case, Elsa, a Spaniard, is labeled as “southern” or “Mediterranean” and the guest identifies herself and positive societal attributes with “the north,” including Switzerland. It shows how “one set of cultural practices, when observed or heard through the structures of another, can make its practitioners seem volatile, unpredictable, irrational, inconsistent, capricious, or even dangerous” (McDonald 1993: 229). Such perceptions are likely more acute with the economic crisis and northern views of southern Europeans as fiscally irresponsible and lazy. Growing stereotypes involving “northern rectitude” and “southern laxity” in the face of the Eurozone crisis have been documented elsewhere (McDonald 2012: 541; Bampilis 2013; Knight 2015; Knight and Stewart 2016). Drawing out the potential implications of this kind of stereotyping, “When we reach the point where those “others” excuse their actions to visitors in these terms – ‘we’re warm-blooded Mediterranean types, what else can we do?’ – hegemony appears to have done its work too well” (Herzfeld 1997: 202). This leads to a critical questioning of Beppe and other established farmers’ self-labeling as “*rozza*” or “rough.”

The “Intelligent” and the “Rough” People: Constructing Identity, Cultural Difference, and Marginality in Amiata

As we were driving back from town to the farm one day, Beppe pointed to the license plate of the car in front of us – “S I — *siamo intelligenti* (we are intelligent),” he murmured. Baffled, I asked him what he meant. He explained that the people in the car in front of us likely thought of themselves as intelligent. Abbreviations for provinces are often indicated on license plates throughout Italy, and Beppe was pointing to an insider distinction between the abbreviations for the provinces of his native Grosseto (GR) and neighboring Siena (SI) to the north. Beppe told me, “Here we say that people from Siena think that they are more intelligent than us. We are the *gente rozza*.”

Beppe’s statement foregrounds the emic understanding that it is a common perception in the province of Grosseto that the Sieneese think of themselves as being of superior intelligence. At the same time, Beppe seemed unabashed in adopting the label of “*la gente rozza*” beyond simply seeing it as a label attributed to them by those from outside the province. Rather than suggesting that the Sieneese see the Grossetani as “*rozza*,” Beppe asserted that they *are* the “*gente rozza*,” accepting this appraisal. While the term literally translates as “rough people,” it has connotations of backwardness and may also be translated as “uncouth.” Beppe explained to me that *contadini* (farmers) like himself are “*rozza*.” He framed his emic understanding of this identity in part in terms of being relatively uneducated. He elaborated by telling me that farmers would not study in school for long, since their labor would be needed on the farm. Such a description resonates with historical patterns in this area and what other farmers of his

generation told me about their family backgrounds.

That Beppe used the word “*contadino*” in his self-description rather than a “modern” professional term such as “*imprenditore agricola*” also carries derogatory undertones based on its historical usage in Italy. In Italian, the term “*contadino*” has come to carry similar pejorative senses as the English “peasant” and the French “*paysan*” as being associated with the labels of “ignorant,” “stupid,” “rustic,” and “crass” or “rude” (Edelman 2013: 3). As anthropologist Marc Edelman points out, “these derogatory meanings are indicative both of peasants’ extreme subordination and of a ubiquitous elite practice of blaming peasants for a variety of economic and social ills [...] These elite imaginings were typically espoused in order to promote policies aimed at pushing peasants off the land and turning them in to laborers” (2013: 3).

In his commentary to me on an encounter he had with an agritourism guest that I mentioned previously, the label “*gente rozza*” came up again. Objecting to the way the young guest addressed him, Beppe said: ‘Signor Beppe, Signor Beppe!’ I don’t respond to this. It’s better if you call me *turzo* (stupid, in dialect). This I understand more because we’re *la gente rozza in campagna* (the rough people in the country).” This commentary illustrates how Beppe has willingly adopted a derogatory label – stupid – that he has explicitly connected with the category with which he associates himself – *la gente rozza*. This interpretation highlights how “self-stereotypes may be enacted for different means” (Herzfeld 1997: 207).

It is difficult to pinpoint the exact cultural meaning of the category of “*rozza*,” and the criteria upon which the label is based. I have observed that it carries different senses and is used for different means in different contexts. Beppe’s and other established farmer’s comments suggest that overall, it may serve locally as a sort of proxy for “tradition,” specifically traditional farming lifestyles in the region. Beppe’s judgments of two other farms that he

deemed to be more “backwards” than him illustrate this point. For example, as we were passing the Gallis’ farm one day, Beppe commented that they were “even more backwards” than him, farming using the methods of the past and living very frugally. He also made a similar comment about a ninety-year-old man and his daughter-in-law who have a small farm down the road from Beppe’s farm. Beppe said that being at their farm was like going “backwards” in time to the 1930s or 1940s.

First, Beppe’s self-identification of being “rough” or “backwards” and the associations of these labels with his livelihood as a farmer bears parallels to the process of transformation that Bourdieu (2007) examined in 1960s rural France. With class differentiation and symbolic domination, Bourdieu found that altered notions of personhood for French farmers, especially involving masculinity and marriage, were so strong that farmers struggled to even refer to themselves with the term “*paysan*” (peasant farmer) (Bourdieu 2007: 198).

Extending Bourdieu’s Beppe clearly articulated how the categories of *contadino* and *rozza* carry dual insider meanings, being sources of meaningful cultural identification with family backgrounds in farming but also pejorative and a locus of marginality. Similar frictions between rural and urban identities as mediated through processes of modernization have been identified in France (Rogers 1987), Spain (Collier 1986), and Italy (Krause 2005) as peasants become “loaded cultural categories” enacted for various political ends (Rogers 1987:60). Self-marginalizing discourses also figure strongly in these tensions.

Michael Herzfeld’s ethnography *The Body Impolitic: Artisans and Artifice in the Global Hierarchy of Value* (2004) of craftsmen and their apprentices in Rethemnos, Crete is insightful in unpacking the meaning and implications of Beppe’s usage of the category of “*rozza*.” Herzfeld’s notion of “the global hierarchy of value” is especially useful in illuminating the processes of self-

marginalization that I have observed of established farmers in Amiata in tourism encounters and beyond. The global hierarchy of value refers to the widespread dominance of certain neoliberal ideologies and policies that have “European and colonial origin,” which Herzfeld defines most simply as “the increasingly homogeneous language of culture and ethics” (2004: 2-3). It is “everywhere present but nowhere clearly definable” and “its very vagueness constitutes one source of its authority” (3). The global hierarchy of value bears relevance to areas undergoing tourism development such as Amiata, since it serves as “the hidden presence of a logic that has seeped in everywhere but is everywhere disguised as difference, heritage, local tradition” (2004: 2). He elaborates:

...some attitudes appear to have become universal after all. Notions such as efficiency, fair play, civility, civil society, human rights, transparency, cooperation, and tolerance serve as global yardsticks for particular patterns of interaction. Startlingly, even ‘diversity’ can become a homogenous product. So, too, can tradition and heritage: the particular is itself universalized (2004: 2).

In his ethnography, Herzfeld examines how Cretan artisans as a social group have “embodied” these global values, therefore reproducing them even as they may seemingly attempt to resist them (21).

In Amiata, similar processes of self-marginalization and stereotyping are at work. Even cultural insiders themselves judge their cultural particularities in terms of the global hierarchy of values, with some aspects of their culture or identity becoming sources of shame. In Herzfeld’s words, “people make disparaging comments about their own local cultures because they are

already judging them by an intrusive set of standards,” meaning those determined by the global hierarchy of value (21). In this way, actors “absorb and reproduce the unflattering portrait” that is drawn of them and also inculcate “the next generation in the same systemic self-marginalization” while restricting their possibilities for upward mobility, leaving them “trapped in the judgmental vise of the global hierarchy of value” (32, 194).

Herzfeld’s point that power lies in the determination of value is apt, which he phrases as “who decides the criteria of sophistication” (25) and who has “control of the criteria” of evaluation (207). Such a frame of analysis is in line with Bourdieu’s thinking on the judgment of taste and distinction (1984) and a Bourdieusian understanding of occupational habitus (1977). Herzfeld summarizes:

Where Western European bourgeois intellectuals and executives can respectively formulate and propagate a seemingly universalistic ranking of distinctions – for which Paris was always, after all, famous – artisans in the periphery can display their talents only within a decidedly localized and antimodernist space. The Rethemniot artisans do not control the criteria of taste for the ‘tradition’ that they supposedly embody, produce, and represent (207).

This statement also resonates with the language Bourdieu uses to describe that French farmers became “members of a class dispossessed of the power to define its own identity” (2007: 198).

In the Greek context, “tradition” is one such source of desirability that is constructed in accordance with the global hierarchy of value and Herzfeld documents how a sort of “picturesque backwardness” may be used as an economic resource in tourist economies and heritage sites. The “traditional” – articulated through a variety of cultural forms – becomes

both a “pedestal” and a “tethering post” for locals, as it is simultaneously revered and marginalized, serving as both a source of empowerment and repression. Such dynamics are similarly documented in the case of Sardinia, where shepherds become a symbol of authenticity in rural tourism through the promotion of “lunch with the shepherds” gastronomic tourism. In reality, such gastronomic constructions of authenticity are underpinned by more complex, often non-local and industrial, chains of food production and sourcing (Satta 2002).

Established Amiatan farmers’ assessments of themselves as “rough” or “backwards” by identifying with the category of “*rozza*” is an example of them adopting the judgments of cultural inferiority established by the “yardsick” of the global hierarchy of value (Herzfeld 2004: 2) which are also historically informed by the sharecropping system. For example, when Beppe and I were moving a large, *Maremmana* cow into the stall, the cow resisted and we had a difficult time fitting its large horns between the bars. As he struggled, Beppe exclaimed, “*Maremma maiala! Ignoranti come noi maremmani!*” (“Maremma pig! Ignorant like us, the Maremmans!).

Beppe noted a split relationship with the label of “*rozza*,” with it taking on both positive and negative associations. When he would joke with other farmers about how they are unwilling to be “commanded” by others and claim their independence and autonomy, “*rozza*” took on a positive force, even serving as a source of pride. Beppe and farmers of his generation frequently reaffirmed this identification with autonomy. The category of “*rozza*” seems to resonate with the agrarian values of farming as a lifestyle among established farmers in Amiata, revolving around the autonomy and independence of farm work, and ultimately, not having to take orders from anyone. Agritourism impinges to a large extent on these values.

When Beppe was forced to respond to guests’ complaints or desires, he often reacted

with indifference. In his commentary to me after such occurrences, two phrases figured prominently. First, *“non importa una sega”* (literally, “it doesn’t matter a saw”). This phrase is a local idiom for expressing a lack of caring. Another phrase was also commonly used by Beppe and other established farmers when they were put in the position especially of having to respond to their agritourism guests or their wives – *“rompere i coglioni”* (to break one’s balls). This phrase both expressed their frustration and served to protect their image as being independent. While *“rozza”* may refer positively to this reluctance to take orders from others and to protect one’s autonomy and independence for established farmers, it may also take on a negative meaning. Being too *“rozza”* – as the Gallis or the old man had been deemed by Beppe – could leave one in the dust of modernity, and at worst, make them relics in a sort of “living museum” (Herzfeld 2004: 19).

Finally, *“rozza”* could also be used as a means of self-effacement in affirming a certain class affiliation among established farmers and distinguishing them from other categories of farmers, especially ex-urban, educated neo-rurals. The case of Beppe suggesting that it would be more sensible for the Italian guest to call him “stupid” than “sir/mister” because he is in the category of *“rozza,”* illustrates this point. He also emphasized how farmers of his generation are typically uneducated. The category of *“rozza”* can function not just as an opposition between the two provinces as Beppe had initially told me, but is also used to articulate cultural and class differences more widely. In this case, a little Italian girl’s urban politeness and deference clearly run up against a local farmers’ self-image and identity. This encounter also clearly highlights classed differences in ideas about appropriate manners and language usage and how they establish difference (Bourdieu 1984).

The next chapter investigates a wider range of established farming livelihoods and the

strategies these farmers employ. In several of these scenarios, the processes of marginalization and class distinction outlined in this chapter in the case of Beppe are also at work, highlighting the unfolding, subtle forms of distinction between established farmers and neo-rurals as established farmers struggle to carve out a place for themselves in the emerging landscape of Tuscan neo-rurality.

CHAPTER 4 | ROOTED IN AMIATA: TRANSFORMATIONS OF ESTABLISHED FARMING

LIVELIHOODS

The concept of repeasantization elides some important dimensions of identity, power, and inequality. Van der Ploeg (2008, 2016) suggests that repeasantization involves “decreasing dependency” of farming livelihoods on industrial inputs and wage labor. However, data from Amiata rather points to nascent forms of dependency, revealing hidden actors and illuminating emerging forms of rural economic and social inequality. It has been claimed elsewhere that “agroecological short-circuit production farms” tend to depend on European Union subsidies through agritourism and development projects, in addition to off-farm employment wages and creating alliances with consumers (Holt 2007; Narotzky 2016: 309). These constitute strategies that do not suggest a clear increase in producer autonomy, but rather dependency on off-farm employment, European subsidies, or the need to create new relationships with consumers. Further, research elsewhere in Italy has suggested that attempted alliances of “co-production” between consumers and producers in alternative food networks may be wrought with tension and not always clearly beneficial to producer livelihoods (Grasseni 2014).

In Amiata, my research has revealed that small and medium-scale farmers increasingly rely on agritourism, specialized wine and olive oil production, and organic production as strategies. They also often depend on a supply of temporary or permanent migrant or volunteer farm labor as family size has shrunk in Italy (Krause 2009). But agritourism requires significant capital investments, command of certain forms of cultural capital, the skills to navigate European bureaucratic structures, and a broad reliance on steady national or

international flows of tourism. Such tourist flows are contingent upon a desirable construction of the landscape of Amiata, a characteristic many feel is under threat with the recent and continuing expansion of highly visible geothermal power plants around the mountain (The Economist, 2015). Moreover, many established farmers feel excluded from agritourism and other avenues of receiving rural development funding support.

This chapter focuses on the shifting strategies of established farmers in Amiata, meaning farmers who are at least the second generation in their family to farm. Some have taken on agritourism, while others have attempted other paths such as specialization in wine or olive oil production. Few have maintained the diversified farming that has been historically practiced in this area. The overall picture in Amiata does not present one of decreasing dependency as outlined by Van der Ploeg (2008, 2016), but rather, agrarian livelihoods that are in profound and often uncertain transition. This chapter follows from the historical conditions of Amiata outlined in Chapter 2 to examine contemporary dynamics of rural change by ethnographically presenting the changing realities of established farmers in Amiata.

ETHNOGRAPHIC PORTRAITS OF ESTABLISHED FARMING LIVELIHOODS

The case studies I outline portray the lived realities and strategies of six distinct established farming livelihoods in Amiata which illustrate the range of farming strategies employed by established farmers. The cases include farms that use different farming styles, engage with international niche markets, and may or may not have children involved in the farm. This collection of ethnographic portraits relates the lived realities and implications of agritourism and other paths as farm decision-making strategies and rural development

initiatives in Amiata. I pay particular attention to household dimensions of farming strategies, including marital cooperation, involvement of children, hired labor, and changing relationships between farm and family. These issues are given deeper treatment in Chapter 6, which compares established and neo-rural constructions of the agritourism experience, forms of distinction and sophistication, and symbolic meanings.

Ethnographic Portrait: THE GALLIS, a “traditional” Amiatan family farm

One of the first stories I heard during fieldwork involved the Galli family down the road from the small farm where I was living. The family had maintained a mixed farm in the valley for generations, sharing the large farmhouse between the grandparents, parents, and children. Since after land reform in the 1950s, the family had gradually expanded its land by small plots over the years, while carefully avoiding taking on any debt. At a time when most farms were selling off or giving away animals, they maintained a mix of cows, sheep, goats, rabbits, chickens, geese, and ducks, including many local heritage breeds that were selected primarily for their ecological suitability and the family’s generational knowledge of the breeds. The eldest son eagerly learned the specialized crafts of pruning and grafting fruit and olive trees from his grandfather, while working alongside the family. Over dinner one night, a neighbor told me how, as the grandfather aged and his health declined, he came to the realization that he could no longer work and contribute to the farm and family as he always had. He led his wife, also largely unable to work by then, out to the stable and shot her first and then himself. His grandson discovered them as he went to tend to the cows that evening.

This story remained in the back of my mind throughout my fieldwork, and its instructive value came into sharper focus as I was exposed to different farming and family contexts. While this story is certainly not representative of family farms writ large in Amiata, the case of this family is illustrative of the profound changes that have occurred in rural life in Western Europe over the past half century, marked by aging farmers, rural depopulation, structural transformations in the scale of farming, and challenges to family farming livelihoods. It also hints at the preponderance of depression, alcoholism, and suicide in this economically marginal area.

Most importantly, it is indicative of the emerging gulf between the old generations of farm families and the new in terms of values, farm welfare, and class-based divisions. The Gallis are one of the few truly mixed farms based around family labor remaining in Amiata. They have 40 hectares of land, with 60% consisting of pasture for animals, 20% olive groves, 10% vineyards, and 10% forest. When I went to interview this family and visit the farm, I was struck by the extent of apparent family unity and devotion to the farm enterprise. During the interview, all members of the family were present without my suggesting it, and they spoke with balanced voices, with the exception of the youngest son, who was less involved with the farm and planned to find an off-farm job.

As I arrived, it was clear that they took their appointment to talk with me and show me the farm seriously, and each family member had stopped their evening's work to participate in the conversation. They also cordially insisted on me having coffee and wafers with them. Since Elsa is their neighbor and she introduced us, she also joined us for coffee. When Mara, the mother, opened the cabinet to retrieve the coffee and wafers, I noticed its emptiness. We sat with Mara at a simple table in a room that served as the kitchen and the dining room. The

room was sparse, with a small oven, a wood stove with a large pot on top, and a few Madonnas and family photos as the only adornments. The pot simmering on the wood stove made me think of the descriptions I had read of sharecropping families, with an ever-present pot efficiently cooking soup or beans. The table was covered with a simple plastic plaid tablecloth. The two sons and father remained standing as we spoke, and I noticed the younger son was more removed from the conversation, both physically and verbally. Andrea, the older son, was animated and talkative. While he answered questions very willingly and took charge, the dynamics between the family members seemed equal, with Andrea allowing everyone to speak. Mara spoke somewhat less, but she was quite expressive with her face. While Elsa told me that Mara was around 45 years old, her tired face made her appear ten years older.

Mara explained to me that her father bought this land during the period of land reform “from having nothing” and that her grandfather was also a farmer. They began to live on this land when Mara was four years old, and before that they lived on a smaller plot up the road. Mara’s father gradually accumulated more small plots of land, buying each with cash.

Driving by the farm daily, I would see the family members sharing the work of the farm. The Gallis work steadily throughout the year, and January is the only month when they can slow down somewhat. They complete the work of the grape and olive harvests together as a family. They decided to mechanize the olive harvest with hand-held branch shakers four years ago, which saves a good deal of time. Mara tends to the housework and cooking, milks the sheep and cows in the morning and evening, takes care of the rabbits and chickens, and helps to clean the chestnut forest. Mara said she most enjoys seeing the lambs being born and that she dislikes housework. She laughed as she said this, but stood by her answer, even surrounded by the males in her family. She also pointed out that milking by hand is quite tiring and occupies a

good deal of her time, both in the morning and in the evening. Her husband, Mario, manages the vineyard, tends to the cows, operates the tractor, and assists his son with the olive grove and the garden. Mario enjoys working in the vineyard and using the tractor most. He singled out cleaning the sheep stable as the worst work. Andrea, the twenty-five year old son, tends to the animals and has the specialized knowledge to tell when the rabbits and other animals are pregnant and to monitor their health. He also oversees the animal breeding and plans the reproduction of the different species. He prunes the fruit and olive trees, does the straw baling for the animals, and helps his father with the garden. Andrea most enjoys pruning and grafting trees, reflecting the very specialized knowledge that he shared with his grandfather. Andrea lit up whenever he talked about the work of the farm, and he hesitated for a long time in coming up with a task he did not enjoy. Eventually he echoed his father's distaste for cleaning the sheep stable. The youngest son, Filippo, assists occasionally but is primarily occupied with going to school and is considering eventually joining the police force. He also suffers from asthma and seems less interested in the farm.

Like many small farms, the Galli farm has felt the strains of falling profits and increasing costs of production with the globalization of agribusiness over the past half-century. They have also run up against the time and monetary costs of growing bureaucratic incursion and regulation. When I asked the Gallis if they had considered taking on agritourism, Mara said that their friends had also asked them about agritourism and suggested they give it a try. But the Gallis were frank about feeling incapable of taking on extra work without additional help, especially considering that Mara could not also tend to the *agriturismo* in addition to her other responsibilities. They were also insecure about their ability to host tourists, since they lacked English language and computer skills. They would never consider hiring help, but the mother

said that perhaps it would be possible if her eldest son found '*una bella fidanzata*' (a nice fiancé). But she also noted how difficult it would be for Andrea to find a wife who would be content with a modest farming lifestyle. The Gallis have a lifestyle that has become increasingly disparate from Italian norms for lifestyle and material consumption, even in rural areas. Many of their household needs come from the farm and they exercise a frugality that relies as little as possible on a cash income.

The Gallis have fought admirably to keep down their farming and living expenses, while all of their family income comes from the farm's production (50% from meat, 20% from olive oil, 20% from wine, eggs, cheese, and any other products, and 10% from chestnuts). They sell the meat directly to a butcher in town, the olives to a nearby *frantoio* (olive press), the chestnuts to a cooperative, and other products such as rabbits, eggs, or cheese to people who come to the farm directly. They have decided not to bottle their wine or oil for sale because there is too much bureaucracy involved. Eighty percent of their expenses go to taxes, and this figure says a good deal about their ability to keep their overall expenses low. The machines they use require fuel and oil, but they attempt to do as many of the repairs as they can themselves and the youngest son's experience studying mechanics has proven useful. They use the compost from the animals in the garden, and the only input they use is a natural sulfur spray for the grapes. While they use organic cultivation methods, they have not had the interest or need for organic certification. They do not have a mortgage or any labor costs, except hiring out the work of pruning the chestnut trees every ten years or so. This pruning is dangerous work that requires equipment and specialized skills, so they are willing to pay to outsource this labor. Elsa told me that pruning the chestnut trees is quite expensive, costing 40-100 euros per plant.

When I asked the Gallis about their hopes for the future, they were unanimous in agreeing that they will continue to make conservative choices and avoid risks, mostly keeping the farm on its current course. As Andrea said, the expression “don’t take a step longer than your leg” resonates with the family. They plan to gradually mechanize some aspects of the farm, but only as their budget allows. They staunchly refuse to take on credit and debt. They hope to eventually purchase a straw baler and a machine for milking, a proposition that Mara heartily endorsed since it would save her a good deal of time milking the animals. The family unanimously agreed that health was most important to them, an attitude that resonates with Carol Counihan’s documentation of the common Tuscan Florentine expression “*basta la salute*” (health is enough) (Counihan 2004: 33).

Ethnographic Portrait: THE MARINOS, an “out of fashion” farming lifestyle

As I pulled up the drive to Franco’s farm, I saw him on the tractor down by the sprawling rows of vines. He waved to me and brought the tractor up the drive. Franco was in his late-sixties, wore a plaid cotton shirt, a Volvo cap, and dirty jeans. One of his light blue eyes was clouded with red, likely from an olive branch during the pruning. Franco was very modest and friendly as he introduced himself, saying he was at my disposal, although he was not sure what he could offer. As we shook hands, I noticed their dry roughness and strength. We entered the wine cellar through a large garage-style door, which was directly below the house. A small dog trailed at our heels. Franco hunted around for another chair and pulled it over to a simple wooden table cluttered with the sundry objects of the wine cellar – labels, beakers, numbers

chicken-scratched on a pad, pencil stubs, a few corks. The smell of the aging wine burned at my nostrils and made me feel slightly woozy.

Franco and his brother have always farmed this land, first as a mixed farm with cereals and animals in addition to the vines and olives. More recently, they have specialized in wine and olive oil production. During the period of sharecropping, the land that Franco's family sharecropped included the current farmland. The farm consisted of 120 hectares and was owned by the primary landowner in the area, Azienda Avanzati, forming part of their significant 2,000 hectare land holding. Their name is still well known among residents in the area, and a monument to the patriarch of the family stands in the town's park that overlooks the surrounding fields, memorializing how the family rendered the area "fertile and healthy." Franco's family had worked this land at least since the 1870s, when his great-grandfather worked as a sharecropper. At this time, it was a mixed farm with cereals, pastured animals, vines, and olive trees. In 1953, the *mezzadria* ended in this area, and as the land reform agency, the Ente Maremma, divided the land, his grandfather received 40 hectares. During the 1950s land redistribution, Franco told me that there was a trend toward greater mechanization, a fact that was in line with the regional history I had read.

Franco shared many of his family's stories from the period of sharecropping, speaking animatedly despite his shy nature. As he began, he recited a common refrain of his generation of farmers in reference to the poverty and hardship of the agrarian past, quietly saying "*povero babbo, povero nonno*" [my poor father, my poor grandfather] (Counihan 2004). Although Franco would have been between 5 and 8 years old when land reform occurred, he seemed to remember the inequality of the past quite viscerally, probably through the stories that have been passed along in his family, which seemed to figure prominently in his memory. He told me

that while half of what was produced on the land went to the owner and half went to the *mezzadri* (sharecroppers), “it was not equal.” The best of everything went to the owner and the owner did not contribute any of the labor. In the later years of the *mezzadria*, the sharecroppers had to fight very hard to receive an increase to 52% of the farm’s production.

Sharecropping families worked constantly, and even children as young as 7 years old would participate in the work. Franco recalled that children would walk at least an hour to town for school and after school they would drop their books at home and go to the fields to look after the animals. Fortunately, by the time Franco was young, a small school had been opened closer to the farm. Franco told me that women played a significant role in taking care of the children and protecting them from hunger. In the days of the *mezzadria*, their diet was based on *pane e formaggio* (bread and cheese), and Franco told me amusedly that while he understands that people now eagerly seek out good bread and cheese, he is “just tired of it.”

Stories of oppression and abuse by the landowners were a theme in Franco’s stories. When the sharecroppers married, the owner had the right to spend the first night with the wife. The young sons of the landowners would come and destroy the fields with their horses and claim that the sharecroppers were not working. The women would painstakingly take *ricotta* to town for it to be sold by the landowner, and much of it would end up being thrown away, a difficult reality to witness during a time of hunger and scarcity for the sharecroppers. But the sharecroppers also developed a “spirit of protest” and strategies in the face of such oppression, sometimes refusing to do the work of separating the wheat from the grass during the harvest, threatening spoilage and a dearth of bread for everyone, including the landowners.

Franco and his brother now live and work on the farm with their wives. Franco’s wife is involved in the farm, tending to the house and handling the *venditta diretta* (direct sales) of

their wine and oil. His brother's wife has a job off the farm and Franco and his brother devote all of their time to the farm. Franco has two sons and his brother has a son, but none of them work on the farm. In their case, their disinterest in working on the farm is not related to an aversion to farming work. Both of Franco's sons work for a wage at the nearby Banfi vineyards. This creates a curious – and in Franco's eyes wistful – juxtaposition in which the sons of a small-scale winemaker are employed for a wage by one of Italy's major commercial winemakers.

Back in the 1970s when Franco and his brother purchased an additional 20 hectares of land to expand production and also invested in improvements to the farm, they were thinking of their sons' eventual involvement in the farm. Franco referred to it as "building something" for their sons. But now, instead of having their help, he and his brother must work even harder to keep up with their expansion, a challenge as they age. As Franco said several times, "*noi siamo vecchi*" [we're old]. But since they cannot afford to pay their sons a set salary from the returns of the farm, they have left the farm and sought wage work. Franco explained that the pension he receives is only around 500 or 600 euros a month, and he still has had to continue working. He expressed frustration, suggesting that the government had given workers hope in the past for a livable pension but now "*siamo rimasti fregati*" [we've been cheated]. Franco repeated several times during our conversation that he and his brother were getting old.

Franco was also aware of how younger generations have come to desire a quality of life and material possessions that a farming lifestyle cannot afford. He said that he and his brother are accustomed to living with less, and they eat at a restaurant only two or three times a year for special occasions. But their sons and their families have other expectations that require the income guaranteed by a wage. He mentioned that the province was attempting to recruit

younger farmers through some initiatives, but that they had little positive impact and access to farming remains a problem, which he called “*un peccato*” [a shame].

Franco seemed quite reflexive about his generation and how different it is from younger generations today. He suggested that his generation is unusual because it has gone “*dalla zappa al computer*” [from the hoe to the computer], seeing both the changes associated with post-war development and the present high-tech, globalized economy. “*Noi siamo fuori moda,*” [we’re out of fashion], he admitted. This statement reflects an awareness of the growing gulf between his generation’s agrarian values rooted in the shared experience of the sharecropping past and his sons’ generation’s emphasis on disposable income and material consumption.

Franco and his brother decided to specialize in wine production, since the land was especially attuned for *sangiovese* production and the newly established DOC Montecucco (*denominazione di origine controllata*, controlled designation of origin) in 1998 held promise for ensuring value added. They were one of the earliest participants to produce for the DOC. This strategy is in line with their emphasis on quality over quantity, a notion highlighted on their website. They opt out of producing the maximum amount possible on their land, and instead focus on ensuring the quality of the grapes produced. While the rules of the DOC would allow them to produce up to 90 quarts per hectare, they produce only 60-70 quarts per hectare. They own 60 hectares of land, producing wine on 5 hectares, olives on 3.5 hectares, and the rest of the land is devoted to cereals, forage, or forest. Specialization in wine production and quality production through the DOC have been the main strategies of Franco and his brother, in addition to selling some of their production directly to customers. The wine they sell directly is not bottled, but rather *vino sfuso*, generally the inferior wine from a given harvest that is meant to be consumed young. Customers include locals, who would come to buy the affordable wine

with their own large vessels to be filled. Alternatively, the farm also supplies large cartons. Primarily, Franco exports bottled wine to an Italian importer in San Francisco. He would also like to sell more in the United States and in Japan, but they only do limited marketing. Franco seldom sells in Italy, and he said that he does not trust restaurants and wine shops much as a sales channel, since he has had bad experiences getting paid for the products he sells. I was surprised to find that Franco had traveled to San Francisco to visit the importer, and he also mentioned traveling to Barcelona.

Until eight years ago, Franco and his brother also had livestock. However, they got rid of the animals because of increasing bureaucratic requirements. He referred to the bureaucracy and hygiene controls required for animals as being “*le cose assurde*” [absurdities] and “*controsenso*” [nonsense]. It has become increasingly necessary to pay certain organizations for inspections, veterinarians, and protocols. For example, he explained to me that in the past, if an animal died it was easy to bury the animal by simply calling someone with a tractor. It was a hygienic, simple solution that did not cost anything or place an unnecessary burden on the farmer.

But now, it is not only impossible to do that, but it is punishable by imprisonment. When an animal dies, the farmer must call a truck to come and take it away. The last time he did this, he had to call the truck to come from Orvieto – nearly 100 kilometers away – and the truck was dirty with the blood of other animals when it arrived to pick up the dead animal on a hot summer day. Then, it had to travel more than two hours through many towns simply to get rid of the animal. Franco argued that if health was really the concern, the risk of infection seems much worse through this system than by burying the animal in an appropriate place nearby as had been done in the past. This procedure must now be followed for any animal, and

it cost 250 euros when he got rid of the animal eight years ago. Interestingly, Franco did not mention falling profitability or purely economic motivations for stopping livestock rearing, but rather highlighted the bureaucratic reasons and the economic ramifications of bureaucratic encroachment. He sees such measures as taking control and independence away from the farmer, in addition to straining already limited farm economies.

Franco was strongly skeptical of organic certification, seeing it as *“una truffa”* [a scam] and he said that he would never consider organic production. He mentioned the example of a nearby farm selling organic meat but he knows that they buy forage from farms all around the area and that it is treated with herbicides. Franco could not understand how the meat could still be considered organic. He also expressed some frustration with the system of financial support for farming. Rural development funds are awarded to farms on the basis of the number of points they accumulate for having certain attributes, including gender of the farm owner, crops produced, whether or not production is organic, and other factors. He was irritated that organic farms receive so many points and consequently, end up being much more competitive for funding support. However, he did not seem against organic production methods, stating that he is careful to use the minimum amount of chemicals necessary to protect his olives and vines, and seeming quite proud of this.

Nor has agritourism been a viable strategy for Franco and his brother. They did experiment with renting a room in the house on a few occasions, but they decided not to continue. He said that one family was not happy with the experience, but that they were largely unable to communicate well enough to understand or remedy their dissatisfaction. Franco said that experiences like that could potentially cause them to lose wine customers, which is their primary avenue of income. Franco did suggest that someone with more skills

could probably have greater success with agritourism – someone who had a good handle of technology, languages, and marketing. He also does not have much faith in Amiata as a reliable enough place for tourism because of its distance from the sea and from Siena and he suggested tourism is intermittent rather than steady. But he mostly emphasized that to do agritourism, one must “*fare una figura*” (make an impression, a phrase which is further discussed in Chapter 6). He also identified the strategy of agritourism as potentially jeopardizing their main enterprise – selling wine. These attitudes reflect his discomfort and lack of confidence in being able to conduct agritourism well enough to ensure the satisfaction of guests. Ultimately, Franco did not feel that he and his brother had the forms of cultural capital necessary to successfully take on agritourism.

When I asked Franco about his goals and motivations for the future, he paused for awhile and turned his eyes down. Eventually, he said he was content enough if things stayed more or less the same, reflecting a conservative approach. He would like to expand selling for his wines in the U.S. and Japan. But he also repeated that he and his brother are getting old and are working harder than ever and are without their sons. For this, he did not mention a solution or signal much hope.

Opting Out of Agritourism and EU Rural Development Initiatives

The Gallis and the Marinos share a common past of family sharecropping histories and experiencing the contexts of land reform and the mechanization of farming. But they have adopted different strategies and trajectories for their farms. Despite taking distinct paths and

having different family and work configurations, neither family has decided to take on agritourism.

The Gallis have continued a pattern of mixed farming for both household production and sale, while earning all of their income from farming and keeping their expenses low. This strategy is enabled at least in part by the devotion of one of their sons to the farm and the willingness of the family as a unit to abide by a frugal lifestyle. But these conditions have also made it difficult for their son to meet a suitable partner. If Andrea is able to find a wife who is willing to assist in the farm and household, they may consider taking on agritourism since their house is large enough. However, this strategy would be dependent on them developing the language skills, technological know-how, and hospitality services necessary while also navigating the bureaucratic structures required by agritourism. The family members seemed satisfied enough with the course of their farm, though, and I did not get the impression they were eager to open an *agriturismo*.

The Marinos, on the other hand, gave up the mixed farming that was characteristic of their family's past and decided to specialize in wine production for an international market. Linking up ten years ago with the newly established DOC enabled them to produce high quality wine that has become internationally recognizable. They are disappointed that their sons have decided not to work on the farm, and now they are forced to work even harder to keep up with the expansion and investments they gradually made in the farm. Franco repeatedly expressed his concern about aging and the uncertain future of the farm. Franco and his brother do not seem interested in considering agritourism, having tried it in the past, but they are also fundamentally limited by being overloaded with their farm work and only having one wife working at home full-time.

The cases of these families are instructive for understanding the combination of factors that may lead farmers to opt out of agritourism and instead pursue other strategies. Both farms are limited by available labor and share a strong aversion to hiring labor. Franco reluctantly hired labor for the first time in the past year to assist with the cleaning of the vineyard. Similarly, the Gallis acknowledge the necessity of hiring labor for pruning the chestnut trees. But neither would consider hiring part-time labor to make the strategy of agritourism possible, and the only way of increasing farm labor is through family expansion. This suggests that economically, agritourism may not be a viable strategy for farm families with certain family labor constraints.

Labor is not the only limiting factor in the adoption of agritourism, nor is hiring labor likely to be an adequate solution for families that feel ill equipped to manage the tourist presence. Agritourism also requires certain skills and aptitudes that are related to cultural capital. For instance, Franco's reactions after his experimentation with agritourism reflect deep-seated doubt about his family's ability to successfully engage with tourists. He pointed out lacking language, technological, and marketing skills. The Gallis echoed these concerns. Franco was also skeptical about engaging with tourism being a viable and appropriate strategy for the area of Amiata, since he sees tourism as being intermittent and unreliable. The limitations these families expressed in the possibility of taking on agritourism draw critical attention to the importance of socio-cultural factors in farm decision-making and the potentially exclusionary facets of agritourism as a rural development and household strategy.

Rural development funding programs have been similarly exclusionary for these farms, which can be a significant source of farm support in areas that are deemed to be marginal like Amiata. Franco accused the EU of "creating a lot of illusions" through their rural development

funding schemes, called the *Piano di Sviluppo Rurale* (PSR, Rural Development Plan). For example, they were thinking about expanding their wine cellar and applying for PSR funding to assist with the project. Their project was accepted by the local funding agency, the *Comunità Montana*, and they were ready to begin the expansion. But in the end, they decided to abort the project because of the cost. While they expected to receive funding upfront, they were actually expected to make the full investment with an undetermined return to be received only at least a year after completion of the project. They ended up viewing this as “a trap,” and they were also unwilling to take on the debt necessary for the investment. They are struggling with space in the wine cellar now, but Franco was adamant that this was preferable to taking such a significant financial risk. While Franco and his brother were able to apply for the funding and be awarded the support, they would not commit to a program that required them to take on debt.

The Gallis were similarly suspicious of funding support and they have never applied. Even though they were encouraged by their farmer’s association to participate, they still did not trust the system of investing all of the money up front. Nor is it in line with their conservative way of gradually expanding the farm without taking on credit or debt. Andrea’s advice, “don’t take a step longer than your leg,” reflects this attitude. While the Gallis would like to mechanize certain aspects of the farm as they get older, they will only do so gradually and when they can afford the investments. They had written off PSR funding as a possibility, though.

These accounts illustrate that EU agricultural and rural development policies are not value-free. They actively promote and reward certain values, farm decision-making strategies, and farm management styles. In their current incarnation, PSR funding schemes seem to encourage a riskier style of farm decision-making in the form of large upfront investments, which almost inevitably require taking credit from a bank. This prospect causes a significant

amount of unease for established farm families like the Gallis and the Marinos since it is fundamentally at odds with their conservative farm and household decision-making compasses that attempt to minimize risk.

Both the Gallis and the Marinos suggested that the external conditions of farming have become more difficult in recent years. For instance, the Marinos reported receiving some government support in the 1990s, but that with the changes in rural development policy and phasing out of direct payments to farmers, they now receive very little support, in addition to feeling excluded from being able to receive PSR funds.

Members of both farms also complained about recent increases in property taxes with the institution of the IMU (*Imposta Municipale Propria*) tax. The IMU rate is based on square meter of land, including farmland and stables. It represents the first time that agricultural land has been taxed in Italy. Farmers in Amiata were at least grateful that their land was exempt from the IMU, since Amiata is recognized by EU rural development policy as a Less Favored Area (LFA). One chestnut producer who has an *agriturismo* even said that if the IMU was applied to his land, he would have to sell his farm because he would be unable to pay the taxes on the land and buildings. Even without the IMU on the land, his taxes constituted half of the farm's expenses. The Gallis complained about recent tax increases, including having to pay 500 euros a year for the maintenance of the road that crosses their property. They also must pay taxes for the maintenance of the river that runs through their property.

The Gallis explained that the IMU and other service charges are not sensitive to the realities of farm life. For instance, when charges for trash are being calculated, it is based on square meter of the house, rather than the number of people in the household or any other measures. They suggested that a farm – especially a farm like theirs that is run with closed

loops that composts and recycles many items – creates less waste and this should also be considered. Many farmers shared the feeling that policy and governance structures are largely “blind” and insensitive to the realities of farming livelihoods and their attempts to survive through agricultural production.

Ethnographic Portrait: THE VALENTIS, a family farm and *agriturismo*

Nico Valenti forgot we had scheduled a time to meet by telephone, and his mother walked me down from the *agriturismo* to the wine cellar where he was working. He plodded out in his high yellow rain boots and greeted me warmly. He started speaking to me in very good English, and we continued our conversation in a mix of English and Italian. I learned that Nico’s family on both sides has been in agriculture for generations. After land reform, his father and his mother’s family each had a farm nearby. When they married, they bought another farm and eventually in 1989 they invested in the current farm. In the past they had pigs, sheep, and cows, but they have scaled back since.

Nico explained that he and his brother, both in their early 30s, have largely taken over the farm since 2012, although their parents are still deeply involved in some aspects. They have nearly a hundred hectares of land on which they produce wine, olive oil, raise *Chianina* cattle, and grow cereals and grasses for the cattle through crop rotation. Both brothers attended college in Florence, and Nico serves as the enologist while his brother acts as the agronomist. Nico proudly referred to the farm as a mixed farm, in holding with the agricultural heritage of this area. Sales account for 80% of the farm income, with 40% coming from wine (15,000

bottles per year), 40% from the cattle and crops, and 20% from oil (3,000 bottles per year). The wine is produced using organic methods, although the farm is not certified organic. The wine is also part of the DOC system and it is sold in Europe, South Korea, Israel, and the U.S., in addition to some restaurants and wine shops in Italy. Nico and his family also run an *agriturismo* in two houses, which accounts for 20% of the farm's earnings. The *agriturismo* is broken up into apartments with shared common areas, capable of sleeping 14 guests. Nico's mother cooks for the guests, and showcases dishes that feature Slow Food endorsed regional products and ingredients sourced from the farm. To locate agritourism guests they work with three agencies and the guests come mostly from Scandinavian countries.

Nico is primarily in charge of the vineyard and the wine cellar, as well as the marketing and bureaucracy related to the farm. He also seemed to take pride in being the one to operate the tractor in the cereal fields. Nico works hard, and he told me that he had been working since 5am that morning. He conceded that one must work "when it is time to work" and that "nature doesn't wait." His father and brother feed the animals in the morning and evening and they also tend to the olive trees and help with the vineyard. His mother handles the operations of the *agriturismo*, including cooking for the guests. Marco complained about needing more labor to help with the work of the farm. He did mention occasionally hiring part-time, temporary labor at peak times of year through contract labor (*agriservizi* will be discussed in chapter 5).

The education of Nico and his brother seems to have paid off in terms of accessing PSR funding. They successfully applied for PSR funding to complete expansions and renovation of their wine cellar, which they completed over the course of eight months around a year ago. They are now waiting on the return from the funding agency on their investment through credit, which could range from 30-60% of their total investment. Nico thought it was very important to

have access to these sources of funding to enable farm investments. He also suggested that these programs generate jobs in the territory, for instance, in building and restoration. He suspects that many farms stay open because of the subsidies from the EU. Crop prices are often so low that farms cannot survive without the subsidies, and if the subsidies stop, it would be disastrous for farms. He reflected on the fact that 30 years ago, grain farming dominated in this area, but since then it has mostly stopped because of falling prices and globalization. Now much of Italy's grain is imported from Canada and he also suspected that a lot of grain comes from newer EU countries where the cost of labor is lower, and he said that the global free market without regulation is problematic for sustaining farming livelihoods. While Nico said he would prefer to have a stable, reliable price for his crops that would enable survival rather than relying on subsidies, he understands how important they have become.

Nico also expressed frustration with the EU's policies on green energy. He said that in the PSR funds, the return for green energy is a guaranteed 60%, which is the maximum. Ten years ago, the PSR subsidized a lot of solar panels in the area, and some farmers ended up covering entire hectares of land with them. He called putting solar panels on the soil "stupid" and insisted that "agriculture must make business with the soil, not with solar panels." The excess energy produced is sold to companies like Enel, the main corporate interest in the controversial expansion of geothermal energy in Amiata. Nico was not against solar power per se, and suggested that putting them on the roof of a house or barn was perfectly sensible. But he saw farmers "planting" solar panels as being a diversion from real farming, and the EU's substantial resources devoted to supporting them through policies that should be supporting food production as being hypocritical.

Nico was a veritable source of knowledge about farming and the history and conditions of Amiata and I was surprised to hear someone so young speak about local history. He saw it as important to have a mixed farm, saying it is good for the farm economy because conditions in some years may be unfavorable for certain crops. Mixed farming diversifies risk. He drew a contrast between the nearby Montalcino area and Amiata. In Montalcino, farming is intensive and more or less only vineyards and possibly also olive groves. There are generally not animals in the farming system of Montalcino. He also said that in Montalcino, very large investments are often made by people who are not really involved in the production, instead hiring people to work for them and taking on an absentee landowner role. He emphasized that in Amiata there are more family farms, whereas in Montalcino he thinks less than 20% are “traditional” mixed farms. He also highlighted that generational change is a problem in Amiata. The younger generation leaves Amiata to study and they “think the future is in the city.” Yet, if the “old families” do not continue cultivating the soil as they have, it changes the landscape of the area. Nico told me that agriculture is the “custodian of the soil” and the younger generation generally abandons the soil. He and his brother are two young people who left the area for education, but came back to devote themselves to the farm. I saw several other examples of educated young males returning to family farms in Amiata.

Organic certification was a source of contention for Nico. He uses organic production methods and is committed to agro-ecological farming methods. He does not use chemicals on the olives and only uses approved levels of sulfur and copper on the vines. He does not use synthetic fertilizers because he uses the manure from the cattle. But he sees organic certification as “so stupid,” mainly because it is very expensive. He was generally frustrated with Italy’s level of bureaucracy, and he seemed to see organic certification as a part of this

“suffocating” imposition. He prefers to create direct relationships of knowledge and trust with his consumers, rather than relying on certification to convey his farm’s values. Even though he ships the wine and oil across the world, consumers will come to the farm to visit, see the production, and meet him. He also has his personalized philosophy of natural farming, which he paraphrased as “if you respect the soil, it will respect you.” Natural relationships cannot be used in intensive farming, since it destroys biodiversity. If one respects the environment, farming is much easier and then “God decides” the weather, growing conditions, and production. The logo on the Valenti’s wine bottles – abstract images of the sun and the moon fused together – reflects this philosophy of farming being “natural” and dependent on nature’s rhythms and cycles.

Ethnographic Portrait: THE CONTIS, an olive oil empire

As I entered the Conti’s *frantoio* (olive mill), the pungent smell of the “green gold” being churned out of the labyrinthine pressing machines overwhelmed my senses. A young female employee led me to the office of the business administrator, a man in his fifties, who sat behind a cluttered desk squinting at a computer screen. He explained the basics of the mill’s history and production to me with businesslike efficiency. Several times during our conversation, he was interrupted by phone calls.

As the manager was taking a call, an old man with bushy eyebrows and a deeply wrinkled, animated face slowly shuffled into the building. His entrance was met by a chorus of affectionate greetings from the employees. As the manager re-emerged from his office, he

introduced me to Luciano Conti, the owner of Frantoio Conti. As he shook my hand, I recognized the thick-knuckled, worn hands of farmers of his generation. Luciano warmly offered to talk with me and give me a tour of the facility. He explained that he had been at the funeral of a friend and could use some company.

I learned that Luciano did not study beyond primary school, stopping his schooling around the age of ten. He always had a passion for doing manual things himself, learning a good deal from his carpenter father. The history of the company followed the personal history of Luciano and his brother, Mauro. In the 1950s, the brothers purchased land for an olive grove and renovated an old barn to open the *frantoio*. They also worked the land of farmers in the area with their tractor, combining economic strategies. For decades, they pressed olives for farmers in the region but did not sell their own oil commercially.

Luciano highlighted a fundamental shift in the company's trajectory after his brother died in the early 1990s. Luciano's son, Giordano, joined the company in 1995, bringing with him "modern business skills" and sensibilities. This was the point when the Contis decided to embark on "*la strada di qualita*" (the path of quality), producing their own high quality olive oils for an international market. They decided on this strategy when they realized that their size and values of production did not allow them to compete with large-scale oil producers. They found their established strategy of direct sales to be too limited, as locals were unwilling to pay for high quality oil when lower grade oils were widely available in supermarkets. They initially decided to focus attention on commercializing high quality oils to give them international exposure and appeal to a niche, luxury market. They later diversified to include basic oils for daily use and cooking, though still at a significantly higher price than mass marketed oils available at supermarkets.

As they commercialized their oils, they adopted the concept of “*cru*” to describe the microzones that produce the taste qualities of their highest quality oils, bearing resemblance to the concept of *terroir* and the language traditionally used to describe wine production. They produced their first oil in 1996 and have gained well-established brand recognition in the international olive oil world since then. Their website and promotional materials foreground long lists of venerable international awards. Their oils consistently place highly at international competitions, including being the only producer in the world to win several international awards multiple years in a row. The major olive oil guide has recognized Frantoio Conti as the best producer for several years, selected from 3,000 oils coming from 40 countries. They have expanded to own and rent many plots of land, including renting 15,000 olive trees from nearby Villa Banfi, the large-scale American wine producer. The Contis buy olives from local farmers and are also willing to travel around the region to locate and purchase quality olives. They also work with some certified organic farms and have created an organic line of oils, along with oils that are territorially certified as originating in Tuscany (IGP Toscano). Frantoio Conti now has a staff of twelve employees, including an administrator and a business manager. They also utilize seasonal immigrant labor through a nearby service for cleaning the olive groves, for the harvests, and for transporting the olives to the *frantoio*.

As Luciano and I passed through the industrial area of oil production, he led me up a staircase into a large, attractive room with a long table running down its center. It was bordered on all sides by shelves and cases holding ornate awards. Other shelves held guidebooks, pamphlets, and thoughtfully displayed bottles of different oils. The old fireplace was flanked with traditional cooking instruments. Luciano explained to me that this was the tasting room, which also served as a space to host groups of visitors. Despite their international recognition,

Luciano complained that most locals are “ignorant” and do not know about their oil and how the mill functions. Paradoxically, they are known all over the world, but not locally. While they are open for tours, people living in the area are generally not interested. “I am sorry for them,” he said.

As we finished looking at the awards in the room, Luciano pointed up a short staircase to what looked like a trap door. As he pushed a button to open it, he proudly explained to me that he invented and installed the sliding door. The door gave way to a large rooftop patio with an expansive view of Val d’Orcia to the North and Monte Amiata to the Southeast.

Luciano recalled how there was friction within his family when his son first wanted to join the business. He was studying architecture at the university, and while he wanted to work with his father to commercialize the business, his mother urged him to finish his studies. Eventually, his mother gave in as the potential for the *frantoio*’s success and her son’s role in it became apparent. Giordano boldly took some of their first oils to a tasting in Verona where it ended up winning top awards. The judges were incredulous that someone so young could make such good oil. After this point, his mother approved of his decision to join his father at the *frantoio*.

Giordano is now in his late forties and spends much of his time traveling to handle the marketing and promotion of their oils. At the time of my visit, he was in Rome hosting a tasting for the food magazine *Gambero Rosso*. In the words of Luciano, his son is “*sempre in giro*” (always traveling around). Luciano profusely complimented his son’s contributions to the company, his pride apparent. Without his son, he admitted that the business would be “practically non-existent.” Luciano admitted that he does not know anything about computers and marketing and he has no interest in learning. He also praised his wife, a nurse, for being

supportive, telling me that behind every great man there is a great woman. He mentioned that all of his employees are “*bravi*” (good) and they seemed to share equal respect and warmth for Luciano.

As we returned to the production area of the *frantoio*, I asked Luciano about a large photo picturing him and his son smiling and toasting with wine glasses filled with vibrant green oil in front of the press. He told me that it was taken back when his son first joined the company, and that he wanted to position it where everyone would see it when they first entered the building. Clearly, he was very proud of the relationship he and his son share and how it has come to fruition in their business.

Luciano told me, with a laugh, that at 86-years-old, his main source of entertainment is reading the labels on the boxes of oil that are being shipped out in order to see their destinations – “*Olanda, Giappone, Germania, Gli Stati Uniti...*” (Holland, Japan, Germany, The United States), he read. He never thought that this would become his reality, shipping oil to more than forty countries all over the world. The *frantoio* has attracted international attention and hosts visitors from all over the world who come to see its operations and taste the oil. He mused, “I never thought when I was 25 or 30 or 40 that the world would come to find us here.” Luciano seemed proud of his success, but also humble and grateful to everyone involved in the company and his life, especially his son. Throughout our conversation, he seemed amused, as if an incredulous spectator to his own success. “I worked hard, but I had fun,” he concluded, smiling.

Ethnographic Portrait: THE BONACORES, From Mixed Farming to Organic Wine and Agritourism

As I drove up the winding road to the Bonacore's vineyard and agritourism, I noticed the well-manicured landscaping and ornate signs in Italian and English. This was clearly a space created with presentation to tourists and visitors in mind. At the office marked "reception" I met Sofia, the office manager, a local woman in her forties. She led Elsa and me past the front desk into a reception area, bordered by an enormous wall of wine bottles, publications, awards, and certificates. In this area of first contact with visitors, the vineyard's prominence was visibly displayed.

Sofia called to Stefano, the son of the owner. Stefano was in his early-forties and shook our hands and greeted us rather formally. Based on his button-down shirt, stylish jeans, and dress shoes, it seemed the only work I was interrupting that day was office work. Stefano told me that they have 120 hectares of land, but Sofia immediately corrected him saying "it's 160 now." This discrepancy was in line with what they told me about constantly buying and selling land in their efforts to expand their wine production.

Stefano outlined the history of his family's involvement in farming. Under the *mezzadria* sharecropping system, the land in the area was almost entirely dominated by two large landowners, La Tenuta di Montecuccio and Colle Massari. Stefano's great grandfather worked the land of one of these owners, and they have stayed on the same land for three generations. In the past, farming was mixed and based around animals. Cows and sheep were raised for milk and meat, along with cereals, small olive groves, and vineyard plots. After land reform, Stefano's father farmed mostly cereals, but he faced falling profits for cereals and meat. By the 1980s, Stefano told me that people living in the area were leaving the land in order to work in cities like Grosseto or to move away from the area entirely.

Stefano highlighted a key change in the trajectory of farming in the area and their own farm with the establishment of the protected designation (*denominazione di origine controllata* or DOC) for Montecucco wine production in 1996. The establishment of the protected production zone inspired Stefano's father and two other neighboring farms to convert their land to specialize in organic wine production. As he told me this, I remembered that Franco Marino and his brother had also made the same decision to convert to wine production once the DOC was established. These farms became the early pioneers of DOC wine production in the area, and others later followed. One nearby farm that collaborated on the renovation produces organic wine and oil, but also has maintained animals such as sheep, a native species of donkey, and pigs, while also producing honey and cereals such as chickpeas, lentils, beans, and spelt (*farro*).

At the same time that they decided to specialize in wine production during this period of rural exodus, Stefano and his father also decided to take on agritourism. The owners of the group of 13th century farmhouses (*borghettino*) – shared with two other farming families who also changed from mixed farming to specialized organic wine production – collaborated in order to apply for funding to restore the houses for agritourism. They received the financial support and completed the restoration in 1998. At first, they doubted whether they would be able to attract tourists, since the houses started out in a state of disrepair and their location is somewhat remote. But they worked with tourist agencies and tourists started coming, which has now created a “reliable” flow. Thirty percent of the farm's income now comes from agritourism. The Bonaceres also collaborate to help two brothers on one of the nearby farms to produce organic wine, who also run an agritourism and produce olive oil.

The Bonacore's farm as it exists today was established in 1998 once the vineyard began producing and the *agriturismo* was established. They now produce organic wine, olive oil, and still maintain some cereal production. Seventy-five percent of their sales come from wine and 25% from oil. They sell most of their wine internationally, but they also sell 40% to Italian restaurants and wine shops and 10% through the *agriturismo*. Stefano explained that they also were organic "from the start" in 1994, with him referring to the beginning of his own involvement in changing the trajectory of the farm as being "the start," even though his family had been farming on this land for generations. He spoke of the current manifestation of the farm and *agriturismo* as a distinct break with the past, as a kind of reinvention. Some of the vines they cultivate have been carefully recovered from vineyards planted earlier in the century by the family, and they have collaborated with the University of Pisa in order to effectively preserve this native variety, which has been named after their family. In fact, Stefano has recently started his own side project – a small wine estate under his ownership – to focus specifically on the protection of this autochthonous variety of *ciliegiolo* vines. The Bonacores' wines and oils have won many national and international awards.

Stefano described the division of labor on the farm. The farm has ten hired workers, with one being devoted to the wine cellar, Sofia working part-time in the office, and eight Albanian immigrants working in the vineyard. They had contacted one of the Albanian workers initially, and he ended up bringing his family to work there, as well. Stefano oversees work in the wine cellar and olive grove and also does some office work. His father works the cereals with the tractor and spends a lot of time on the computer and phone to do direct marketing and build relationships with clients. They do all of their marketing on their own, and Stefano said that this is a main focus and it takes a lot of time. Stefano told me that despite his age, his

father has learned to use the computer and he really enjoys building personal relationships with customers. Stefano's mother works to prepare the agritourism lodging and during the high tourism season they hire one person to assist with the cleaning.

The Bonacores have followed a relatively risky path, deciding to plant vineyards, invest in organic production, take on debt to receive funding support for the agritourism restoration, hiring a good deal of labor, and make large-scale investments in expanding their wine cellar in 2005. They have also taken on credit for buying land and machinery. When I asked Stefano about credit, he responded, "of course, who doesn't have credit?" When I asked about their goals for the future, Stefano's answer reflected the expansions and investments they have made in specialized wine production. Without hesitation he responded, "to sell a lot of wine" while establishing new international markets.

ESTABLISHED FARMERS						
	Household Composition	Farm Strategies	Local, National, or International Focus?	Off farm work?	Children Involved?	Education
Beppe Gaspari	Married man/grown children. Lives in town. Works closely with brother and family.	Mixed production - cattle, pigs, chickens/eggs, sheep and goats, donkeys; Chestnuts; wine and olive oil for household; Agritourism	Local for family restaurant and butcher. Some direct sales	Wife, yes	Children involved in businesses, not farm	No college
The Gallis	2 generation family (wife, husband, 2 sons). Live on farm.	Mixed, diversified production - cattle (milk and meat), sheep (cheese and meat), diverse small animals, wine and oil, chestnuts; heritage breeds; "peasant" strategies	Local and household production. Some direct sales	No	One son very involved, one son somewhat involved but in school	No college
The Marinos (Franco)	Married man/grown children. Lives on farm. Works and lives with brother and wife.	DOC Wine and olive oil	International. Some direct sales of bulk wine for local market.	Brother's wife only.	No	No college
The Valentis (Nico)	2 generation family (wife, husband, 2 sons). Live on farm.	DOC Wine and olive oil; Livestock (meat - heritage breed); Cereals; Agritourism	International	No	Yes, both sons	College - agronomy and enology degrees
The Contis (Luciano)	Father (married) and son in separate households	DOP Olive oil; Some organic; olive processing	International	Wife in past, yes	Yes, son	College
The Bonacores (Stefano)	Father (married) and son in separate households	DOC wine and olive oil; Organic; Agritourism	International	No	Yes, son	College

Figure 1: Established Farmers Described in Ethnographic Portraits

Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented a continuum of diverse established farming livelihoods in Amiata, some which have taken on agritourism and others which have not. It began by relating the case of the Gallis, a farm family that may be most closely compared with peasant household strategies as conceived of by anthropologists (Edelman 2013; Wolf 1966) and envisioned by van der Ploeg's conception of "the peasant condition" (Ploeg 2008; 2013). They are committed to unity between the household and farm and their farming is economical and ecological in a way that is consistent with household farming styles that were divided between subsistence and market production in this area under the *mezzadria* sharecropping system (Pratt 1994; Silverman 1968).

The second portrait tells the story of the Marinos, two brothers who have lived through their family's history in the sharecropping system and the agricultural transformations of the 20th century. Faced with growing bureaucratic incursions on livestock production, they decided to eventually specialize in wine production once the DOC was established. A significant theme in their story is the abandonment of the farm by their sons for wage labor on a nearby large-scale industrial vineyard and the likely lack of a farm successor as the brothers age.

The third case describes three entrepreneurial families that are multigenerational and organized around neo-rural orientations such as agritourism or niche market production of high quality products. The Valentis were also involved in agriculture under the sharecropping system and the enologist and agronomist sons now run the family's mixed farm and they also have an *agriturismo*. The last case recounts the international success of high quality olive oil and wine

production by the Contis and the Bonacores, who also have sons who are deeply involved in the family businesses. Their families also have a long history in the area.

A significant pattern emerges in that those established farms that take on agritourism or enjoy the financial rewards of international markets have children with some degree of higher education who are deeply involved in the farming enterprise. Not only are these farms multigenerational, but in almost all cases the children have higher education in specialized fields such as agronomy, enology, agribusiness, or olive growing and oil production. I have observed how these children bring neo-rural values and sensibilities to the farm, including discourses and practices of alternative farming and sustainability, adeptness with the Internet and social media, and business know-how and marketing skills. I also observed how the sons of these families were ideologically invested and passionate about the work of the farm enterprise, willing to work long hours with little vacation time.

Importantly, this range of case studies highlight that neo-rurality is more complex than simply being constituted by in-migrants from outside Amiata. Neo-rural values and practices are also incorporated into established farming livelihoods through children's education, values, and aspirations. Such values and commitments are developed through higher education and personal interest, informing their farming practices and their family's farming trajectory and chance of success. They also link up with initiatives toward sustainable farming and local food networks such as organic production; DOP, DOC, and IGP territorial certifications and the consortiums that protect them; the *strada del vino Montecucco e dei Sapori d'Amiata* (the Montecucco wine and tastes of Amiata route); Slow Food's Renewable Energy Food Community; and Legambiente and their annual festival (the center for sustainable development in the Maremma).

Further, the portraits of established farms with neo-rural elements suggest a movement towards greater cooperation between farms. For instance, the Bonacores specialized in organic wine production while working with neighboring farms to secure funding support for restoration of the agritourism buildings. They also collaborate with these farms regularly, and one farm even gives them credit on their label as collaborators. Even though these farms are following similar trajectories of specialization, their interaction does not seem to be marked by competition even though they are in close proximity and presumably competing for tourist attention. Wine producers more broadly are also brought into cooperation through involvement in the DOC Montecucco producer's association.

The portraits in this chapter make the degree to which neo-rurality is becoming hegemonic clear. If established farms do not take on neo-rural characteristics through their children – as with the Gallis and the Marinos – they are still largely defined in contrast to neo-rurality and judged within the emerging wider context of neo-rural practices, economic relations, value orientations, and lifestyles. For instance, Franco Marino was very aware of how his son's generation of farmer differed from his own and the shifting demands for certain quality of life indicators such as a stable wage for “modern” families. Franco admitted that he and his wife do not desire an affluent lifestyle, telling me that they only go out to dinner once or twice a year. Mara Galli was similarly aware of the difficulty of her son finding a wife who would want to share their simple farming lifestyle, even if they attempted to open an *agriturismo* with the extra help. On the other hand, several of the neo-rural sons had girlfriends, fiancées, or wives, highlighting the divide between these two farming trajectories in terms of possibilities for marriage and family.

It is important to highlight that the generational divisions between neo-rural and established farming values and practices are not unitary or homogenous. For instance, Stefano Bonacore's father and Franco Marino are of the same generation and both specialize in wine production. Franco Marino notably drew attention to the fact that his generation is "out of fashion" and has witnessed the change "from the hoe to the computer." This resonates with James Verinis's description of the stigma surrounding farming in Greece in the face of modern capitalism and industrialization, as he writes, "the symbol of the computer has become the preferred antithesis to the plow" (2015: 131). Many farmers of the same generation expressed similar discomfort with technology, including computers and smart phones. However, Stefano Bonacore explained to me that his father takes great pleasure in using the computer to develop relationships with clients and market their products, despite his age. At the same time, he enjoys using the tractor, which I have come to see as the "traditional" symbol of patriarchal male power in Amiata. His simultaneous embrace of the "old" and "new" dimensions of agricultural production and business suggest that agency may be exercised in unpredictable directions, in this case generating a rather surprising hybrid identity.

The portraits also indicate how neo-rurality is becoming hegemonic in rural development funding support, a trend also documented elsewhere as funds are increasingly tied to agro-environmental measures and support for rural consumption and leisure investments (Heatherington 2010; Verinis 2015). The Gallis and the Marinos both clearly indicated that bureaucratic regulations and European funding support do not align beneficially with their farming and decision-making styles. They were both unwilling to take on the debt that would have been necessary in order to obtain rural development funding, and they ended up seeing the programs as potential traps, since only an uncertain portion of the investment

would eventually be returned. On the other hand, neo-rurals or those with highly educated children invested in the farm were more likely to make the entrepreneurial decision to participate in rural development funding programs, to take on debt, and to take financial risks. While the Bonacore's response to my asking about loans was "who doesn't have credit?" the reactions of the Gallis and Marinos were the opposite, approaching the idea of seeking credit from banks with suspicion. They demonstrated a cautious farm management style, characterized by avoidance of debt, intensive family manual farm labor, and desire for a modest lifestyle (Barlett 1993).

Lastly, the entrepreneurial farms with educated children and international reputations were adept at displaying markers of their distinction within the spaces of their farms, offices, and guest lodging. They proudly showcased awards and publications in which their products were featured, creating a space where their distinction, "authenticity," and international recognition were visually on display. They consciously created a public face for their farms and products both in the space of the farm and in the realm of the Internet with sophisticated, aesthetically pleasing websites and narratives. The professionalization of their farms is also present in the form of hired administrative and accounting employees. On the other hand, the farms and homes of the Gallis and the Marinos are entirely without these embellishments, instead emphasizing the physical labor of farming.

Overall, the ethnographic portraits in this chapter illustrate the divide between entrepreneurial farms marked by neo-rural influences – most notably, highly educated children and their values and practices – and farming livelihoods that show more continuity with Amiata's peasant past. While this chapter has presented diverse portraits of established

farming livelihoods in Amiata and considered patterns and differences between them, the next chapter turns to neo-rural lifestyle migrants and their constructions of life projects in Amiata.



Image 10: Established Farmer on Tractor with Vineyard in Background



Image 11: Established Farmer with Photo of Self, Son, and Olive Oil



Image 12: Established Farmer in Old Farm Shelter with Shoes of Ancestors

PART III

NEO-RURAL FLOWS:

LIFESTYLE MIGRANTS, LABOR MIGRANTS, AND VOLUNTEER

TOURISTS

CHAPTER 5 | THE REINVENTION OF THE RURAL: NEO-RURAL LIVES AND DISTINCTION IN

AMIATA

At the center of unfolding rural transformations that have been downplayed by repeasantization are the mobile populations of neo-rural migrants, labor migrants, tourists, and volunteer tourists. Neo-rural migrants who settle in Amiata, their affective struggles, and the values they bring to Amiata are the focus of this chapter, while migrant workers and volunteer tourists are discussed in the following chapter. Neo-rural migrants to Amiata include both lifestyle migrants who relocate to Amiata and more privileged investors who form neo-rural estates and often act as partially absent owners.

The Rural And The Neo-Rural: Mapping Landscapes Of Desire and “Economies of Sentiment”

I draw from DuPuis (2006) and other post-modern theorists in highlighting desire as a key trope in understanding the nature of post-modern rural transformations and revealing crucial dimensions of identity and power. Desire may be thought of as a “project of impossible fulfillment, the project of creating the Self through making the dream world the real one” (DuPuis 2006: 124-5). This attempt to craft one’s identity and reality has tangible effects on the world that can be “mapped” and examined (DuPuis 2006: 125). Particular rural areas such as Tuscany have long been constructed as sources of idyll and romanticism (Short 2006, Bell 2006). Situated in the context of the historical conditions of post-modernity, certain rural areas have become vessels for imaginings of self-identity based on notions of purity,

authenticity, and distinction. Given the significant presence of neo-rural lifestyle migrants in Amiata, this research takes as part of its object of study “the analysis of desire’s effects” in the particular rural area of Amiata (DuPuis 2006: 125). I also utilize Heather Paxson’s (2012) concept of “economies of sentiment” – which she refers to as “projects of multiple value-making” and possibilities for “realizing numerous values and sentiments” (Paxson 2012: 64-65). The concept of “economies of sentiment” allows for a balanced consideration of both the economic and social processes of meaning making in agricultural production and engagements with place. Citing Stephen Gudeman, Paxson finds that artisan cheese makers are “motivated by social fulfillment, curiosity, and the pleasure of mastery, as well as instrumental purpose, competition, and the accumulation of gains” (Paxson 2012: 65). Often, the “embodied human capacities” of “knowledge, skills, dispositions” that are enacted in order to produce commodities play a significant role in shaping one’s self-identity (Paxson 2012).

In this research I found it was important to account for not only the material conditions of production, but also motivating “economies of sentiment,” the affective framing of farming and what commitments and values are prioritized by producers. This is contingent on both personal experience, and the particular historical moments in which they unfold. In rural Amiata, the notion of “neo-rurality” or “post-productive/post-modern rural landscapes” and claims of repeasantization, along with agro-ecological or alternative farming, form the broad contours of this historical moment. Accordingly, I located motivating “economies of sentiment” in how producers conduct and talk about their labor and the products of their labor -- the cultural and symbolic values that work comes to embody.

As scholars have pointed out, “nature becomes entangled in the dreams of modernity, a repository of everything civilization is not: pure, uninhabited, unconscious, non-rational, free of

inhibitions and intent” (DuPuis 2006: 125). Such dreams are culturally and historically constructed, but have real consequences. In European rural policy, recent concerted efforts to create landscapes of refuge, recreation, and leisure for urbanites can be seen as part of a post-modern dream of shifting the countryside from an area of production to a site of consumption. The imaginings and dreams of both “policy worlds” and rural actors have real effects that result in rural transformations of social and economic realities, affecting all farming livelihoods (Shore et al 2011).

Desire foregrounds the importance of how identity is formed through imagined countrysides and “the relation of imagined and real countrysides to marginal identities” (DuPuis 2006: 126). The desires manifested in a particular place are often multiple and conflicting, and “contests by interest groups over the nature of rurality become contests over the right to consume rural landscapes in particular ways” (DuPuis 2006: 127). Some groups may be excluded from dominant visions of rurality or conveniently made invisible, especially in terms of class or race. In other words, it is crucial to analyze “how does rurality itself become a vehicle for increasing and storing inequality...?” (Shucksmith 2012: 377). The narratives and experiences of neo-rural migrants reveal unfolding processes of rural class transformation otherwise sidelined in the discourse of “repeasantization.” A fine-grained attending to desire and its effects on landscape illuminates how the classed desires of neo-rurals powerfully align with policy visions and incentives for a transformed rural Europe, especially in areas deemed to be marginal like Amiata.

Describing Neo-Rurals and Rural Class Transformations

Throughout Europe, “the new rural immigrants of recent decades are not a homogenous group but a variety of social types, each with their agendas” (MacClancy 2015:7). In Amiata, too, the new actors inhabiting rural areas are a diverse mix of disenchanted young people attempting to go “back-to-the-land”; religious practitioners who relocated to be close to one of the largest meeting places in Europe for the international Dogchen Buddhist community; artists inspired by nature and relative solitude; wealthy Europeans or Northern Italians investing in Tuscany and seeking a connection with nature or place; and migrants fleeing other parts of the world seeking work or political refuge. Rural repopulation is occurring in many rural areas of Europe as “a new generation, of the disenchanted and the unemployed had come in to renovate their collapsing houses, clear their fields, push the forest back, and start afresh” (MacClancy 2015: 1; Verinis 2011). Some of these actors practice farming to different extents, and they coexist alongside locals who live or work in rural areas. The supermarkets, bars, restaurants, public spaces, and events of the nearby hill towns also bring these actors into frequent contact with each other and with those living in town.

As illustrated in the ethnographic portraits in this chapter, neo-rural residents involved to some degree in farming tend to be highly educated, coming from other professional backgrounds. This trend is similarly documented in the U.S. (Hoey 2010; Jacobs 1997) and other areas of Europe (Benson 2011; Kasimis and Papadopoulos 2013). General attributes of neo-rurals in Amiata are consistent with those recently documented of new farmers in the Greek case, where a trend of “crisis counterurbanization” has been documented in light of the economic crisis and spiraling urban unemployment (Donadio 2012; Gkartzios 2013; Kasimis and Papadopoulos 2013). On average, new farmers in Greece from urban areas are young at an average 41.7 years compared to 47.3 of the total employed in agriculture. They are also highly

educated with 24 percent holding a higher education degree and 9 percent holding a postgraduate degree (Kasimis and Papadopoulos 2013: 285).

Neo-rurals in Amiata represent a range of ages and family configurations, and I describe younger individuals like Elsa and Davide, young couples like Anna and Ben, families with young children like the Cerullos, couples with grown children, middle-aged bachelors like Arturo and Carlo, and retirees. While most neo-rural residents involved in farming in Amiata are younger or middle-aged, older retirees also have a presence. A study of British retirement migration to regions of Southern Europe found that retirees were “predominantly well-off, with above-average levels of education and an employment background mainly in business, management and the professions” (King et al 2000: 89). Retirees in Tuscany were the oldest and most highly educated of the regions studied. Decisions to permanently retire in Tuscany were based on previous vacation experience and purchase of second homes prior to retirement (King et al 2000).

The majority of neo-rurals diversify into realms such as organic production, tourism, direct sales, and energy production, in line with the farming style of pluriactivity (Fuller 1990). Neo-rurals are involved to varying degrees in farming, with those like Carlo claiming little interest and those like the Cerullos dedicated to producing organic wine for an international market. Neo-rurals tend to be involved in agriculture on a part-time basis, a trend also documented in Spain (Montoya 2015; Oliva 2010) and the U.S. (Paxson 2012). As second-career farmers, neo-rurals have income coming from other streams related to their previous professional work or from taking on part-time wage work, as in the cases of Elsa and Davide. Even in the example of a neo-rural family farm, the Cerullos are dependent on hired farm and household labor, and the wife has a high-paying, off-farm professional job. Neo-rural farms with

larger production like the Cerullos also rely on seasonal migrant farm labor or permanent hired labor, a trend also documented in Greece (Kasimis and Papadopoulos 2013; Verinis 2011). In the Greek case, most new farmers become independent farmers and most produce crops. They also participate significantly in agricultural wage labor (Kasimis and Papadopoulos 2013). In the Greek case:

Contemporary 'reverse mobility' towards the countryside has elements of both modernity and tradition, of necessity and choice: return to the land of origin, new methods of organization and employment, rediscovery of traditional and development of new crops (legumes, aromatic herbs, pomegranates, mushrooms, spirulina, hippophaes, snails etc.) and methods of cultivation (organic farming, greenhouse production, producer groups etc.), elements of a new space and time division of living and working between rural and urban areas are some of these elements (Kasimis and Papadopoulos 2013: 286).

While it has been claimed that newcomers to rural areas are constituted by diverse class backgrounds – rather than the relatively homogenous middle-class incomers conveyed by Newby in 1970s Britain (MacClancy 2015) – my data suggests that rural newcomers in Amiata come from similar class backgrounds and trajectories and graft similar class sensibilities onto their rural experiences and livelihoods, despite their different nationalities. A greater diversity of class experience may be claimed if labor migrants are also included in the category of rural newcomers, but labor migrants primarily remain a “hidden” population as discussed later.

Constructing Neo-Rural Lives and Livelihoods: Urban-to-Rural Migration as Class and Life Project

Lifestyle migration to rural areas has become a growing phenomenon over the past thirty years in the United States and throughout Europe (Benson 2011; Benson and O'Reilly 2009; Buller and Hoggart 1994; Hoey 2010), which represents a partial shift away from previous patterns of urbanization. It is enabled by the historical and material realities of globalization, ease of mobility, and growing relative wealth characterizing post- or late modernity (Benson and O'Reilly 2009). Lifestyle migrants have been characterized as “relatively affluent individuals of all ages, moving either part-time or full-time to places that, for various reasons, signify, for the migrant, a better quality of life” (Benson and O'Reilly 2009: 609; Trundle 2014). Lifestyle migrants generally place aesthetic values such as quality of life over economic considerations (Benson and Osbaldiston 2014; Osbaldiston 2012).

As such, cultural factors have generally been emphasized over economic variables in explaining peoples' motivations to relocate. Accordingly, Benson (2011) argues that lifestyle migration demands an attention to “the underlying cultural logic that makes those particular destinations and ways of life meaningful and that frames the experiences of life following migration” (12-13). Decisions to relocate are often motivated by a “narrative of escape” and refuge from life before migration that simultaneously strongly state the negative attributes of their home region or prior lifestyle and the positive vision to be realized in their chosen destination (Benson and O'Reilly 2009: 609; Hoey 2009). Migration is also often centered around goals for self-realization (Benson 2011). For example, a young British couple with a child that was visiting Amiata to explore possibilities to buy land described their aspiration to relocate

as “shifting down a few gears” and the discourse of “slowing down” through lifestyle change is shared with the “slow phenomenon” (Osbaldiston 2013). Lifestyle migration decisions have been variously emphasized in the literature as being a reaction to disillusionment with urban life (Buller and Hoggart 1994) and representative of emerging environmental ideologies (Barou and Prado 1995). Lifestyle migrants have been identified in various settings of migration, including Ibiza and Goa, Mykonos, and Varanasi, as being “countercultural individuals,” referred to as “bohemian lifestyle migrants,” “global nomads,” “expressive expatriates,” or “New Age travellers” (Benson 2011: 12; Hetherington 2000).

Anthropologists and sociologists have recently begun contributing to ethnographically understanding how lifestyle migrants construct post-migration lives and identities (Benson 2011; Hoey 2014). Attracted by a transformative potential, lifestyle migrants seek to realize authentic, “potential selves” through their relocation (Hoey 2010). Lifestyle migration is intimately linked with what Anthony Giddens conceived of as “the ongoing ‘life project’ of the modern individual, who must seek fulfillment, express an ‘authentic’ self, and justify choices within a coherent narrative of the self” (Trundle 2014: 9; Benson 2011). Similarly, anthropologist Brian Hoey refers to migrants as undertaking a “narrative project of selfhood” (2010: 245; Hoey 2014). As Hoey (2009) summarizes:

Lifestyle migrants recognize the essential role of place in creating a lasting sense of self. They self-consciously engaged in this process, choosing particular places as personally therapeutic landscapes. Following uncertainty and dissatisfaction with working lives prior to relocation, they make purposeful connections with these places as a

more stable and personally meaningful anchor for identity than what they could make in a world of work turned upside down by post-industrial economic change (345).

In a similar light, inhabiting a social class may also be usefully thought of as an active project (Ortner 2003) and the endeavor of neo-rural migrants to re-root their lives in rural areas is equally a life and class project. With sociologists Michaela Benson and Karen O'Reilly (2009), I take lifestyle migration to be "a search, a project, rather than an act, and it encompasses diverse destinations, desires and dreams" (610). Lifestyle migration is situated more broadly in the context of serving as "a strategy to negotiate the tension between personal experience with material demands in pursuit of a livelihood in a 'flexible' economy and prevailing moral meanings of, and cultural conventions for, the good life" (Hoey 2010: 238).

Neo-rural residents play a significant role in the landscape of rural transformation in Amiata. The affective struggles they encounter and the particular class sensibilities and desires they bring and cultivate in rural areas generate novel patterns of lifestyle, sociality, work, and values, can be seen as patterns of neo-rurality. These patterns are also formed as neo-rurals work through their processes of place making and identity formation. Migrants struggle to form coherent and representative self-narratives as they face the realities of rural life in Amiata, including feeling social isolation, straddling multiple place affiliations, experiencing a sense of dislocation, undergoing restlessness and alienation, enduring bureaucracy, and the desiring social and intimate connection through the attempted construction of an idealized community. These struggles for identity formation, self-representation, attachment to place, and belonging in these contexts – though ultimately unresolvable – are generative of patterns of neo-rurality

that come to distinguish the presence of foreigners in the countryside. These new patterns set neo-rurals apart from local farmers and residents in significant ways, fueling new rural class distinctions.

My ethnographic data from Amiata suggests that agritourism is a common strategy that neo-rurals use to cultivate and realize “ideal selves,” in the process accumulating cultural capital. Agritourism involves some degree of engagement with the environment through land ownership, gardening, or farming and plays a key role in solidifying place attachments for neo-rurals. Agritourism also involves performative aspects required by hosting guests and serving as a cultural intermediary for visitors, serving as a site for the formation and solidification of new rural identities. The constant performance of these identities reinforces the idealized image of migrants’ imagined and desired rural lives. It is this ongoing performance that makes the neo-rural life project possible in areas with the relative isolation of Amiata. While identities are performed and reworked in an effort to join reality with the idealized aspirations of neo-rural migrants, my data suggests that idealized imagined neo-rural lives often fall out of synch with the lived realities of neo-rurals, a process also documented by Benson (2011) in the case of the British in rural France. This rupture between expectations and realities of post-migration lives is also explored in this chapter.

Performing identities through agritourism enables neo-rurals to exercise and augment not only their incomes, but also their reservoirs of cultural capital. Neo-rural residents dually influence rural areas both through their own migration and through the tourism they foster. Rural areas are transformed by the neo-rural presence, especially when neo-rurals engage in agritourism. They attract middle-class tourists, host their guests and personal acquaintances, and recruit labor through international volunteer tourism organizations such as World Wide

Opportunities on Organic Farms (WWOOF). In the process, neo-rurals bring a range of actors to rural areas, influencing the social and agricultural landscape beyond the immediate effects of their own relocation.

Rather than documenting in-depth the affective realities of lifestyle migrants as other ethnographic studies have (Benson 2011; Bonisch-Brednich and Trundle 2012; Hoey 2005, 2006, 2009, 2010, 2014; Jacob 1997; Korpela 2009; O'Reilly 2000; Osbaldiston 2012; Salazar 2014; Trundle 2013), I draw out the patterns I identified among neo-rurals in how they construct livelihoods, engage with land and nature, construct community, struggle with affective challenges, and creatively resolve challenges in these realms by enacting patterns of neo-rurality. These patterns of neo-rurality are hybrid, as neo-rurals repackage their middle-class dispositions and skills for the rural context. As my ethnographic data allows, I attend to the complex phenomenological worlds of these actors, maintaining anthropological concerns with subjectivity, personhood, identity, and reflexivity.

I describe the configurations and lived experiences of neo-rurals in the remainder of this chapter. Importantly, from the approach of practice theory (Bourdieu 1984), Sherry Ortner (2003) usefully conceives of class as a project, seeing it as “something that is always being made or kept or defended, feared or desired” (2003: 14). This is an apt rendering of class in the context of lifestyle migration. Neo-rural migrant life projects are equally class projects, as I illuminate with ethnographic data from Amiata.

NEO-RURAL REALITIES IN AMIATA: ETHNOGRAPHIC PORTRAITS

The ethnographic portraits written from my field notes and interview notes that follow serve as a sampling of the variety of neo-rural residents I came to know while conducting fieldwork in Amiata. They represent diverse migrant experiences and configurations of family life and work, from single individuals living alone and young couples to families with children and retirees. The portraits explore the life projects, affective challenges, and emerging patterns of neo-rurality that characterize these migrants. The portraits illustrate how diverse rural actors have ended up settling in Amiata and how they configure rural life and work in Amiata. It highlights the interactions among these new residents and with local residents as they construct livelihoods and share this rural space. I especially consider rural transformations in terms of changing class and gender sensibilities. These cases display both the diversity of neo-rural experience and the emerging patterns generated by neo-rurals that are transforming rural areas. With anthropologist Jeremy MacClancy, “This novel degree of social complexity, refracted differently in different European settings, necessitates ethnographic studies in order to elucidate, in each case, the subtleties of its multiple strands and consequences, and so provide a potential basis for informed comparative generalisations” (MacClancy 2015: 21).

Ethnographic Portrait: ELSA, A Young Single Woman Working on and off Farm

As I sat near the fountain in the large *piazza*, I wondered how much later Elsa would be, or if she would show up at all. I had arrived in Italy a few days earlier and spent a few nights in a cheap hotel in town as I got a feel for the town before moving to Elsa’s small farm nearby. I was waiting for Elsa to pick me up, and elderly passersby looked at me quizzically as they shuffled along with their shopping or their newspapers, holding their gazes for longer than I felt was

comfortable. My bench was surrounded by luggage and carrier bags of groceries, prepared to begin a year of fieldwork.

Eventually, a rickety old truck pulled up in front of me, driven by a bright-faced young woman who beamed and started waving animatedly at me and honking the horn after having the spark of recognition. When I first met Elsa, I was struck by her energy and warmth. She hopped out of the old Citroen and rushed to embrace me, as she told me how happy she was that I arrived and helped me with my luggage. I allowed my reserved nature to be warmly assailed by her Andalusian hospitality. She was short and athletically built, with brown hair lightened by the sun, sun-soaked skin, and blue eyes. I had located Elsa's rural property on the Airbnb website — a U.S. based online short-term property rental service — and arranged to rent a room in a house from her for the duration of my fieldwork. The ride back to her home was a flurry of animated conversation in our mix of English and Italian. She drove as fast as she talked, even on the bumpy road down into the undulating valley that is known as *la conca d'oro* (the golden bowl). The truck bounced and creaked between the potholes as my luggage scattered and we traversed the side of the valley. This was the start of a yearlong relationship with Elsa during which she served as my host, key informant, and friend.

Elsa's property was perched on the slope of the valley looking westward toward the silhouette of a hilltop village and its bell tower where the sun would set in a brilliant fan of gold and crimson. As we arrived, her cats and dogs eagerly greeted us and a rooster pecked around the base of a rosemary plant. The animals seemed to converge around her human warmth, reminding me of Disney's Snow White. The sloped land surrounding the two houses was punctuated with the outcrops of enormous boulders throughout the *castagneto* (chestnut forest). Elsa welcomed me to the house I would inhabit and sometimes share with tourists. It

was a restored *seccatoio* (chestnut drying and store house) from the mid-18th century. The structure reflects the deep historical importance of chestnuts in this area of Amiata for sustenance and wood (Giannelli 2014; Nardini 2011). She explained to me that the chestnuts would have been loaded through the upstairs door and downstairs a low fire would be kept burning to dry the chestnuts. The small two-story stone house had been carefully restored, preserving the traditional architectural elements, heavy wooden doors, and massive wooden ceiling beams. Vines and rose bushes clung to the stone walls.

Elsa came to Italy from Southern Spain 12 years ago, when she was 28 years old, to work as a nurse in Siena's hospital, an hour and a half drive from Amiata. She first came to Amiata to visit a friend, and she felt a strong pull to the place. Although she was not looking to buy property at the time, through her contacts she was put in touch with an elderly German couple who were selling a property. Overwhelmingly drawn to the property's land, the area, and to the idea of changing her lifestyle, she decided to take out a loan to buy the property at age 30. With her decision, she gave up her secure job as a nurse and decided to take on small-scale farming. Her family back in Spain was shocked by her decision.

At the time, she had been dating a French man for several years, and when she purchased the property she hoped to share the work of restoring the land and property with him and eventually have a family. They lived on the property together for a few years before parting ways. Elsa invested the funds to restore the *seccatoio* and to build a modest wooden house with lots of natural light from what had previously been a carpentry workspace. Rather than hiring out the work on the wooden house, she employed a friend from Northern Italy who also lived in Amiata to build the house.

Now Elsa has lived in Amiata for 10 years. She is passionately committed to organic cultivation methods and has also explored biodynamic methods by reading and learning from others. Her main commercial crops are the chestnuts from her 150 trees on 2 hectares, but she also cultivates organic lavender and has some olive trees. She keeps an organic vegetable and herb garden for her own use and for her guests, a few chickens for eggs, and she also harvests cherries. Aside from the chestnuts and lavender, production is mainly for the house or to share with guests and friends. Elsa does some agricultural activities and hosts tourists, but she also has a part-time job as an administrative assistant at the nearby Buddhist Center.

While Elsa hosts tourists and is classified by the state as an *imprenditrice agricola* (agricultural entrepreneur), she does not refer to her operation as an *agriturismo*. She modestly refers to it as a very small bed-and-breakfast and when asked, emphasizes the small scale of her undertaking. She is able to house four people at a time in the restored chestnut house, but at peak times, she often rented out her house, as well, and stayed with friends. This reality gave Elsa a nomadic quality. She made her houses primarily equipped for guests and aesthetically pleasing, storing most of her personal belongings in the chicken coop.

Elsa enjoys hosting and getting to know guests from all over the world. She offers guests fresh eggs, fruits, and vegetables when possible, and she enjoys suggesting places for guests to explore in Amiata. Elsa meticulously puts fresh flowers in each room of the house, relishing the “natural beauty” and wanting to share it with her guests. She invests a good deal of energy and interest in her guests, myself included, and often tries to share a meal, *aperitivo* (pre-meal drink), or activity with them during the course of their stay. Reflective of her hospitality, Elsa graciously introduced me to her friends, invited me to events and gatherings, helped me

arrange visits with farms, assisted me with the paperwork necessary for my stay in Italy, and shared many meals and conversations with me.

Elsa serves as the energetic intermediary in a network of expatriates, well positioned in this role because of her friendliness and fluent command of Spanish, Italian, English, and French. Her language skills are also useful in hosting tourists. Elsa also maintains friendly relations and friendships with some Amiata locals. She unites a range of actors by organizing and hosting dinners and parties. In this sense, she served as a key informant, linking me with others and sharing her impressions of Amiata and its inhabitants as an outsider who has taken up residence there.

Ethnographic Portrait: CARLO, A Middle-Aged Artist and Buddhist Practitioner

Elsa and I slowly wound through the chestnut groves on the slopes of Amiata to meet Carlo for lunch, the engine of the old truck straining and sputtering against the incline. My first conversation with Carlo – an acquaintance of Elsa – occurred months before at a celebration he threw in honor of a group of Russian photographers he was hosting in his *agriturismo*. The photographers woke before sunrise to capture the perfect morning mist over the cypress-lined fields across the river in Val d’Orcia, which would become stereotypically Tuscan calendar photos. But they had opted to stay on this less fabled – and less costly – side of the river. As we arrived, Carlo and his friends were setting the outdoor table for lunch. His female friend from Rome – an active practitioner in the Dogchen Buddhist community – had prepared a salad and pasta. A strapping man in his mid-fifties, Carlo towered over the rest of us as he greeted us and introduced us to his friends.

Carlo has lived in this 19th century farmhouse for 25 years and told me how as he was living in Rome and searching for a farmhouse to renovate, Amiata reminded him of the mountains of his native Turin. Carlo referred to the uncertain etymology of 'Amiata' as coming from the German *Heimat*, a complex term for "homeland." This name was familiar to me, since several other foreigners, including Elsa, had also expressed a connection to this place by making reference to those origins. Although he was looking for a farmhouse closer to Rome, he felt drawn to Amiata and intrigued by the nearby Buddhist center. He decided to renovate the large farmhouse and its extensions, structures large enough to house fifteen people. Before Carlo, the house belonged to a multi-generational family and the land was devoted to mixed farming, relying mostly on chestnuts with grain planted throughout the grove to maximize production, along with donkeys, pigs, and sheep. Due to the large size of the house and given that Carlo is divorced and living alone, he envisioned having an *agriturismo* on this land, and sought out funding support.

Carlo recalled that he got a "good deal" on funding when he applied in 1990. According to him and others, in these early days of funding support for agritourism, the process was simpler. Carlo had to work within the timeline of the funding conditions, which meant hiring a good deal more labor than would have been necessary if he could have done the work himself over a longer period. Carlo has a background in building restoration and invested a good deal of his own labor and oversight in the project.

In order to apply for the funds for agritourism to enable the restoration, he also had to take on farming, if not become a full-fledged farmer. Carlo does not come from a farming background and fully admitted that he does not enjoy the work of farming or find it economically profitable. His primary interest had always been in the building restoration. For

the purposes of the funding support and for creating an *agriturismo*, he kept four hectares of chestnuts, produced honey, cultivated medicinal plants, and kept a garden. Largely free of farming now, he eventually hopes to create a sort of artists' retreat and continue renting the apartments.

Fortunately, as he was gradually restoring the structures, he was able to finish and begin renting one of the apartments fairly quickly, which lightened the financial burden. He has since stopped looking for any further funding assistance, saying that "it's too much" and the regulations are very stringent now. Undoubtedly, his shift away from farming also limits his possibilities for funding. Carlo has restored the apartments with respect to the traditional architecture of the 19th century farmhouse, but also incorporates bold modern and artistic accents throughout, reflecting his aesthetic taste and style.

He formally opened the *agriturismo* in 2006, and also cultivated the land as certified organic since 2005. Carlo focuses on long-term rentals through his website, through the Airbnb website, and he has also recently started working with a rental agency. He rented mostly to Germans at first, but now also rents to many Dutch, French, Eastern Europeans, and Americans. He noted that most of the Americans and Russian tourists are "rich" and want a place with a pool, but now there is a middle-class of tourist emerging that wants to explore Amiata and nature and that their demands are more modest. While Amiata is outside of the major Tuscan touristic circuit, Carlo sees that changing somewhat. Carlo likes the flexibility and independence of his work. If he wants to go away he can close for a short period and he travels often to Rome. He also found that his basic English language skills help a lot, since tourists of many nationalities often speak some English. If not, he said that Google Translate is effective enough and that he and his guests always managed to find a way to be understood. In the future, he wants to

develop the space as an artist retreat and longs for the time to paint. But he also is mindful of the need to generate income, which he hopes to do primarily through renting the apartments.

Ethnographic Portrait: ARTURO, A Middle-Aged Engineer and Buddhist Practitioner

Experimenting with Self-Sufficiency

The rough gravel road to Arturo's house was riddled with potholes, curving along a steep drop-off to the stream. Many tourists have complained about the road, and a few have even refused to drive on it with their rental cars, forcing Arturo to pick them up. The house had a modern, minimalist feel, and uses ecological materials and green building techniques, including kitchen counters constructed of straw and clay and expensive triple-paned windows from Northern Italy for insulation. The house is also self-sufficient for energy through the use of photovoltaic solar panels. As we sat around a table in the living room to talk, a builder who was working on renovating the other house on the property sporadically interrupted to ask Arturo for instructions.

Arturo wore a purple linen tunic with a Chinese collar and his attire seemed at harmony with the natural materials and Eastern-inspired art of his home. Even the iron teapot at the center of the table fit this motif. He is an active practitioner at the Buddhist center, which is echoed in the material aspects of his living space. Arturo is fluent in English, and enthusiastically volunteered for us to conduct our conversation in English. Before beginning our conversation, he carefully asked me about the "frame" for my research in order to know what elements of his experience to highlight, reflecting his knowledge of the process of scholarly research and awareness of my role as a researcher.

Like Carlo, Arturo is also a friend of Elsa's and she introduced us. She used to work occasionally helping him to prepare the rooms for the *agriturismo*. She also attempted to "breathe some life" into what she felt was a rather stark "bachelor's space." She urged him to continue putting fresh flowers in the guest rooms, since she felt that guests really appreciate these "feminine touches" to "make them feel welcome."

As we sipped our tea, Arturo told me about his personal history. He is in his mid-forties, with dark features and a stocky build. He was trained as an engineer while growing up in Venice, but his parents are from Southern Italy. It is clear that Arturo is highly educated, as he speaks fluent English with a good deal of nuance. He is also fluent in French and Spanish. After school, Arturo was traveling and working abroad, living in big cities or "having an experience," in his words. But he found that his body and mind were missing something, a longing that he identified as "craving nature." In 2007, he was living in France and decided to come back to Italy. He had already known Amiata through his acquaintances, so he decided to come and look for a house here. He rented a place for nine months as he tested out the waters, and started looking for a small place to buy.

As he was out for a walk one day, he spotted the ruins of what would become his current property. The name of his *agriturismo* comes from *buca* (pit or hole) and from the road where he was walking it looked as if the ruined rooftops of the structures were nestled in a hole in the forest. He began to do some research into the place, and learned that the houses were abandoned since the 1950s and that access was difficult. Elsa told me that he had to invest a huge sum of money just to get the road to the house in working order, and even now the road still presents problems. The place ended up being bigger than Arturo had expected but he liked the fact that the land surrounding the house had access to a stream.

As he searched for the owner in the cadastral records, he learned that there were three owners listed for the houses and eight for the land, reflecting a pattern of partible inheritance and complicating his role as a potential buyer. He said that in the past, rich families did not live here. They were farmers living in three separate houses and sharing the outdoor wood oven and land. The houses were quite small, with the largest being less than 350 square feet. The families ended up leaving the land when their children went away to study. Since he was interested in buying the property, Arturo diligently called each owner to discuss the possibility. Some of the owners were not interested in selling, and it took a whole year of negotiations to reach a consensus. Then it took another year to obtain building permissions.

Arturo's vision changed as he followed his intuitions to buy this larger property. While he was originally looking for a small, peaceful house for himself, he eventually had the idea "to do something here." He never was interested in farming and selling what he produced, but he was motivated to use it as a place to "experiment" with sustainable self-sufficiency for energy and food, areas he had explored in his reading and Internet research.

In 2008, he applied for and received funding support for agritourism. Like Carlo, he had to take on farming and have a tourism activity in order to justify the renovations and access the funding. The renovation of the main house took two and a half years, and his specialized background in engineering proved useful. He chose the materials, supervised the work, and handled all of the paperwork. During the course of renovation, he changed building companies a few times and even had a legal battle with one of them in which he won but ended up spending a lot of money on legal representation. Currently, Arturo is renovating another house next to the main house where he lives, and this occupies all of his energy and attention. He said he did not have a garden this year because of the time demands of the ongoing renovation. In

the future, he is very interested in continuing to experiment with permaculture principles in the garden. He says that the Internet is “revolutionary” in allowing people such as himself to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to experiment with relative food and energy self-sufficiency.

Arturo now runs a small *agriturismo*, renting rooms and teepees for camping by the stream. He says he has had many good guests, successfully attracting “certain kinds of people,” especially young couples and friends in their 30s or 40s who like to travel and have contact with nature. They “like simple, natural things and appreciate good quality.” Arturo designed his own website for the *agriturismo*, and he also built a website for Elsa’s bed and breakfast as she cleaned rooms for him in exchange. This type of non-monetary barter exchange and cooperation between friends is a theme throughout the group of new rural residents in Amiata and elsewhere.

When Arturo first applied for funding, he also applied for the land to be cultivated organically. It took two years for the conversion to certified organic, which in this case was just a formality or “a bureaucratic procedure” since the land had been abandoned for at least 40 years. Production on the 6 hectares of land and woodland revolves around the house – in this case, Arturo’s own consumption and supporting his guests and volunteers – and olives are the main crop. He also usually maintains a small permaculture vegetable garden, but he does not sell any products. Interestingly, Arturo thinks organic certification is “a racket.” In his words, “you just pay to have a certification that’s not very useful” and it has limited utility for him since he does not sell his products. The certification costs 400 euros per year and an inspector comes to visit for two hours, according to Arturo. While he is critical of certification, he stands firmly by the ideals of organic cultivation, affirming, “if you respect the land, you cannot poison it.”

One reason Arturo became certified organic was to enable him to participate in the WWOOF organization, although certification is not explicitly required (Azizi and Mostafanezhad 2016). World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms is a global network of organic farms and volunteers that are united through the non-monetary exchange of labor for accommodation and food on farms. The WWOOF experience typically involves training in organic cultivation methods and living with or in close proximity to the farm household. WWOOF aims to promote “cultural and educational experiences based on trust and non-monetary exchanges thereby helping to build a sustainable global community” (WWOOF Website 2016). Over the past three years, Arturo has hosted around sixty “WWOOFers.” He says that this is very “interesting and nice” as he is able to learn a lot from people from all around the world. He calls this “traveling without traveling.” Engagement with WWOOF provides a way around the social isolation of the area as he says “we are not in the center of the world here...it can be secluded.” Arturo did also acknowledge that hosting guest workers is “sometimes tiring.”

One summer afternoon, Arturo brought one of his WWOOFers down to Elsa’s, and the American college student on summer break told me she planned to stay for two weeks with Arturo before meeting up with a friend and moving on to other farms around Italy and France. She was content scouring the forest for berries and helping Arturo make wood-fired pizzas for the parties he sometimes threw. She spoke only very basic Italian and had chosen to work with Arturo partly because of his command of English.

Arturo also highlighted the social realities of living in Amiata. For instance, he does not feel integrated with locals. “I don’t know many locals,” he admitted. “We come from different realities,” he continued. He comes from the city and he feels that “in these places” like Amiata people have “very conservative mentalities.” He claims that all new things in Amiata are

brought by outside influences. When young people study, they end up moving away or only coming back to visit, causing a drain of educated people from the area. The people who stay are the ones who did not go to study and have few alternatives, whereas people who come from outside to live in this area “come by their will” and bring their knowledge and skills.

Arturo also suggested that locals are not sensitive to the environment, saying that “as a matter of culture, they don’t have it.” He finds that farmers from outside often have a “different sensitivity towards the soil” and are more environmentally conscious than locals. He also said that the “new farmers” have the luxury of being conscious in this way, and maybe less productive, because they have income coming from other streams of work.

One main challenge Arturo has faced is “crashing against a wall of bureaucracy” in attempting to access funding, conduct restoration, and run an *agriturismo*. He also noted social integration as a challenge, since coming to the area one is surrounded by “people who have a totally different reality than you.” In the future, Arturo intends to finish the restoration and expand the *agriturismo*. Once he has space for 10-15 people, he will be able to host groups, which for him is an interesting prospect. He mentioned that he would like to host interactive workshops that would build on his specialized engineering knowledge. Having interaction with like-minded people would also be personally rewarding. But Arturo has learned to keep his goals tempered and be “much more careful with projects” as he has seen the work involved in the phases of restoration.

Ethnographic Portrait: THE CERULLOS, A Neo-Rural Family Vineyard

The Cerullo family’s vineyard opened to a striking panorama of the valley at the end of a long dirt road descending from the main road that wound through the dense chestnut forest.

The stone house that emerged from the ground free of any landscaping looked recently built, positioned at one end of the vineyard. A playground next to the house was littered with toys and bikes and a large black dog in a pen barked as I arrived. Riccardo's wife, Mara, greeted me. She was comfortably dressed after shifting from the workday back to her domestic role. She offered me coffee and invited me to sit at the dining table with their eldest son to wait for Riccardo. Mara was friendly, but direct, not bothering to make small talk. Her son, Daniele, was busily assembling a collage diagram of different types of paper for a school assignment. He greeted me politely and asked where I was from. He seemed satisfied with my answer of "*gli Stati Uniti*" and he smiled. His mother encouraged him to speak some English with me, but he shyly shook his head and went back to his assignment. His younger brother played noisily outside with two friends, sporadically zooming through the house.

A few minutes later, Riccardo arrived and welcomed me. He was dressed in a polo shirt, crisp designer jeans, and clean, fashionable boots. As we shook hands, I noticed his hands were much softer than those of the older generation of farmers. Thin-rimmed glasses framed his light, inquisitive eyes. I noticed he was at least five years older than his wife, his hair thinning.

We sat down at the table and I complimented the expansive view from the large windows. Riccardo explained to me that he pointedly decided not to build a professional tasting room for the cantina (the grape processing area and wine cellar on Tuscan farms) and that "this is our tasting room." When clients or guests come to visit, they want to see where the wine is made and "here they have the view." They also are curious about the people who produce the wine, and welcoming them into the intimate space of the family home – especially in the particular space where meals are shared – satisfies this yearning for connection. Riccardo also

travels frequently to visit clients and promote the wine, since consumers like to meet the producers so that “the products have a face.” He had recently returned from a trip to Japan.

The Cerullos produce high quality organic wine for an international market under the family name, with key markets in the U.S., Japan, Canada, Brazil, the UK, and Northern Europe. The family is comprised of Riccardo and Mara – a married couple in their forties – and their two sons under 12 years old. They own around 30 hectares of land, with 4 hectares of vineyard surrounded by 16 hectares of forest. Riccardo says the extensive surrounding forest acreage helps to maintain the fidelity of their organic methods by eliminating the possibility of contamination from surrounding conventional fields. The 12 hectares of their land that would have produced wheat and corn in the past are no longer in cultivation, since the soil is rocky, accommodating the vineyard well, but not other crops. They also have 50 olive trees. They are currently renting land on a nearby abandoned farm in order to expand their wine production (1.5 more acres) and cultivate more olive trees (150 more plants) in order to begin to sell the oil. Widespread farm abandonment in the area allows them flexible opportunities for expansion. They have two full-time employees for the vineyard, wine cellar, and to help with the children and household, and Mara works full-time as a lawyer and occasionally travels for work. They also hire other part-time labor at certain times of year.

Both spouses come from urban, non-farming backgrounds and they moved to Tuscany from Naples before their first child was born. One day, over a simple lunch that she had prepared for the family and me, Mara told me that while she and Riccardo are from Naples, “*nostri figli sono toscani*” (our sons are Tuscan) since they were both born and raised in Amiata. She also remembered with fondness that they had traveled to New York City to visit clients once in February when it was snowing and they were in awe of the life and history of the city. When

possible, the family enjoys traveling together for business. When I asked Riccardo if Mara was involved in the farm, he responded that “she is involved in some ways.” She participates in some publicity, acting as part of the “face of the farm,” for instance by attending the weekly tastings they host for tourists. Throughout our conversation, Riccardo drew attention to the importance of building relationships with consumers through marketing and direct personal contact.

As we talked, the kids interrupted frequently to ask questions about homework or to playfully vie for their father’s attention. Riccardo responded to them gently, without losing patience. Riccardo eagerly offered for us to also converse in English, saying that it would be beneficial for him to practice his English.

As we walked through the vineyard to the cantina, Riccardo told me that he was trained as a lawyer and was on track to practice law when he was living in Naples. It was easy for me to imagine him studying legal texts, given his methodical nature, reflective style of speaking, and polished English. Buying this land and moving to rural Tuscany was a lifestyle change for both him and his wife, also a lawyer. His older sister had purchased land nearby that housed large farmhouses, and before deciding to also buy land, he and his wife stayed with her for a year. They purchased the land in 1999 and have been living in the house for 12 years, the age of their eldest son.

Riccardo’s sister, Melina, now runs an *agriturismo* that often hosts yoga, dance, and lifestyle workshops for international clients. To produce her wine for the *agriturismo*, she uses her brother’s wine cellar. Since Riccardo does not provide lodging, he also refers guests to Melina. When Elsa and I went for an informal follow-up visit with Melina after attending one of her parties, we were surprised to see that Melina, dewy-faced after emerging from a long hot

stone massage in the garden, had also booked one for Elsa. As we went off to talk about the farm over her freshly concocted wild elderberry spritzer, she told me that she was sure Elsa “worked too hard” and that she deserved to be pampered.

As we spoke, Riccardo’s attachment to his family heritage and ancestry emerged several times. Riccardo’s father farmed “as a hobby” outside of Naples on inherited land. His mother, in awe of how much time and money he spent on his hobby, would say that “*per lui, la campagna e’ come una amante*” [for him, the countryside is like a mistress]. Riccardo seemed to cherish the memory of his father, naming one of his top wines in honor of his nickname, “*Comandante*” [commander]. He had a boat outside Naples and as he would greet the kids when he came to port, they started referring to him affectionately as “*Comandante.*” His namesake wine had been recently hailed as one of the best 100 wines in Italy. Riccardo also proudly shared the recent news of one of his ancestor’s long-overdue public recognition. An ancestor in Naples had originally written many of the fairy tales that were later rewritten by the Grimm brothers, and a major film was about to premier internationally that drew from his tales and gave him credit. Riccardo called the well-known director to thank him and to offer him the family’s wine for the film’s premier.

The Cerullos have always cultivated under organic certification and Riccardo referred to organic farming as being “scientific” and “scientifically proven,” unlike biodynamic cultivation. Riccardo also emphasized the quality of his methods and wines and participates in competitions, but he is outspokenly against “wine snobbery.” He told me that wine “shouldn’t be complicated,” a philosophy that is reflected in their humble tasting room at the family dining table.

Riccardo sees a place for technological innovation in his vineyard, and seemed pleased with the steps he has taken. For example, he installed solar panels in 2011 on the tractor garage and thermal panels for hot water near the house. The farm and household now generate more energy than they consume and he calls it “zero impact.” His sister’s *agriturismo* is also “zero impact.” Riccardo also utilizes an accounting computer program that keeps track of all sales and expenses. He said that the farms that still keep their books by hand are “crazy” to do so, especially given the growing demands of bureaucratic regulation and accounting in agriculture. He also told me that the Internet is crucial for his marketing and for maintaining relationships with clients, and that the service in the countryside can be slow. He showed me his mobile hotspot device, which is the best option he has found. He maintains his own website through a subscription service with a fixed cost per year.

Bureaucracy has been a “constant” source of frustration for Riccardo, and his use of the farmer’s association Confragricoltura (General Confederation of Italian Agriculture) helps somewhat. Harkening to his legal training, Riccardo told me that Italy is the country with the greatest number of laws in the world, with around 200,000 laws. He asked me to guess the number of laws in the second place country, France. The number – 7,000 – paled in comparison to Italy’s venerable legal labyrinth. Wine production for an international market especially involves a high degree of bureaucracy, for taxes, sanitary controls, and organic inspections, resulting in a lot of regulations and “no coordination between them.”

Like Arturo, the Cerullos utilize WWOOF. They host WWOOFers only one at a time, since they stay in a room in the house with the family. They mainly seek WWOOFers during the labor-intensive period of April through October and volunteers typically come from the U.S., Australia, New Zealand, and Canada. They stay an average of 20 days, but one of them stayed three

months. Over the past 11 years, Riccardo reports a “90 percent positive” experience with WWOOF. He spoke very warmly about it, and also mentioned the value of it for his kids, since they are able to meet people from all over the world. This echoes other research in the United States that finds direct selling and engagement with tourists from around the world is seen as holding great value for fostering education and cultural sensitivity of children. One such mother – whose family sells maple syrup in Vermont – said, “Inviting visitors to our farm has opened up new worlds to us. Living in this rural part of Vermont, my kids would have only known our neighbors, who are a lot like us. Now we have friends from around the world” (Chase and Grubinger 2014: 180). Through these engagements, they are able to practice their English and he derided English language instruction in the Italian school system. This reflects a concern with education and worldliness of their children by these highly educated, professionally trained parents.

While I was working in the Cerullo’s wine cellar, a WWOOFer from England, James, arrived. He greeted the sons familiarly in good Italian and as we worked, he told me how his life is split between England and Piombino, a town on the Tuscan coast where his Italian girlfriend resides. He returns to the vineyard often to work for a week since he had a positive experience and enjoys the work. As I used the machine to press the foil around the bottle corks, he explained to me that WWOOFers technically are not supposed to use machinery and that they have some “strange rules.”

I spent a few weeks working in the Cerulllos’ vineyard and wine cellar, working to clean and label the bottles, prepare shipments, clip up the lines and vines in the vineyard to secure them for the tractor to spray organic-approved treatments, and clean the barrels in the cantina while shifting the wines between barrels using pumps and hoses. Most of my time was spent in

the wine cellar with Gina, a local woman who served as the energetic assistant of Riccardo and the children's caretaker. Paolo, the young local tractor operator, worked primarily outdoors and Riccardo spent much of his time in the office above the cantina, though he did work in the cantina to check the status of the wines and tend to their storage.

I also had the chance to take part in the bottling of the wine in May, which involved a significant mobilization of labor over two days. A large truck housing the long chain of bottling equipment was backed up to the cantina door and an assembly line of people performed different tasks. Riccardo supervised the complex chain of work, and had his Bluetooth in his ear, communicating frequently with the other end of the production line and receiving calls. Both of Riccardo's boys were involved in helping with different tasks, working alongside their father or Gina. They smiled and laughed a lot, seeming to enjoy the work and attention. The work commenced early in the morning when the truck arrived and continued through the whole day, aside from the hour break for lunch. They hoped to finish the bottling in two days. Mara prepared an enormous pot of pasta and brought it down to the wine cellar, and we all ate together around a long, improvised table. The lunch was also combined with a brief 50th birthday celebration for Gina, who lit up as everyone gathered around a cake to sing '*Tanti Auguri a Te*' ('Happy birthday,' in the same melody of the American version) to her, have a toast with *prosecco*, and share their birthday wishes.

Riccardo explained that to realize the full potential of the international niche market he has established currently means increasing production. To accomplish this, he has rented additional land. He now produces 25,000-30,000 bottles a year and he would like to reach 50,000 bottles a year. He was careful to establish the market for this level of production in advance, before investing in expansion. Riccardo has embarked on a path of quality, organic

wine production but he has also exercised conservative decision-making in terms of expansion. Riccardo instructed me, “One thing you must write in your book...farming is not so romantic. There is this romanticism and idealism surrounding it, but you need a lot of money. The truth is that many people invested more money than they could, thinking that it would eventually come back. It ended in failure.”

Ethnographic Portrait: DAVIDE, A Young Farmer-Bachelor and Agricultural Wage Laborer

Davide is in his early thirties and migrated from Northern Italy eight years ago. Davide’s story reveals a past colored by disappointments in romance and farming. Davide told me that he knew he wanted to be a farmer when he was three years old, a time when he began to obsessively play with a farm Lego set. Of his peers, he is the only one who actually ended up doing what he thought he wanted to do at such an early age.

Although he now owns a 50 hectare farm in a particularly sparsely populated area of Amiata, reality has turned out to be somewhat more complicated for Davide. His farm is not what he imagined it would be and he also has had to take on a part-time job working in the vineyards at the Banfi estate. He has the knowledge and passion to keep animals and imagined devoting his farm to raising livestock and pigs. He has also learned many of the skills for butchering and preserving meat and wanted to eventually conduct on-farm processing and *venditta diretta* (direct sales). He expressed interest in potentially starting a *fattoria didattica* (teaching farm) and thought they are important for creating awareness of sustainable farming systems and social change. Despite his skills and interest in these alternative farming forms, he has been unable to execute them so far. He also expressed that his only partial fulfillment of his university degree blocks him from some funding sources that support alternative farming.

When Beppe and I went to Davide's farm one day to look at the hay he was selling, Beppe told me that in the past livestock rearing was abundant in this area. He remembered visiting the area often with his father, a livestock broker, to pick up cattle. Now we looked out onto largely abandoned fields as Beppe marveled, "*abbandonato dal Cristo*" (abandoned by Christ). Even the territory is known as the "forsaken" or "abandoned" land. Davide joked about this being the perfect place for him, admitting that he does not like being surrounded by people and hates cities. Beppe and Davide agreed that what little land was not abandoned was mostly inhabited by foreigners and that "it is hard to find an Italian," although there are a several Milanese like Davide. I listened as Beppe talked Davide down on the price of the hay and as Davide's resistance withered. It was clear that Beppe had spent his childhood carefully observing how his father negotiated the price of livestock. It was equally clear that Davide was desperate to make a sale at almost any price.

Davide bought the farm five years ago with an inheritance from his grandfather, who was a doctor, and set out to farm with his partner at the time. As he showed me a few photos, his eyes welled with tears as he came to one of his grandfather. "None of this would have been possible without him," he told me. Davide's younger cousin, his aunt, and grandmother had bought a farm nearby with the same inheritance, and Davide had first spent a few years living and working there before buying his own farm. While Davide enjoyed setting up the farm, populating it with animals, and planting the vineyard, he was disappointed with what he claimed was his artist aunt's unwillingness to do her share of the farm work. Frictions between them led Davide to seek his own farm, and his aunt, her son, and her mother (Davide's grandmother on the maternal side) now remain on that land to run an *agriturismo* and farm that produce buffalo meat, wine, oil, and some vegetables and fruits. They have succeeded in

enacting some of the alternative farming forms Davide had hoped to have on his own farm, including keeping pastured animals and selling for through *gruppi di acquisto solidale (rete GAS* or solidarity purchase groups) (See Grasseni 2014). In order to participate in the GAS groups, they travel to northern Italian cities to sell the meat where there is a niche market for buffalo meat. They have also supplied eggs to the group in Grosseto, a thirty minute drive.

Davide and his partner spent a few years planting cereals and fodder, keeping sheep, tending a vegetable garden, and producing oil while she worked part-time in an administrative job in a nearby town. Her earnings contributed to the household budget, while Davide worked on the farm full-time. But, according to Davide, his partner eventually decided she no longer wanted to share that lifestyle and returned to Milan. With hints of bitterness, Davide suggested that “she did nothing” and never showed an interest in farming. At the time of our conversation, he was facing a lawsuit from his ex-partner, who was demanding to be compensated for what she had invested in the farm and their life together, even though Davide did not have a mortgage.

Davide expressed himself as being strongly against capitalism and critical of money, calling the advent of currency “the biggest mistake in human history” and claiming that he “would be happier without it.” He referred to money as “*maledetti soldi*” (damned money). He explained that he tries to exchange through barter as much as possible, and often does farm work for others in exchange for cuts of meat or quantities of wine. He also exchanges many food products with his cousin’s farm. But Davide has had some trouble finding a network of kindred people in the area who are interested in bartering. He suggested that he thought this absence was particular to this area of Tuscany. In the North, he said it would not be this way, and his comments hinted at a perceived backwardness or stubborn independence or self-

interest of residents of Amiata. As another way partly around dependence on money in addition to bartering, he attempts to be as self-sufficient as possible. His heating and hot water heater run on wood from his land, and he does a lot of preserving from his garden. Even with his efforts to distance himself from money, Davide is aware of the need for some money, reflected in his part-time job at Banfi. Money still seemed to be a source of uncertainty and stress, and he relies on electricity, cell phone service, the internet, television, and cigarettes, which require him to maintain a constant flow of cash. As we spoke, he seemed anxious, smoking and exhaling with his brow furrowed, as if willing himself to expel years of disappointment and resentment.

NEO-RURAL FARMERS						
	Household Composition	Farm Strategies	Local, National, or International Focus?	Off farm work?	Children Involved?	Education
Elsa	Single woman, lives on farm.	Chestnuts; Lavender; Organic; Olive oil and garden/ chickens for household; Agritourism	Local and National (chestnuts to cooperative)	Yes, part-time	n/a	Nursing degree
Carlo	Single man, lives on farm.	Chestnuts; Organic; Agritourism	National (chestnuts to cooperative)	Self-employed part-time	n/a	Unknown
Arturo	Single man, lives on farm.	Vegetable garden; Organic; Agritourism; WWOOF	Household production/ International tourism	Self-employed part-time	n/a	Engineering degree
The Cerullos (Riccardo)	Wife and husband with 2 young sons, live on farm.	DOC wine and olive oil; Organic; WWOOF	International	Wife, yes	No, young children	Law degree
Davide	Single man, lives on farm.	Grains; Olive oil	National (grains to cooperative); Some direct sales of grain locally	Yes, part-time	n/a	Some college
Antonio	Single man, lives on farm.	DOC wine and olive oil; Agritourism	Sales through agritourism; National	No	n/a	College
The Martacis (Gianna & Fulvio)	Married couple with grown children, Couple lives on farm.	DOC wine and olive oil; Organic; Chestnuts; Honey; Agritourism	Sales through agritourism	No	Son involved in marketing/ business	Unknown

Figure 2: Neo-Rural Farmers Described in Ethnographic Portraits

EMERGING DIMENSIONS OF NEO-RURALITY

Dirt and Desire: Place Making, Belonging, and Affective Longing

Anthropologists have long understood and documented how “the experience of space is always socially constructed” (Gupta and Ferguson 1992: 11). Anthropologists have issued crucial critiques of the way space and place are theorized in cultural analysis, destabilizing essentialized notions of community, nation, and culture and insisting that the discipline “give up the naïve ideas of communities as literal entities” (Gupta and Ferguson 1992: 10, 1997; Anderson 1983; Barth 1969; Cohen 1985). Even so, conceptions of place remain salient in constructing identity, social practice, and power relations, and “place remains a deeply contested and symbolically rich site in which to constitute the self, even for those on the move” (Bonisch-Brednich and Trundle 2010: 7). Attachment to place and practices of place making are meaningful aspects of modern migration (Bonisch-Brednich and Trundle 2010: 7; Low 1992). As Gupta and Ferguson highlight, “The irony of these times, however, is that as actual places and localities become ever more blurred and indeterminate, *ideas* of culturally and ethnically distinct places become perhaps even more salient” (1992: 10). This resonates with the paradox noted by David Harvey (1990) in which place-based identities have become more important in a world increasingly marked by global exchanges and communications. In his ethnographic study of lifestyle migrants in Michigan’s Grand Traverse region, Hoey (2010, 2014) also finds that “despite numerous proclamations of an essential placelessness to contemporary

American society, place continues to be a basic part of the construction of the person” (2010: 237).

With this theoretical framing in mind, this study contributes to the “need to theorize how space is being *reterritorialized* in the contemporary world” (Gupta and Ferguson 1992: 20). In understanding the landscapes of neo-rural livelihoods in Amiata, it is crucial to emphasize neo-rural “processes and practices of place making” and efforts toward “emplaced belonging” as being “embodied practices that shape identities and enable resistances” (Gupta and Ferguson 1997: 6; Bonisch-Brednich and Trundle 2010). Amiata as a locality cannot be taken as given, since it has long-standing and changing linkages with regional and global processes and power structures. Rather, the means by which rural Amiata is constructed as a meaningful place with symbolic interest and currency for the life projects and redefinition of identities of middle-class newcomers is of interest in this research, especially as a locus for the reformulation of class identities. With Gupta and Ferguson (1997), I am interested in interrogating “how perceptions of locality and community are discursively and historically constructed” while examining how “understandings of locality, community, and region [are] formed and lived” (6). I acknowledge place making as both a material and symbolic process, warranting balanced attention to phenomenological and material aspects.

In comprehending the mobilities and fluid processes of identity formation that characterize neo-rural subjects, it is crucial to balance understandings of individual subjectivity, collective experience, and broader contexts of political economy (Biehl et al 2007). While the movement of middle-class residents from urban, professional livelihoods to agglomerated, hybrid life projects based in rural areas destabilizes to a certain extent the tenets of modernization, urbanization, and professional gain with which these people would typically

engage, it also exposes actors to different contexts of selfhood, inner emotional processes, and forms of social suffering. With anthropologists Biehl, Good, and Kleinman (2007), subjective processes of identity formation are central in understanding how and why middle-class residents seek to remake their lives in rural areas:

The study of individual subjectivity as both a strategy of existence and a material and means of governance helps to recast assumptions about the workings of collectivities and institutions. Refracted through potent political, technological, psychological, and linguistic registers, inner life processes capture the violence and dynamism of everyday life. By attending to subjectivity in ethnographic terms and in comparative social analysis, we encounter the concrete constellations in which people forge and foreclose their lives around what is most at stake. Examination of the complex ways in which people's inner states reflect lived experience within everyday worlds as well as within temporary spaces and transitions – moments of crisis and states of exception – can disturb and enlarge presumed understandings of what is socially possible and desirable. What is life for? What is an adequate life? Such study also helps us understand what psychological processes are about (5).

In their comparative study of British retirement migration to areas of Italy, Spain, and France, King and colleagues (2000) suggest that “Southern Europe attracts people...who do not have deep roots in one place, people who are (or have been) extremely mobile and who maintain multiple place affiliations” (162). One such region is “the cosmopolitan countryside of

Tuscany, with its confusion of cultures and manners” (King et al 2000: 163). Whether or not Southern Europe has particular appeal for mobile populations or if sustained mobility is rather an element of the overall migratory experience, I did find that neo-rural residents were generally mobile and tended to inhabit multiple geographical, social, and economic worlds. Maintaining mobilities and multiple place affiliations is in accord with the “postmodern notion of their being located more in fields of expertise than in places” (King et al 2000: 163; Benson 2009).

Despite the multiplicity and fluidity of place affiliations, new rural residents claim place as an important marker of identity, both personally and often in their entrepreneurial endeavors. As demonstrated in the ethnographic portraits above, place is strongly reified and articulated as important by these mobile individuals and their shared use of the concept of *Heimat* shows “how imagined communities (Anderson 1983) come to be attached to imagined places” (Gupta and Ferguson 1992: 10). When deciding to relocate, many told me that they were drawn by a special pull to Amiata, often articulated through reference to the claimed origins of the name “Amiata” with the German word *Heimat*.

The term *Heimat* cannot be translated into English and it has multiple meanings. In another study of British and Swiss retirement migrants in Southern Spain, the term has been found to “convey the struggles inherent in the creation of home, community, and a sense of belonging” (Huber and O’Reilly 2004: 330). The concept “says more about those who use it than about a referent or entity” and its invocation by neo-rurals in Amiata shows a concerted striving for place making and belonging (Huber and O’Reilly 2004: 329-330). It is also hybrid and involves a degree of pastiche, with a German term being embraced by migrants of diverse nationalities to describe a place in rural Italy. As suggested by Gupta and Ferguson (1992),

“Homeland’ in this way remains one of the most powerful unifying symbols for mobile and displaced peoples, though the relation to homeland may be very differently constructed in different settings” (11).

A comparative study of British and Swiss retirement migration to Southern Spain examined how retirees constructed *Heimat*, used as an emic concept (Huber and O’Reilly 2004). Key facets of the construction of *Heimat* included establishing close relationships in Spain and maintaining relationships in their home countries, engaging in activities organized by ex-pat associations and clubs, engaging in voluntary work and social networks of exchange with their compatriots.

Similarly, Catherine Trundle (2013) finds that engagement in charity is a crucial avenue of belonging for American women living in Florence], and expressing fulfillment with “feeling at home” and feeling that their hearts reside in their new location. While friendships may be formed with compatriots, other migrants, and the Spanish, linguistic competence and integration into Spanish culture and lifestyle were not important aspects of *Heimat*. Ultimately, the study found that retirement migrants found their lives in Spain fulfilling and that they effectively established the sense of community and social life reflected in the concept of *Heimat*.

In the case of retirement migration in Spain, social relations were perceived as an important aspect of *Heimat*. These findings were echoed in a recent ethnographic study of British migrants in rural France, who placed a great importance on creating social ties with local French residents (Benson 2011). However, in Amiata, social life and relations were missing from conceptions of *Heimat*. Rather, *Heimat* was used in reference to feeling an intuitive connection to place, often in reference to the mountain itself. Part of establishing belonging in Amiata for

neo-rurals involved learning about and mastering knowledge of natural place, including the plants and animals of the mountain. Such conceptions are in line with Setha Low's (1992) view of place attachment as being "the symbolic relationship formed by people giving culturally shared emotional/affective meanings to a particular space or piece of land that provides the basis for the individual's and group's understanding of and relationship to the environment" (165).

Heimat also involves mystical elements for several neo-rurals. For instance, Elsa suggested that, being a dormant volcano, the mountain and its elements were capable of exercising a "pull" on people, exercising agency. This was how she found herself relocating to Amiata. *Heimat* was constructed by neo-rurals based on both the material and intangible qualities of the mountain and natural world. Another neo-rural told me the story of how she found her land. She grew up in Naples, but told me that the environment is a "disaster" in that area and that she knew she wanted to move to Tuscany. When she and her husband came to visit the region of Tuscany, they knew they wanted to stay in an *agriturismo* and they randomly opened a guidebook to a page, finding the area of Amiata and deciding to visit. It was snowing when they started exploring the area, and they had to cross the river to their current property with plastic bags on their shoes because there was not a road. She told her husband that she recognized the house immediately because she had a dream about it the previous night. This is how they decided to buy the property and the land twenty-five years ago.

Many neo-rurals also drew attention to organized religious aspects of their relocation, since they were drawn to participating in the practice and community life of the Buddhist Center. They also drew attention to the spiritual values of connecting with the land through

their rural lives and work while acknowledging the interconnectedness of ecological systems, demonstrating aspects of what Bron Taylor (2009) has termed “dark green religion.”

While the study of retirement migrants and their construction of *Heimat* and belonging in Spain does concede that there may be struggles that involve loneliness, isolation, alcoholism, and difficulties when facing health problems, it suggests an overall picture that migrants felt like they were “getting the best of both worlds” (Huber and O’Reilly 2004: 338). While retirement migrants likely face different challenges, the study was not based on extended fieldwork and may not be able to access the fractures and ruptures inherent to experiences of migration and place making, instead placing undue emphasis on processes and perceptions of cohesion.

The realities I observed in Amiata often suggested that migrants, rather than “getting the best of both worlds,” often felt pulled between multiple worlds. They also felt pulled between the realities they encountered in daily life and the imagined ideals they had projected on their experience of migrating to this place. The claims of feeling *Heimat* by my informants were sometimes fraught with tensions, revealing complex subjective experiences and emotional processes of affective longing and alienation. While neo-rurals felt drawn to or “pulled” to Amiata, they faced endless challenges. As Elsa commented on both the physical challenges of living alone in rural Amiata and her emotional struggles, “this mountain will challenge you.” Arturo also complained that he “crashed against a wall of bureaucracy” in attempting to make his home and had to engage in a costly legal battle. Davide also imagined Amiata to be an idyllic setting for his thriving farm with pastured animals, where he could work in union with his partner and have space to be untroubled with other people, except the ones he chose to allow on the farm to buy products or learn about farming. These experiences reflect that migrants experience a disjunct between what was imagined for their life in Amiata and the reality they

encountered, a finding backed by Benson's ethnography of British lifestyle migrants in rural France (Benson 2011). For neo-rural migrants, Amiata acts as an imagined environment, a blank slate upon which imaginings, aspirations, and longings can be inscribed. It is the disjuncture encountered between these imaginings and the reality encountered that generate novel forms of neo-rural being, as neo-rural subjects seek out labor and camaraderie through volunteer workers and tourist guests.

Many neo-rural migrants hold multiple place orientations and affiliations through their lives and work, often in different geographic areas. For instance, Elsa traveled to Spain to visit her family at their home and also spend some solitary time as an "escape" to her family's small beach apartment. Her family also came to visit her in Amiata during the time of my fieldwork. I found that identifying with aspects of past experiences, especially family relations, often leads to dual feelings of longing for connection with the past while also facing alienation from their prior lives. While older migrants with more resources seemed to maintain connections with their previous lives more easily, younger migrants voiced how they struggled with feelings of alienation and friction between the reality in which they currently lived and their family members living in the realm of their prior lives. Sometimes these struggles were framed by material constraints, but often the struggle persisted despite having the resources to travel.

The case of Anna and Ben illustrates this struggle. Anna is a young woman who farms a small plot of land with her partner, Ben, and they are engaged in a project to build ecological yurts that they will eventually rent or use to host volunteer workers. She voiced her anxiety to Elsa and me over dinner about her mother's upcoming visit from London. While she expressed closeness and affection for her mother, she was aware of her mother's disapproval of her giving up her high-paying job in computer programming to reinvent her life in rural Amiata. Living

conditions in the unfinished yurt were rustic, without any form of temperature control and with exposure to the realities of insects, pests, and the elements. Visitors also utilized a shared outdoor compost toilet and bathed in the river. She was wary that such a setup would induce shock and an uneasy adjustment for a woman accustomed to the “comforts” of city life.

Anna made it clear that she felt much more comfortable visiting her mother in her urban world than bringing her into her rural lifestyle. But Anna and Ben were increasingly hesitant to be away from their land to visit London as they continued to develop their farming efforts. They also faced time pressures with their building project because if the yurt was not finished and properly winterized, they would have to rent an apartment in the village for the winter as they had in the past. The alternative of her mother staying somewhere else during her visit was not discussed, and perhaps was not seen as an appropriate option for a close family member. Such realities placed Anna in the visibly stressful position of wanting to maintain her relationship with her mother but feeling incapable both of traveling to see her or properly hosting her in Amiata. This reflects what James Ferguson finds, as “dislocation is more often a partial and conditional state of affairs, an uncertain predicament that entails neither a clear sense of membership in one’s community of origin nor an uncomplicated conviction of having left it behind” (1997: 153).

Elsa, even while offering accommodations with full amenities in two houses, was similarly anxious prior to her parents’ and her sister’s family coming to visit from Spain. She was especially worried that her sister’s teenaged children might get bored during the visit, and that it would be difficult to plan activities that would please three generations of the children, her sister and her husband, and their elderly parents. By coming to Amiata, Elsa had made a decision of which her family was judgmental. She confided to me that she felt the need to show them that she “was doing okay” in this place that they see as so remote. She wanted her family

to see and come to understand that she was content with the life she chose and doing well, even without a partner, a void that could be partly filled, she felt, through reassuring her family of her close friendships and support systems. While Elsa shared her emotional struggles with her friends, and eventually also with me, she felt the need to establish her family's approval for her life choice to relocate to Amiata. After her family left, Elsa told me that she enjoyed their visit, but also that she felt "exhausted." Elsa undoubtedly invested a good deal of energy and emotional management in their visit, as she attempted to please everyone's diverse interests and project an unrealistically positive image of her daily life in Amiata. I observed how lifestyle migrants, especially females, often seemed taxed by performing this emotional labor, reflecting how they often feel caught between different social realities.

Modernization and Masculinity

Two complementary ethnographies examine modernization's effects on family and gender in European rural areas while grounding the historical circumstances of contemporary concerns brought to light by my informants. Jane Collier's study (1986, 1997) considers shifting patterns of gender ideals in the village of Los Olivos in Andalucía, Spain, and Susan Carol Rogers' (1991) research examines the dispersed village and farming system of Sainte Foy in southern France. Both suggest some hypotheses for Amiata, which line up with my ethnographic data.

Collier (1997) examines the root causes of a change she observed in the village of Los Olivos. In 1963, women in the village wore drab clothing and were often plump, seemingly taking less of an interest in their physical appearance and aesthetics. However since 1984,

women resident in the village and migrants from the village both displayed a concern with fashion, adornment, and weight. In a powerful contrast, Collier notes that “twenty years ago, the women of Los Olivos were judged according to how well they emulated the Virgin Mary. Today they are judged according to how well they emulate the Modern Woman of advertisements and TV” (1997: 104). This shift or “radical cultural break” (105) became the focus of Collier’s study.

In Los Olivos, the social structure and markers of status in 1963 were determined in large part through inheritance and land, with the village divided into three groups -- resident landowners who did not work, resident landowners who worked their land, and landless laborers. Status of children was determined in large part by the reputation of parents and conduct was often seen through the lenses of male courage or female modesty. But by 1984, the class structure had been toppled through heavy emigration, industrialization, and the commercialization of farming. The previous landlords who stayed in the village now constituted the poorest class and the sharecroppers who migrated early enough were able to gain industrial employment and good incomes. While wage labor was a marker of low status in 1963 since it indicated a lack of wealth in property, it became a source of prestige and material gain by twenty years later. Rather than being determined by inheritance, people saw their occupations as linked to personal initiative and capabilities, and it is these discourses that were enacted to justify and uphold inequalities in work and lifestyle. Not surprisingly, education had replaced property as the central parental preoccupation of securing a viable future for children. While modest presentation of self in 1963 showed the legitimacy of a woman’s children and her alliance with the duties of wifedom, more elaborate fashions and wider participation in public life signaled a woman’s sophistication and ability to maintain a desirable spouse (Collier 1997).

Collier found little overlap between the two social systems. She also goes on to draw out the differences between the two systems in terms of ideas about gender and romance, with romantic love taking the place previously held by honor in determining courtship and marriage patterns (1997). While she presents a fairly clear and tidy break between the cultural configurations of “tradition” and “modernity” with little blurring across the two systems, she also presents a strong case for their emic validity. She is attuned to the fine-grained dimensions of the formation of a modern, gendered subjectivity. She insists that “cultural conceptions of gender must be interpreted as aspects of cultural systems through which people manipulate, interpret, rationalize, resist, and reproduce relations of inequality within complex social wholes” (1997: 101).

Rogers’s ethnography (1991) also takes modernization as its object in a French farming community that underwent rapid change during the post-war period as regional agriculture organized in an integrated farming system was commercialized to provide milk for the Roquefort cheese industry. Rogers discovered that, contrary to conventional predictions around modernization, stem family organization with multiple generations present in a household and the system of impartible inheritance actually increased over time. Through the *ostal* system, women were excluded from rights such as land ownership, patronage, and the public activities of the village’s cafes and markets. But it was only with modernization and increased conspicuous consumption that the rural status differences enforced by the *ostal* system were felt by women. With modernization, the response of many young women was to migrate to urban areas disproportionately to males, resulting in a shortage of wives and widespread bachelorhood in rural areas. This led to the decay of long-standing rules and restrictions surrounding appropriate, class-based marriages. By the late 1970s, the crisis of the female

exodus had ended, both due to France's economic crisis beginning in the mid-1970s and due to changes in *ostal* homes, such as modern renovations and the possibility of wives continuing their off-farm work through the domestic assistance of their mothers-in-law.

Rogers does not document such sharp distinctions between "traditional" rural life and "modern" urban life as Collier did in Spain. Rather, she finds that the profound changes spurred by postwar economic change did not erode the local cultural system. Rather, "sociocultural specificities are normally reproduced rather than worn away in the course of such transformations as those we conventionally gloss as modernization, national integration, or capitalist penetration" (1991: 208). Her ethnography challenges the idea of modernization as a monolithic steamroller that uniformly enforces tendencies toward cultural homogenization.

Collier (1986, 1997) and Rogers (1991) both cut the concept of modernization down to size by mapping out its local meanings, its role in the formation of subjectivities, and its implications for local social and economic systems of organization. Many of these patterns that began with modernization and industrialization in rural areas were highlighted in their contemporary contexts by my informants. First, the preoccupation with education for children that Collier noted in the Spanish case was widely shared by neo-rural families such as the Cerullos. Several established farmers also proudly boasted of their children's education and reified the fact that they had gone into other professions. But others had children who were not educated, who either stayed on the family farm, combined working on the farm with wage labor, or worked entirely in wage labor off the farm. A notable few established local farms had children with higher education who decided to return to the family farm, and in all cases the young farmers and their parents were engaged in tourism and often in organic farming practices.

Davide and his young neighbor, Eduardo – the son of a farmer who combines working his father’s land with wage labor – brought up gendered concerns that have resonance with the changes associated with modernization examined by Collier and Rogers. Most prominently, they expressed the difficulty in finding women interested in rural life. Davide was especially frustrated, claiming that Italian women were “superficial,” materialistic, and uninterested in rural life. They do not appreciate “simplicity” or “*le cose importanti*” [the important things], perceived as Davide to be hard farm work, independence, relative self-sufficiency, and good food. Devotion to the farm enterprise and an interest in working side by side on the land were primary attributes of a potential partner for Davide. His suggestion of Italian women being materialistic and oriented away from rural life bears parallels to the changing ideals of femininity and construction of the self through consumption with modernization examined by Collier (1997) in Spain.

As discussed by Rogers (1991) in the French case, marriage markets were profoundly altered with urbanization and rural exodus. Bourdieu (2007) also documented this process in 1960s rural France, as males were left on family farms as relatively isolated bachelors. He connected this trend with a broader process of class differentiation and symbolic domination that fundamentally altered notions of personhood for French farmers -- they became “members of a class dispossessed of the power to define its own identity [they] cannot even be said to be what they are, since the most ordinary word [*paysan*] used to designate them can function, even in their own eyes, as an insult” (2007: 198). Similar frictions between the rural and urban as mediated through processes of modernization have been documented in Italy (Krause 2005) as peasants become “loaded cultural categories” enacted for various political ends (Rogers 1987: 60).

In the lived experience of young male farmers like Davide and Eduardo, broader shifts in the expectations of modernity play out in the realms of masculinity and romance. For instance, Eduardo is a young bachelor inheriting the disappearing agrarian life of his parents, producing forage and cereals without diversifying. Eduardo – as was traditionally the case in Italy but has been changing with urbanization (Counihan 2004; Pratt 1994) – lived with his parents on the farm. He had a girlfriend but was frustrated with the little privacy they had with his living arrangements. Similarly, the Gallis – an established family farm with the eldest son working on the farm – brought up that it was increasingly difficult to find a potential wife who would be interested in a farming lifestyle. Elsa also remarked that she had never seen the son with a woman. Both established farm families like Eduardo’s family and the Gallis, and neo-rural bachelors like Davide seemed aware that farmers are not perceived in general as desirable spouses by women.

Such difficulties and disappointments in romance likely have effects on how masculinity is experienced and perceived societally. For instance, Davide had an encounter with Beppe, an older established, locally well-known farmer, which sheds light on how notions of masculinity and gender roles are drawn into scrutiny by bachelorhood. Beppe’s family has owned a farm and a good deal of land for generations, and their enterprise has expanded into other businesses in town. He lives in an apartment in town and his wife has an administrative job. According to Beppe, she has “never set foot” in the farm and suggested that her fear of dogs was merely an excuse to stay away from the farm. This female distancing from the farm was also echoed by one of Beppe’s friends of the same generation. This reflects Beppe, an established farmer of an older generation, expecting a deeper divide between the reproductive labor of the household and the productive labor of the farm than young Davide would.

Beppe unabashedly asked Davide if he cooks and how he manages the cooking, cleaning, and tasks of housekeeping on his own. Davide explained that he cooks and manages things, since he has been unmarried and essentially living on his own for the past twelve years and has little choice. Beppe seemed baffled, and proceeded to ask if there was someone (female) nearby to do the cleaning. Davide said, “why pay someone, when I can do it myself?”, reflecting his values of frugality and self-sufficiency. Beppe concluded, “*sei come una donna*” [you’re like a woman]. He assured us that he does not know how to cook or clean, and that women are better at cleaning than men. Despite living in town and his wife having a job outside of the farm, Beppe had strong opinions that cooking and cleaning were solidly in the realm of women’s work, and that attempting to perform such tasks could call his masculinity into question. Interestingly, though, Beppe had a good deal of knowledge of food preparation, as he often sent me home from the farm or his shop in town with ingredients and specific instructions for preparation. Nevertheless, Beppe had trouble imagining even a single man being capable or willing to perform the tasks of cooking and cleaning. While Davide maintained more traditional ideas about wanting a wife who would be devoted to the farm and home as documented in agrarian values in the U.S. (Barlett 2006), he did not share Beppe’s disdain for performing domestic tasks. Beppe’s judgment that Davide was “like a woman” suggests another way that Davide’s reality as a farmer-bachelor is at odds with local expectations of masculinity.

Davide’s response seemed to be to forcefully attempt to reestablish his masculinity by reclaiming the title and role of farmer and expressing pride in performing farming work. Even laboring at Banfi, he often proudly wore his overall uniform in town after work as evidence of the hard, honest work of laboring on the land. He did not worry about his dirty, rough hands,

suggesting that they, too, were evidence of his hard work. Despite the clear difficulties in some areas of his life, he continued to idealize the independence and work of having his farm. Hints of bitterness and disappointment still crept to the surface, though, especially in reference to lacking a partner and longing for partnership – though not necessarily marital – centered around the farm enterprise.

Young Rural Migrants and Farmers: “This isn’t what I was expecting...”

Those who chose to migrate and seek rural lifestyles or begin farming in Amiata in their 20s or 30s and do not have families face unique challenges, as illustrated in the ethnographic descriptions of Elsa and Davide. Some of the issues they face mirror those of a younger generation who have inherited their parents’ rapidly disappearing conventional farming livelihoods. For younger migrants, challenges are both economic and affective. Migrants tend to come to rural areas with a certain degree of economic privilege from their families or previous professional lives. The economic imperative is most often met with part-time off-farm work, but taking on part-time work often has emotional repercussions. The affective struggles of rural life appear to be more intractable for young migrants and I noticed that younger migrants like Elsa and Davide, who were most interested in alternative farming and farming as a lifestyle, were most affected.

While young rural migrants often seek a lifestyle drastically different from their previous lives in urban areas and professional jobs, in reality, a trend of part-time farming and need to engage in off-farm work often follows. For instance, Elsa’s daily experience of work is much

different than how she imagined it. While she purchased her property and began the process of restoration with the expectation of partnership, shared labor, and eventually having a family, instead she is doing the work essentially on her own and has remained largely frustrated in romance. Not having a partner to share the work and financial burdens has obliged her to take on a part-time job in order to pay the mortgage and cover expenses, which further limits the time she can devote to farming and hosting guests, and it saps her energy. I watched in awe as Elsa hurried between the realms of office work, hosting guests, maintaining her land and houses, and engaging in her social life. She often appeared to be weary, although she was able to summon admirable energy.

Her part-time job was also a source of frustration and exhaustion. Elsa did not enjoy being pent up in an office for half of each day, and often came home feeling drained of energy from having to spend the day looking at a computer screen, which she described as “mind-numbing.” While she had imagined rural life to be an escape from a profession working indoors, she has had to engage in the very type of work she was hoping to avoid in order to make ends meet. She longed to devote all of her time to farming and maintaining her property, but it was impossible without a partner. For the time being, she recognized that she must keep her part-time job, and she felt grateful for the income, despite her unrest and desire for things to be different. Davide expressed similar complaints about his part-time work, though he mostly complained of the work at Banfi as being sometimes laborious and repetitive. His disappointment in not being able to devote himself completely to his farm alongside a dedicated partner in the way he had hoped strongly resonated with Elsa’s circumstances.

While Carlo and Arturo were middle-aged and much less involved in working the land, Elsa and Davide had to confront the limitations of their bodies in their work. Both had to

balance the physical demands of off-farm work with working their land alone. For Davide, this was especially severe since he had a part-time job that involved manual labor and his farm was 50 hectares. His work at Banfi could be physically demanding and repetitive, and he complained of pain in his arm and back. With time, Elsa had also developed back problems from years of heavy lifting and physical labor, requiring her to seek special treatments in the hospital in Grosseto or Siena. In this way, both the realities of rural work and life and the disappointment of living and working alone gradually become inscribed on their bodies in painful ways.

Perhaps even more acutely than material dimensions, Elsa and Davide both expressed a strong affective desire for romantic partnership based around their aspirations and imaginings of what their rural lives would become. Without shame, Davide admitted that having a partner *“al mio fianco”* (by [his] side) gave him the strength and motivation necessary to tend to the animals, work the land, and imagine a desired future for himself and his farm. *“Sono fatto così”* (I am made like this), he told me. When his partner left, he said that he was “left alone” and struggled to find the motivation to work or envision the future. But at the same time, he berated his former partner and claimed that she did not have a true interest in farm work, reflecting a paradox between feeling left alone without that partner but at the same time judging her as unsuitable.

Elsa also recognized that not having a romantic partner has affected her emotionally. She complained to me on several occasions about how hard it was to meet eligible partners who share her values of a simple lifestyle and enjoyment of working on the land. Elsa had an active social life and network of acquaintances in Amiata, but she still felt the void of not having a partner. While Elsa was generally an upbeat, friendly, energetic, and positive person, her life during the time of my fieldwork as she turned 40 was also tinged with a sense of

disappointment and sadness. As I got closer to Elsa, we had many conversations about how she felt “this is not the best moment in my life.” Some days, she would feel sad and seek solace in books or films, uncharacteristically shutting out her friends and commitments. Her reality – living a rural life alone with her family far away and without a partner or children – has not lined up with her hopes when she embarked on transitioning to a rural lifestyle. As she told me, “this isn’t what I was expecting.”

For new rural migrants like Elsa and Davide, there is a “tension between imagining and experience, between structure and agency that results in the ambivalence that characterizes the migrants’ lives. [...] Life following migration does not always conform to its imaginings” (Benson 2011: 1). Elsa told me that she was longing to share her life with someone. She was also very interested in having kids, and at age 40 realizes she may have run out of time. She was frank about there not being a suitable partner on the horizon, despite her efforts to be social, meet people, and keep herself open to the possibility. I watched as her attempts to connect intimately with her visiting ex-partner and a young winemaker who lived nearby were met with disappointment.

Anna and Ben, friends of Elsa, reflected a different reality. They, too, had chosen to migrate together in their early 30s, giving up professional careers in information technology and university teaching in England to travel. They eventually chose to relocate and buy land in Amiata after considering several other affordable rural areas in France and Spain. They had visited these areas on a budget and gained experience farming through WWOOF. Currently, they are engaged in building ecological yurts to live in on their land and practicing small-scale organic farming by engaging labor assistance through the Workaway program. Long-term, they are interested in cultivating rare crop and plant varieties. While they occasionally had frictions

with each other, they were both deeply engaged in their undertakings, seemed pleased with the choices they had made, and found fulfillment in their work. They often worked long hours, and I fondly remember Anna holding a newborn chicken close to her and patiently feeding it at a gathering one night in order to keep it alive, since the mother hen had been attacked by a fox. Anna was Elsa's closest friend, and Elsa often referred to Anna and Ben as the ideal couple, united in their shared work and vision and supportive of each other. For Elsa, I imagine their relationship served as both a source of hope and a reminder of what she perceived she was lacking.

Young rural migrants broadly unite as a group around shared values, and in this sense they are positioned alongside diffuse social movements and practices that critique the economic, social, and environmental impacts of globalization and neoliberal capitalism. Several referenced broad frustrations with neoliberal capitalism and fast-paced, urban life, and in this sense they reflected the predilections of many of their young guests and guest workers.

Young farmers also voiced critiques of conventional agriculture and interests in a movement toward sustainable agriculture, voicing their dissatisfaction with the "industrialization, corporate domination, and globalization of agriculture" (Hassanein 1999:3). Over many dinners, I listened to them rail about Monsanto's practices. In their farming methods, most young farmers avoided using synthetic chemicals and utilized biological pest control, composting, and other methods to encourage the health of plants, the soil, and ecosystems while "enhancing and using natural processes rather than suppressing them" (Hassanein 1999: 5). Such values and practices resonate with Neva Hassanein's study of the sustainable agriculture movement in Wisconsin (1999), Kregg Hetherington's research with

organic farmers in Nova Scotia (2005), and the concerns and critiques broadly voiced by transnational agrarian movements (Borras et al 2008; Heller 2013).

The ideologies and practices of young rural migrants reflect an interest in alternatives to neoliberal capitalism. They often attempt to live by the tenets of voluntary simplicity, or “defining the good life as something other than the consuming life” (Princen 2010). Many relocated to Amiata with an idealized communitarian expectation, hoping to become embedded in alternative socio-economic networks of exchange and cooperation based on connectedness, trust, and reciprocity. Some of them articulated disillusionment and distrust of recent events such as the financial crisis of 2008, as documented among younger farmers in the U.S. (Paxson 2012). Their aspirations mirror Gibson-Graham’s (2006) vision of the alternative to global capitalist development as being based on local initiatives and community economies rooted in non-capitalist economic practices. It also resonates with Juliet Schor’s (2010) vision for an alternative economy of “plenitude,” which recognizes multiple sources of wealth, moves away from full-time employment, promotes self-provisioning, encourages environmentally aware consumption, and deepens social relations and networks of exchange. Through these interests, they also occasionally linked up with a scattered few like-minded, young locals.

As discussed above, Davide, Elsa, and others creatively mix alternative, non-capitalist economic activities with wage labor. Elsa often participated in shared meals, spreading out the burden of cooking while creating a warm atmosphere for sociality and commensality. She also avoided a significant financial investment – the redesign and development of her farm’s website – by bartering extended lodging of an American couple in exchange for their web design services. Elsa, Anna, Ben, and another young Central European couple all utilized non-capitalist labor exchange programs such as Workaway for both building and agricultural work [Such

programs are further discussed in Chapter 7]. Commonly shared efforts toward food and energy self-sufficiency may also be read as non-capitalist economic practices, especially as such efforts worked to distance actors from reliance on the global agri-food system and energy markets.

However, such alternative farming practices were not always easily enacted, especially for neo-rurals working primarily alone, like Elsa and Davide. While Elsa managed small-scale production of chestnuts and lavender organically and by mobilizing volunteer and social networks of labor, Davide was prevented by structural constraints from realizing his aspirations for his farm. While he wanted to have pastured, organically raised animals, working alone he was unable to realize this vision. Instead, he relied on industrial inputs to produce non-organic forage for the animals of others. Although he was well-versed in the harmfulness of petro-chemical farm inputs, he felt he did not have alternatives. The best he could do was try to use as little as possible to maintain the yield necessary to modestly profit. Even so, around ten percent of his expenses went to fertilizers and chemicals and nearly twenty percent to seeds and other primary materials.

Alternative economic practices for neo-rurals were also limited in scope and imperfectly enacted. They did not always coexist harmoniously with economic realities. Young farmers and like-minded locals could enact some of these practices among themselves, but structures were not in place for a systematic “community economy” to emerge and solidify (Gibson-Graham 2006). Elsa and a group of friends and neighbors undertook a project for a communal garden on her land with shared labor and production, but she ended up frustrated with the task of organizing the labor. She did not feel people took ownership in the project, and much of the work ended up falling on her, me, and one other friend until a drought limited its full realization.

Amiata has a perplexing absence of local food networks, also recently noted by anthropologist Jeff Pratt (2014). Solidarity purchase groups (*gruppi di acquisto solidale* or GAS) constitute a significant alternative provisioning movement in Italy (Grasseni 2014), but there are few groups in the province of Grosseto and none in Amiata. Only one farm I visited produced for a GAS group, selling eggs to the group in Grosseto and selling buffalo meat to a more distant niche market through GAS in Northern Italy. Regularly scheduled farmers' markets with local produce – seen as a keystone in local food movements in North America (Gillespie et al 2007) – only take place in the cities of Siena and Grosseto.

Neo-rurals may bring hopeful ideologies to Amiata, reflecting some degree of shared values, but the ability to establish alternative socio-economic relationships based on local food provisioning, reciprocity, and bartering of goods and services was limited. For instance, Davide suggested that he attempted to exchange information with local farmers about animal rearing. He said that they would respond to him dubiously, claiming what he was suggesting was impossible or useless, but that a week later he would see that they had enacted exactly what he had suggested. He saw this as being “prideful,” “competitive,” and uncooperative behavior that alienated him from other farmers.

The “Agri” in *Agriturismo*?

I began this research interrogating the economic ramifications of taking on tourism for established farms, but ended up surprised by the preponderance of individuals taking on farming for tourism. Carlo and Arturo are clear examples of two people who strategically gained funding support for building restoration by taking on farming, even though they are both

uninterested in pursuing farming as a livelihood or subsisting primarily on income from agricultural production. In fact, neither of them produces for a market. They had the skills to navigate the bureaucracy involved in applying for funding, presenting themselves as farmers interested in agritourism, and securing EU funding. In reality, they both have other backgrounds, other sources of income, and other goals for their *agriturismi*, including creating an artist retreat or professional group retreat space. While EU policy may identify them as farmers with tourism, they may be more aptly represented – an indeed, refer to themselves – as individuals with other primary interests who host tourists and engage with the land to some degree.

Riccardo and his family produce high quality organic wines for an international market, and their engagements with tourists and international audiences revolve around promotion of their wines. They have chosen not to take on agritourism, instead focusing on niche wine production and marketing. On the other hand, Riccardo's sister, Melina, focuses primarily on agritourism, often hosting large workshops for yoga, dance, and other lifestyle interests. The two enterprises work in cooperation, as Melina produces wine only for the household and agritourism and Riccardo allows her to age the wine in his cellar and refers guests to her.

This brings into question to what extent farms conducting agritourism actually revolve around agriculture and the feasibility of farms that are oriented around agricultural production to take on agritourism. The sample of farms in this study provides a very diverse picture of the embeddedness of agritourism in farming and certainly Carlo and Arturo figure at the lower end of the spectrum. While in the tourist imagination, staying on a Tuscan *agriturismo* likely comes with a certain set of expectations for “cultural authenticity,” in reality, tourists may well end up staying on an essentially non-working farm of a non-Tuscan or non-Italian.



Image 13: Young Neo-Rural Farmer with Buffalo



Image 14: Neo-rural Olive Harvest, Placing the Nets



Image 15: Neo-Rural Pool and Vineyard



Image 16: Neo-Rural Dining Room

CHAPTER 6: AGRITOURISM AND EMERGING CLASS TRAJECTORIES: FROM AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION TO CULTURAL CONSUMPTION

This chapter builds on the ethnographic portraits of established and neo-rural farms and agritourisms presented in previous chapters in order to analyze how agritourism is constructed by farmers of different class *habiti*. In the first portion of the chapter, I analyze processes of neo-rural subject formation through bricolage and how neo-rurals fit into European visions of consumable rural countrysides. Then, I present ethnographic portraits of three additional agritourism farms. Two of the descriptions are of neo-rural agritourism farms, one run by an individual and one run by a couple. In the second half of the chapter, I analyze both neo-rural and established farmers' constructions of agritourism. I highlight how agritourism is a type of cultural performance – that some are better equipped to perform than others – and serves as an arena for discourses of class, privilege, and belonging to emerge. Ultimately, agritourism is not equally accessible to all farmers and ends up fueling rural class inequalities.

Neo-Rurals as *Bricoleurs*: Constructing Neo-Rural Subjects and a Consumable Countryside

Neoliberalism has been said to involve shifts in personhood from citizen to consumer (Guthman and DuPuis 2006) and European rural policy has increasingly sought to reinvent rural areas as consumptive spaces for leisure, recreation, and cultural consumption (Heatherington 2011). Such transformations are also in line with cultural and socioeconomic shifts to post-

modernity with late capitalism in Western societies and shifts toward postagrarian rural societies (Salamon 2006). Consonant with dimensions of neo-rurality, post-modernity is associated with the growth of service industries such as tourism, an overall shift from production to consumption, especially from commodities to signs, and “heightened experiential dislocation” (Knauft 1996: 66; Harvey 1990). It is in this context that I highlight emerging processes of neo-rural subject formation.

Reinventing places as sites for cultural consumption also requires enlisting actors who serve to curate desirable modes of consumption. Therefore, this reinvention of place as consumptive involves also reinventing subjects, a process that takes place through the interweaving of structure and agency. Emanuela Guano’s (2006) ethnographic research on antique fairs and urban development in Genoa identifies these processes in an urban context. Guano builds on the concept of *bricoleur* as used by Bill Martin to describe how middle-class individuals entering the professional-managerial job market are increasingly obliged by neoliberal labor markets to merge their formal training with their other talents and skills. This reflects the ability to make do with what resources and skills are available, or a type of *bricolage* (Guano 2006: 107-8; Levi-Strauss 1996 [1962]).

Guano (2006) ethnographically describes how middle-class, urban women in Genoa are adept at experimenting with such flexibility, especially considering that they are systematically excluded from the formal work force. She finds that women who participate in self-employment by selling goods at antique fairs in Genoa act as “*bricoleuses* who utilize their gendered skills and knowledge types to establish their own public and professional identities” (108). The skills of these women are gendered and classed, as cultural capital consisting of aesthetic sensibilities, “expertise in high culture and sumptuous

consumption” (107), research skills (115), and “humanistic cultural capital” (117) or “gendered expertise in bourgeois symbolic capital” (115).

Neo-rurals establishing homes and farms in Amiata master and utilize forms of cultural capital and distinction in a similar fashion. Neo-rural livelihoods and the concomitant structures that support them exhibit parallels to the urban middle-class *bricolage* described by Guano. She links the agency exercised by these actors with broader structures of political economy and policy. She suggests that in post-industrial Genoa, urban development initiatives are attempting to establish an “urban economy of consumable heritage that is based on the marketing of cultural and symbolic goods, services, and experiences” (2006: 117).

A similar process is at work in European Union policy efforts to transform rural landscapes such as Amiata from areas of agricultural production to areas of cultural consumption through shifting agricultural and rural development policies. Namely, the policy initiative and farming strategy of *agriturismo* serves this end. The “neoliberal notion” of heritage and culture as commodities (Guano 2006: 108) is very much present in the rural context as EU rural development policy strives to recast rural areas as not purely agricultural areas of production, but as sites for the consumption of leisure, tourism, heritage, and nature, a claim that is supported by theorists of European rural policy (Bryden 2010; Heatherington 2011). In the urban context, Guano documents that considerable resources have been devoted to the “renovation and beautification of the built environment” (Guano 2006: 117), just as substantial funds and policy incentives have been extended to rural newcomers to encourage the restoration of the farmhouses and fields of rural Tuscany’s agritourism landscape. In each case, structures of policy support powerfully align with the class-specific capabilities and desires of middle-class urbanites.

It is crucial to highlight that creating a “culture industry” such as rural tourism also involves creating “cultural intermediaries” (Guano 2006: 117), which requires reformulations of identities and personhood, the enlistment of entirely new actors, or both processes. Inevitably, some actors emerge as more effective in “playing the game” than others, leading to unequal power relations patterned by class-based capabilities, knowledge, mastery, and aspirations. Such an analysis resonates with Bourdieusian frameworks of cultural capital and hierarchy (Bourdieu 1977, 1984). Guano compellingly illuminates this dynamic in the case of the cultural capital of middle-class women in Genoa. Just as “middle-class women had become the enthusiastic foot soldiers of Genoa’s burgeoning culture industry” (Guano 2006: 106), so too neo-rural residents with command of certain class distinctions and sensibilities somewhat ironically have become the guardians of “competent consumption” (2006: 108) of a rurality that is in many ways perceived as timeless or traditional.

I refer to these emerging policy-backed processes of neo-rural identity and belonging as neo-rural subject formation. As primarily ex-urban residents, neo-rural actors curate the meaning and experience of proper rurality for a global audience of middle-class tourists with whom they are equipped to effectively engage based on their urban, educated backgrounds and dispositions. With their educational and professional backgrounds, they are able to engage with tourists of similar class backgrounds, serving as brokers of a desired – and class filtered – experience of rurality. They also have the skills to host guests across linguistic and cultural barriers in a way that long-term residents in Amiata often do not perceive themselves as capable of doing. Neo-rurals serve as brokers of a comfortably consumable rurality for global tourist consumers. Neo-rural cultural capital and classed interests in forging a countryside for tourist consumption makes them the frequent beneficiaries of EU support that promotes

transformation of rural areas for tourism. In turn, they constitute valuable actors in the EU's mission to reform rural areas for tourist consumption and leisure (Heatherington 2011).

Guano draws heavily from Bourdieu's conceptions of distinction and cultural capital, especially symbolic capital (Bourdieu 1984), to explain why middle-class women in particular become valuable agents of this particular culture industry. She suggests, "the competent consumption of symbolic goods pertaining to the domestic sphere is a traditional expectation of bourgeois women who are often in charge of managing the family's taste and its distinction for the sake of generating an adequate performance of class identity" (Guano 2006: 115). Tourists in Amiata also seek to "competently consume" and command certain accepted markers of gastronomic discernment and engagements with place through their tourism experiences as a classed form of distinction.

Janet Chrzan's (2007, 2008) work on culinary tourism in Tuscany highlights how two central concepts in the tourism literature – the "tourist gaze" developed by John Urry (1990) and tourist "scapes" – are constructed on a particular well-known Italian-American-owned estate in Tuscany and in the region more broadly. The "tourist gaze" refers to "a perception of a place that differs from a local person's perspective" (2007: 21). Tourist "scapes" encompass "a flow of people and resources – material, personal, and ideational – that anthropologists can study to understand how tourism produces and consumes real and symbolic capital" (2007: 21). She suggests that the tourist scape for Tuscany revolves heavily around food and cuisine, connection with farming lifestyles, and idealized notions of rural life. My research in Amiata acknowledges how these aspects all support agritourism as a popular form of tourism in the region.

For example, Chrzan (2008) highlights how aspirations of American tourists to Tuscany

articulate with their discontent with their established lives and how “dreaming of Tuscany” becomes a powerful symbol of relief and transformation. I suggest that similar dissatisfactions, aspirations, and imaginings characterize neo-rural agritourism hosts across different European and Anglo-American backgrounds, signifying a type of subjective alignment between them and many of their tourist guests. As Chrzan writes:

Tuscan tourists indicate that many educated professionals feel overworked and out of balance. They focus on food as the material course of transformation; changing a diet is a metaphor for a renewal of body, mind and spirit. The important elements of this food are not really Mediterranean, but are local, fresh, seasonal, and whole, representing nature, innocence, and purity; the ideal and healthfulness of the Mediterranean diet has been blended into the Myth of Tuscany. Desire for Tuscany functions as a symbol for an awareness that American lives are not really as good as they ought to be, and that something is wrong and out of balance with society and culture. Anxiety is expressed by dreaming of Tuscany – a fantasy of relief for the disaffected and a place of stability, ancient customs, and healthy, transformative food (Chrzan 2008: 248).

There is often a disjuncture between tourist expectations and actual historical realities, which has been documented elsewhere in Tuscany. For example, there is a great demand by tourists for thick Chianina steaks and other meats in Tuscany. However, historically, meat was not a part of the Tuscan peasant cuisine (Counihan 2004; Chrzan 2007).

Neo-rurals in Amiata are well positioned to provide tourists access to elements of the Tuscan tourist scape and to craft and translate their meanings in the relatively protected context

of their livelihoods and class experience. Neo-rurals generally do not rely primarily on farming as a livelihood. Those who are involved in tourism generally have the time and patience necessary to host tourists, since they are relatively free from the potentially heavy seasonal demands of intensive agricultural production in addition to having the skills, distinction, and cultural capital required of agritourism encounters.

NEO-RURAL STYLES OF AGRITURISMO

Drawing from this literature, in the two cases that follow from Amiata, patterned differences in the bricolage, cultural capital, and construction of “scapes” (Chrzan 2007) are apparent between established and neo-rural constructions of agritourism.

Ethnographic Portrait: ANTONIO SILVESTRI, Farming and Friendship

On a bright day in late summer, I drove across the valley from where I was living at Elsa’s to visit an *agriturismo* that produced wine and olive oil. As I pulled down the long gravel drive that descended through vineyards to the farm buildings, a tall man in camouflage print pants and a button-down shirt waved to me and indicated that I should park in front of the wine cellar. His attire struck me as a curiously mismatched mix of rugged and refined. He greeted me warmly and introduced himself as Antonio, the owner of the *agriturismo*. He had a long, gaunt face and wore glasses. His short gray hair and grizzled beard indicated he was probably in his late fifties.

The six hectares of land surrounding the farmhouses was split into small plots of vineyard,

sometimes separated by groves of olive trees. I immediately noticed that the property was immaculately maintained and landscaped. The large agritourism building was built of new stone, but was restored with aesthetic fidelity to the historic style of farmhouses in the area. On one side of the agritourism there was a massive stone press used to make olive oil in the past. On the other side, an inviting, crystal blue, irregularly shaped pool stretched under a fountain. Begonias and other bright flowers in oversized terra cotta pots accented the pool and walkways. The far side of the pool opened up to a picturesque view of the nearby hill town and its bell tower. The buildings housing the wine cellar, large dining room and kitchen, and Antonio's apartment were restored in a similar style.

Antonio has been producing wine and oil and hosting guests for around five years, after spending several years building and planting on the abandoned land. He grew up near Pisa and spent much of his life in Rome, where he was a teacher. His love of knowledge was reflected in the label of the bottle of white wine he opened upon my arrival – a modern, minimalist label indicating the wine's name – *Filos*. As we sat on the patio in the sun and sipped the wine, Antonio told me about his wine production and *agriturismo*. He explained to me that selling the wine is the most difficult part of the enterprise, since he feels his production is too small to effectively enter international markets. He also mentioned having to spend a good deal of time attending to the bureaucratic dimensions of the farm, and he mentioned in particular a law that was passed by the region of Tuscany in 2013 that made abiding by the regulations for swimming pools very expensive and burdensome. Other farmers with *agriturismi* had also mentioned the difficulty of maintaining swimming pools on top of the initial investment of building them. But they also highlighted the necessity of a pool to attract tourists.

Antonio lives on the farm and runs it himself. Up until a year ago he worked closely with

an old local farmer who taught him about the olive trees and the vineyards. Antonio does not have a family or educational background in farming, and he learned everything by watching and experimenting firsthand. He seemed wistful when talking about the old farmer's recent passing, telling me that the upcoming harvests would be the first ones without him present. Now Antonio employs two workers – a Romanian woman who does the cleaning for the agriturismo and an Albanian man who helps with the agricultural work. He also consults with an enologist and hires the additional help of migrant farm workers for the harvests.

I could see that Antonio ran his farm as a business when I asked him about the structure of the farm's expenses and earnings. He led me into his office, which housed a large, elegant wooden desk that was crowded with papers. He explained to me that he studied some economics in college and he has developed his own accounting system for the farm. He carefully supplied me with the data I requested, writing the figures down from his computer screen. His analytical mind seemed to tick along happily with the task. I laughed to myself as I tried to imagine some of the established farmers touching a computer or showing me detailed farm records.

The *agriturismo* is split into five apartments able to accommodate twenty-two people. Most of the guests come from Northern Europe and Germany, and Antonio's grasp of German and French have proven useful, even though he only speaks rudimentary English. He locates guests through two agencies and through the website Booking.com, which he said works very well. He proudly told me that guests always tell him that the reality of the experience is much better than the promotional photos even suggest. Antonio has devoted a good deal of energy to the *agriturismo*, reflected in the fact that 70% of the farm's earnings come from hosting tourists. Antonio told me that guests do not generally help with the agricultural work, since the

high tourism times are not during the harvests. He also told me that the *agriturismo* is full of his friends during the harvests, as well. He brought out a bound photo album that was filled with images from the grape harvest a few years ago.



Image 17: Antonio's photo book

When I offered to return to help with the *vendemmia* (grape harvest) that would begin a few weeks later, Antonio was delighted. He sent me on my way with a bottle of red wine and a handful of brochures in English and Italian.

I returned to Antonio's farm a few weeks later for the *sangiovese vendemmia* (grape harvest). When I arrived at eight o'clock in the morning, the farm was already bustling with a dozen of Antonio's friends from Rome and other parts of Italy. I was told that even more would show up the next day, a Saturday, since many of them work during the week. Antonio

welcomed me warmly and introduced me to his friends, a mix of men and women in their thirties through sixties. Antonio led me into the dining room and offered me a slice of *crostata* (tart). He also proudly offered me a *caffè americano* (coffee that contains much more water than the typically consumed Italian *espresso*) from an American-style coffee machine that he bought to appease his German and Northern European guests. After having breakfast and chatting with Antonio's friends, a few of the women ushered me outside to work near them in the vineyard.

Before we started, Antonio outlined the system we should follow for picking the grapes, with a pair working together on each side of the line. He instructed us to be very selective in the grapes we chose, only keeping the best bunches, since it was a good year with more grapes than he could make into wine. Four Albanian and Bangladeshi males, who could not have been older than twenty, worked industriously loading the heavy crates full of grapes on the tractor. They also continually delivered empty crates to us as we picked the grapes. Antonio drove the tractor filled with crates of grapes to and from the wine cellar. As we steadily made our way up and down the rows of vines, there was much talking, joking, and laughing between and across the pairs of friends. Later in the morning, music erupted from a few cell phones, motivating our work as we approached the lunch break.

After a morning of work, we convened together for a large, communal lunch at the long table in the dining room. Antonio made sure to steer me to a seat at the head of the table between him and his sister, Chiara. Antonio made a festive toast at lunch that highlighted the bonds of friendship that were solidified through working on the harvests together. It also included mentioning that the group was pleased to have me helping and that I added a youthful, international element to their group. With our bodies tired from the morning's work,

we feasted on pasta, pork, bread, and cheese, talking and laughing throughout. After lunch, I noticed a framed article on the dining room wall about Antonio and Chiara's father, a businessman in Pisa. Antonio saw me looking at the article, and told me that he was the "real *padrone*" (owner) of the farm, since he had purchased the property with his inheritance. Antonio was clearly paying his respects by displaying this tribute to his father so prominently in the space of communal eating.

After lunch, Antonio invited me to spend the night in the *agriturismo* with the group. Since I was living close by and had field notes to type up that night, I accepted his invitation to join them for dinner, but returned home at night. I rejoined the group the next morning to finish the *sangiovese* harvest. I also returned a month later to help with the olive harvest over a weekend, joined by the same core group of friends, in addition to a few new friends.

The olive harvest was even more conducive to conversation, since it involved small groups working around the same tree. The women I was working with told me that they find the air on the farm very different from their home environment. "Tuscany is Tuscany," one told me. A fifty-year-old mother, Mara, also told me that since she does not have time to go to the gym, helping with the harvests provides some physical activity. Another woman told me that the harvest is not about who works the hardest or contributes the most, but that it is about everyone contributing what they can, lending a hand, and being surrounded by friends while getting fresh air and an experience of this place. The topic of organic foods also came up, and the women reached a consensus that they value seeking out organic food, especially for feeding their children. They told me that while Antonio's wine and oils are not certified organic, he uses the smallest amount of chemical inputs possible. As we picked the olives, the group was satisfied with the olives, especially in comparison to the extreme blight of the previous year.

“What satisfaction!” to see such abundance, they often commented as they picked the olives.

While the other women and I picked olives by hand, the men worked primarily with the electronic machines that shake the branches or worked laying the nets, loading crates on the tractor, or using the machine to sort the olives. At one point, Mara joked that their work as women in the olive harvest is undervalued and that the men do not have faith in their ability to work, leaving them to the less glamorous work of slowly picking the olives. In reality, she said, they complete much of the work of the harvest, steadily picking olives all day. She also commented that if a woman is gone too long from the family, the family falls apart, drawing parallels with her traveling away from her family for a few days to help with the harvests.

While the harvests were characterized by a convivial atmosphere of work, companionship, and friendship, they were not without a few frictions. Most notably, Antonio became very angry with two different friends as they were working. First, he yelled at the man who served as his right-hand man about his insistence on continuing to shake olives down even though the net was not placed correctly to catch all of the olives. His friend was frustrated and argued back, escalating to the two of them yelling at each other. On another occasion, he yelled at Mara when she asked for clarification about how to proceed with the work. While everyone quieted and did not react directly to the confrontation, it was clear that there was tension in the air. Probably sensing my surprise at how mercurial Antonio had become, Mara quietly explained to me that Antonio “gets like this with them” and not with other people, since he gets anxious about the work at busy times. “This kind of tension is normal for him,” she told me. When Antonio was calm throughout the second day of the harvest, Mara told me that “it’s rare to see him so serene.”

During the grape and olive harvests, many of the friends wore sweatshirts, t-shirts, or

hats from the previous year's harvests. Each year, Antonio would design an article of clothing and give it to everyone who participated. As we finished the olive harvest, Antonio noticed I was taking photos and asked me to share them with him, since he writes and circulates a regular newsletter from the farm to his friends in order to keep them updated on the harvests, the farm's production, and any other happenings.



Image 18: Antonio's Newsletter with Author at Right

As I said goodbye to the group, they all expressed their eagerness to see me again at future harvests on my return trips to Amiata. I later saw that they had also included me in their group newsletter for the grape and olive harvests.

Ethnographic Portrait: GIANNA AND FULVIO MARTACI, Neo-Rural Marital Unity

When I arrived at the Martaci's *agriturismo*, it took me some time to locate the owners, a couple in their late-fifties. Gianna was busy talking with a group of guests and Fulvio emerged onto the patio wearing a white apron. The patio was bordered with well-tended flower pots and stylish fabrics created partial shade. The patio side of the house opened to an impressive vista of the nearby hill town, which guests could admire while dining. Unfortunately, I had gotten lost on my way to their remote property nestled in the thick chestnut forest of lower Monte Amiata and arrived late. While they told me that they had to prepare dinner for their guests and would not be able to talk with me, we arranged a meeting time for the following day.

The next day, we sat outside at a picnic table, enjoying the shade the trees offered from the oppressively hot, dry summer. The Martacis knew something of the history of their property, telling me about the different families that previously owned it and explaining that the farmhouse was the home of the sharecropping family. The land had been abandoned for fifty years prior to its purchase. Gianna and Fulvio are both from nearby towns – though Fulvio is from the other side of the mountain – and they both come from non-farming backgrounds. Fulvio is a carpenter by trade, as were his father and Gianna's father. Gianna's mother ran a laundry shop in town.

When I asked them how they decided to buy the land, Gianna admitted that it was “all her fault,” with a chuckle, and her husband smiled. As a painter and restorer of art and furniture, she told me that she would look out of her window in town each day and notice this particular parcel of land and the surrounding forest. She painted it, and also wrote a poem about the colors of the mountain that frames the land. I quickly saw that their non-farming backgrounds, her creative profession, their environmental values, and their romanticization of

place align them with the sensibilities and lifestyles of other neo-rurals conducting agritourism. They expressed a strong spiritual connection to that particular place, telling me that finding the property was “*un destino*” (destiny). In line with other neo-rural residents, they also articulated a strong concern for the education of their two college-educated adult children. They bought a house in the city of Grosseto once their children were old enough to attend school, since they claimed the schools in Amiata were of poor quality. But eventually, they ended up impulsively changing their plans to buy and restore their current property, ultimately following their intuitive pull to that land.

Gianna and Fulvio now produce organic olive oil, chestnuts, honey, and fruits and vegetables for the *agriturismo* and household and to be sold through direct sales. When I asked them how they decided to have an agritourism and farm the land, they explained that at first they were only interested in restoring the property as their own private residence. But since the house is so large – 600 square meters with almost 10 hectares of land – and the financial support available for agritourism was so appealing in the late 1990s, they decided to give it a try. They also said that they wanted to “do an activity for the public,” a sentiment in line with neo-rural ideas of contributing to community. Reflecting their degree of marital unity, they also made it a point to mention that they both liked the idea of trying to have an *agriturismo*. The restoration took three years to complete and they did much of the work on their own or with their families, given their backgrounds in carpentry. Fulvio was also able to complete much of the painstaking work on the swimming pool.

They followed a gradual progression in developing their operations, first only renting rooms. Then they added breakfast service. Eventually, they opened a restaurant in which Gianna does most of the cooking. Fulvio praised his wife’s cooking, saying that “she cooks with

her heart.” They mentioned that the restaurant and pool are also open to the public, potentially reflecting their ideal of “doing something for the public.” Eventually they also started hosting events such as weddings at the farm. They mentioned that they have hosted some well-known “jet-setting” guests such as politicians and actors. The mayor of Gianna’s nearby hometown is also a friend and visits often. Most of the agritourism guests are German and Dutch and the Martacis keep the *agriturismo* open from May through September, closing for the harvests in October. In March, they open briefly for the Easter holiday.

Gianna and Fulvio perform all of the work themselves including marketing. Interestingly, they actually factor stipends for their labor into the farm budget, which accounts for 30% of their expenses. While they claimed a relatively clear division of labor, with Gianna working in the agritourism and kitchen and Fulvio working outdoors on agricultural tasks, the first time I visited, Fulvio was wearing an apron and used the pronoun “we” in reference to preparing dinner. This reflects that the seemingly gendered division between indoor and outdoor work may be less clear-cut than they initially told me. Their son – who recently lost his job in computer programming in Grosseto during the economic crisis – will have a contract with them soon to develop marketing and the farm's website. They also collaborate with the family of their son’s wife, who are wine producers nearby, by selling their wine in the *agriturismo*.

The Martacis also place themselves apart from local residents – although they are both from the area – in a way that is similar to how many neo-rurals talk about their perceived superior connection to place. “*Siamo un po’ differenti dalla realta’* (we are a bit different from the reality of others here),” they told me, explaining that they appreciate the place more than locals. They asserted that they “love this land” and “do everything together.” They cited foreigners in Italy as being “*molti bravi*” (very good) environmental stewards, doing the work of

restoring properties and tending the land that Italians are often not interested in doing. This attitude again aligns themselves and their environmental values more with foreigners and neo-rurals than with established farmers. I especially noted how they were echoing what Arturo had told me about foreigners bringing new ideas and practices to Amiata that locals would not necessarily appreciate.

I noticed that when they told me that they “love this land” and “do everything together,” they were placing their love for the land alongside a statement of their marital unity. Although they were probably in their late-fifties, they had already been married for thirty-six years. I noticed that both were present for the duration of the interview and they spoke with equal voices throughout, respecting each other’s right to speak. At various points, they also joked playfully with each other, made sustained eye contact with each other, and touched each other affectionately.

As we spoke, I consistently noticed the degree of marital unity they expressed and their strong tendency to frame their rural undertaking in terms of a lifestyle or their life’s purpose. They told me, “*Noi viviamo con questa realta*” (we live this reality), making it clear that they have thoroughly “invested their lives in the agritourism” and that they “do it with their hearts.” While they are always busy during the year, they enjoy winter when they can rest and eat their meals on time. They both agreed that they enjoy having the *agriturismo* and that they get a lot of pleasure from meeting a range of different people. They shared the environmental values that many other neo-rurals held dear, such as dedication to organic production methods. They also articulated many of the general complaints about modern life, such as alienation from the natural world, abuse of nature, and a lack of unity or concern for other humans. They were critical of what they referred to as the materialism of youths, who think only of money. But

“you can’t eat money,” they told me, reflecting some concern for self-sufficiency. Overall, they maintained a hopeful tone, seeing themselves at least as a “drop in the ocean,” as a minority but still capable of contributing toward their vision of positive change.

The Martaci’s neo-rural status does not exempt them from sometimes experiencing frictions or frustrations with their guests. However, they articulated a distinctive philosophy of how to navigate the value differences that sometimes emerge in the context of the *agriturismo*. These differences often involved what the Martacis perceived as affronts to their environmental values and interest in restoring human connections to nature. For example, they told me that guests should not choose to stay in an *agriturismo* if they do not want to actually have the experience of staying in the country. They told me that some guests clearly do not appreciate or respect natural beauty. For example, when guests throw cigarette butts on the ground the Martacis perceive it as a blatant disrespect for the natural world. Exasperated, they also told me how some guests complained about the “concert of birds” that disturbed them in the morning and the mosquitos that would bother them at the pool. Although they found such complaints frustrating, they expressed an interest in educating the guests and modeling a certain respect and positive behavior, such as picking up the cigarette butts and still treating everyone with respect despite their differences. In this way, they might serve as “a mirror” for their guests.

The Martacis told me that the main stress on their enterprise was the financial pressure of seeing any return on their investment. They told me that after taxes, nothing is left and that the costs of production increase each year while the earnings remain more or less the same. They have not increased the cost of their room rentals because they feel they will lose guests, especially during the recent economic crisis. They also often encountered obstacles with

bureaucracy, a common complaint of both neo-rural and established farmers. For instance, it took them three years simply to get the permission to build the pool since their property is in the zone of a well-known, protected sculpture garden. They also expressed frustration with the way that rural development funds are allocated, echoing the familiar complaint about having to invest upfront without knowing how much support will be refunded upon completion. They were disappointed to only receive a 30% return on their first renovation of the *agriturismo*, and since funding support has grown increasingly difficult and rare, they decided to complete the renovation of the smaller farmhouse on the property without seeking support. They told me that the larger farms that have the money and resources in the first place are the farms that end up receiving the most funding support. They also bemoaned the EU's "set aside" agricultural policies, telling me that they have friends in the Maremma plain that have dairy and grain farms that have been paid to stay in production but not to sell their products.

Despite their frustrations with funding support, they have never taken on any debt during the process of creating the *agriturismo*, reflecting substantial family savings or financial inheritance. When I asked them about their goals for the *agriturismo* in the next few years, they said that they would expand a little, since they are building a stable to have horses and restoring another small farmhouse on the property. But they were mostly interested in maintaining "*la cosa bella*" (the beautiful thing) they have built. They also told me they felt lucky that they have children who are interested in being involved in the farm. Overall, they described their farm as "*un'azienda sana senza debito*" (a healthy farm without debt).

CHAPTER 7 | DIVERGENT REALITIES: AGRITOURISM THROUGH NEO-RURAL AND ESTABLISHED LENSES

The Materiality of Agritourism: Aesthetics, Objects, and Distinction

Anthropologists have long understood material goods as symbolic of efforts to obtain or maintain social status and establish identity (Appadurai 1986). Daniel Miller's research (2008, 2009) supports considering peoples' relationships to objects as a lens for understanding their lives and aspirations. Miller's work on material culture – following Bourdieu's *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (1977) -- holds that “the main process of socialization into becoming a member of any given society was the everyday association with practical taxonomies embodied in the order of material culture” (2009: 4). People become both members of a society and of a class “through habits and expectations fostered in our everyday object world” (2009: 4). In this sense, taste, distinction, and class also come to be patterned by peoples' relationships to material objects (Bourdieu 1984).

In constructing the agritourism experience, neo-rurals often exercise a degree of hybridity and creativity that I liken to *bricolage*. In a similar vein, Willis and Campbell (2004) suggest in their research with a group of “neo-peasants” in France that they demonstrate hybridity as they “blend the survival strategies of the old peasantry with the skills and abilities of the educated urban elite” (317). Neo-rurals in Amiata were also generally adept at interacting with bureaucratic structures because of their education and professional training, and this positioned them to be competitive in gaining access to subsidies and benefits for farming and agritourism, a finding also backed by Willis and Campbell in the French case (2004: 327). They also find that the neo-rurals are cognizant of the power they command, as they are

“acutely aware of the power and even rights they possess as members of a western society, as well as the EU” (327). Ultimately, they suggest “the neo-peasants of the Cevennes have powerfully grafted traditional peasant strategy onto the advantages of class-background and education” (328). In their case, the rural newcomers had formed a community, living communally and becoming “embedded actors and the dominant social group” in the area (328). On the other hand, in Amiata, rural newcomers are more fragmented and most of them experience more affective struggles than have been documented in the peculiar French case of communal living. These neo-rural struggles with affective reality, social practice, and cultural meaning were discussed at length in chapter 4.

Several examples I encountered in Amiata make the parallel I draw between neo-rurality and *bricolage* more tangible and manipulation of objects often figures strongly. Although Levi-Strauss (1996 [1962]) used *bricolage* to examine patterns of mythological thinking, his interpretation is nevertheless insightful for understanding the creative force of neo-rurality. For instance, Levi-Strauss emphasizes that *bricoleurs* – by putting already existing objects or ideas together in new ways – use existing symbols and signs in ways that they were not initially intended. This gives way to new interpretations and cultural meanings. Further, Levi-Strauss suggests:

...the possibilities always remain limited by the particular history of each piece and by those of its features which are already determined by the use for which it was originally intended or the modifications it has undergone for other purposes. The elements which the ‘bricoleur’ collects and uses are ‘pre-constrained’ like the constitutive units of myth, the possible combinations of which are restricted by the fact that they are drawn from

the language where they already possess a sense which sets a limit on their freedom of manoeuvre (12).

Levi-Strauss also highlights how creatively utilized and repurposed objects can become important avenues to express symbolic meaning and identity. He writes, “...he ‘speaks’ not only *with* things, as we have already seen, but also through the medium of things: giving an account of his personality and life by the choices he makes between the limited possibilities. The ‘bricoleur’ may not ever complete his purpose but he always puts something of himself into it” (Levi-Strauss 1996 [1962]: 14).

For example, it was common for neo-rurals to find novel ways to incorporate objects of the agricultural past – particular features of farmhouses meant for other purposes such as troughs for feeding animals (Image 19), farming tools, and ox yokes (Image 20) – into their dwellings and guest spaces for aesthetic purposes.



Image 19: Neo-Rural Trough Light Fixture



Image 20: Neo-Rural Repurposed Ox Yoke

In these cases, the signs and symbols that are manipulated and repackaged are material objects that embody the realities of the agricultural past. The referent for the symbols and signs is the “peasant past” and they seem to fulfill a tourist desire for consumption of “the authentic.”

Established farmers do not lack creativity or inventiveness in this sense. Although they are often less interested in displaying material signs of distinction, they sometimes use similar strategies as neo-rurals. For example, Beppe’s agritourism also uses an ox yoke as a light fixture. However, in Beppe’s case a known past is referenced, reflecting his family and farming history. For example, he told me that one of the bedrooms in the agritourism was named for both his grandfather and himself.

The paradoxes and ironies inherent in neo-rural bricolage in service of tourism can be

summed up by the example of the “agri-bus.” One couple running an *agriturismo* invented a “new mode of transport” that, in their words, “combines the ancient idea” of a carriage led by a horse or oxen with the power of the modern tractor in order to transport tourists on a cart behind the tractor. They call their invention an “agri-bus,” combining the prefix “agri” with a mode of transport – the bus – that is clearly associated with tourism or popular transport, taking tourists on tours of the fields. They describe the agri-bus as “modifying and transforming” established modes of transport and as being “innovative” in providing tourists with “an evocative and unique experience” of the landscape [my translation]. The language they use self-consciously references their ability to act as creative *bricoleurs* in service of an authentic experience of place for tourists. They have drawn from a symbol of the “peasant past” – the horse or ox-drawn carriage or plough – and combined it with the modern technology of the tractor and concept of experiencing the landscape as leisure. As such, this new tractor, rather than performing the work of agriculture, performs the work of agricultural tourism.

Gendering Farming and Agritourism: Marriage, Masculinity, and Social Status

Neo-rural and established farmers with agritourisms had different gender divisions of labor and ways of expressing gender identities. Those neo-rurals who were married generally had a high degree of marital unity around their agritourism enterprise, seeing it as a life project and purpose. On the other hand, established farmers with agritourisms often did not share a similar sense of marital unity. If wives were involved, it was primarily in the realm of cooking or preparing rooms, and there was a division between the work of agricultural

production and the work of hosting tourists.

Several established farmers like Beppe took pride in claiming that their wives had never entered the realm of the farm. In one case, although the wife was very involved in cooking and preparing rooms for the agritourism, the husband still took pride in distinguishing that she would never set foot on the farm. Beppe's wife kept a separate off-farm job and carried out the cooking and household work, bearing parallels to industrial marital models in U.S. agriculture (Barlett 1993). This suggests that wives keeping a separation from the farm was a status claim for established farmers. Such family configurations are not in line with Ploeg's (2009) claims of repeasantization, which see family labor and aspirations mobilized around the farm enterprise. Beppe did maintain a gendered division of labor with a female migrant worker from Romania who worked to clean the rooms in the agritourisms, but he was often called on to see to guests' immediate needs during their visits.

As I worked on Beppe's farm and accompanied him in daily life, he simultaneously highlighted and underplayed my gender in seemingly contradictory ways. In the broader historical context of women's roles in farming in this area, there was rapid change with the mechanization of farming and the growing division between mechanized agricultural production and household production and consumption after land reform in the 1950s (Pratt 1994: 106). Women in farming households were generally excluded from the production activities that earned cash incomes, leaving them to seek off-farm, unskilled work (Pratt 1994). Female farm work shifted away from activities that previously earned supplemental cash incomes, such as a household garden, poultry, and pigs (Pratt 1994; see also Fink 1987; Salamon 2006). As Pratt found during his fieldwork in the 1970s and 1980s, "the skills these rural women possess are still important to the household economy, but they are not of a kind which receives prominent

treatment in women's magazines or in the dominant representations of femininity" (1994: 107).

More recently, fewer people, especially women, are engaged in agricultural work. During my fieldwork, women were primarily involved in specialty wine production, attending to agritourism guests, managing the household and children, gardening, marketing, or engaging in off-farm work. With few exceptions, the few *agriturismi* that are female-owned and run rely on a high level of hired labor. My hands-on involvement in the daily operations of Beppe's mixed farm was to a large extent flying in the face of accepted gender norms in a way that my working on other farms such as vineyards was not.

When introducing me to people, Beppe emphasized my femininity, making remarks such as "this is my farmhand, can you believe it?" But in the daily realities of work, he made few allowances for me being a female "outsider." He did not hesitate to throw all sorts of tasks at me, and did not seem to consider the notion that someone without a farming background might feel overwhelmed or squeamish performing certain tasks. He had me vaccinate and assist clipping the teeth of newborn piglets on my second day and later encouraged me to take part in the slaughtering and castration of animals. Seeing me falter, he would encourage me by saying "*e' una cosa naturale*," (it's something natural), "*e' niente di strano*" (it's nothing strange), or his oft repeated "*senza paura*" (without fear). Indeed, animal slaughter, castration, and medical care were daily realities for Beppe since his early days and he sought to also naturalize these tasks for me as an outsider.

The one task that he always excused me from was cleaning the manure from the cows' stall. He shoveled the manure manually twice daily. When he took the hour and a half to remove all of the manure with the tractor every other week or so, he would send me to the *agriturismo's* pool before we went to lunch. He may have excused me from this task because it

can be dangerous, and after leaving the field I heard that Beppe had been kicked by one of the calves and fractured his hand while clearing the manure.

I was very surprised when Beppe quickly introduced me to the exclusively male domain of the tractor, encouraging me to learn how to operate the thirty-five-year-old Lamborghini. During my time in the field, I did not witness or hear of a woman operating a tractor and Pratt (1994) has also documented that women do not operate tractors in this area. It is possible that my role as a foreign “outsider” permitted me to transcend this boundary. Beppe also often commented to me and to others that I was “strong like a man,” suggesting that in order for me to participate in the realm of the farm -- and potentially also the tractor -- I had to demonstrate certain masculine characteristics. Anthropologist Anton Blok documented a case in Sicily in which a woman who was obligated by her particular circumstances to take on tasks that were typically performed by men earned wide approval and a reputation for being “*una donna a cui mancano i coglioni*” (a woman who only lacked testicles) (Blok 1981: 429).



Image 21: Beppe cleaning the cows' stall



Image 22: Author operating tractor

Further, Beppe indicated that the duties of hosting tourists require a servility that is emasculating, as he repeatedly mentioned his “balls being broken” by tourists and their demands. This phrase was shared with his farmer friends. Such a finding is in line with the autonomy and independence of a farming lifestyle serving as the basis of self-respect and masculine empowerment for farmers (Barlett 1993, Mooney 1988). Beppe clearly signaled that household tasks were not in the masculine realm when he accused Davide, a young in-migrant farmer, of “being a woman” for doing his own cooking and housework. This reflects a distinction anthropologists have noted in Mediterranean codes of honor between the public and private spheres (Blok 1981) even as gendered domestic roles and identities have changed over time (Pink 2003). Sarah Pink (2003) has noted in the Spanish context, “behind the statistics that tell us men are doing an increasing amount of domestic work, are men who do not engage with the housework in the way that the ‘traditional housewife’ would. Instead, they use their

own (diverse) masculine narratives to shape their domestic practices, performing these roles in terms of, for instance, their ‘meticulous,’ ‘clean’ or ‘adventurous’ identities” (Pink 2003: 189).

Beppe also made status claims through ownership of his shop and restaurant in town, and masculinity played into such claims in surprising ways. For instance, I was with Beppe one day and I told him I needed to pick up a few things at the Coop, the main grocery store in town. He responded, “what do you want to do, give me horns?” In Italian, this expression refers to billy-goats (*becco*) and means to cuckold a man by giving him horns (*cornute*), a fierce insult to masculinity not only in Italy, but in Spain and Portugal, as well (Blok 1981; Stewart 2013). The deceived husband of an unfaithful wife is identified with the shameful figure of the billy-goat. Beppe was suggesting that by shopping at a store other than his own, people in town would associate me with his farm but see me as being disloyal by shopping elsewhere. Beppe expressed his dissatisfaction in terms of an affront to his masculinity, which also reflects an affront to his status.

On the other hand, neo-rurals couples running agritourisms were more likely to be unified around their enterprise and to emphasize this unity in their narratives about their livelihoods and work. For instance, the Martacis said that they “do everything together,” they invested their lives in the agritourism, and they work “with their hearts.” They spoke with equal voices and frequently gave each other credit. This sort of marital unity supported their personal aspirations -- and status claims -- around cultivation of place and tourist experiences. While Gianna generally did the cooking for guests and her husband gushed that she “cooks with her heart,” those duties also seemed to be shared. Reflecting a partial gender inversion, Fulvio emerged from the kitchen wearing an apron one day. This distinction is also bound up in status claims, as chefs may acceptably be male in Italy, but food procurement and cooking within the

home tends to fall on females (Counihan 2004). The marital unity characteristic of neo-rural agritourism farms seems to reflect research in the U.S. that identifies that sustainable farmers invoke more egalitarian patterns of masculinity and new patterns of gender equity (Peter et al 2000). For instance, I could not imagine Beppe referring to doing anything “with his heart” and he told me that he had never experienced romantic love.

CHAPTER 8 | MOBILE GLOBAL WORKERS: TRANSFORMATIONS OF RURAL LABOR

Flows of migration associated with farm labor are underplayed in considerations of repeasantization. While it is claimed that repeasantization sees farms relying on little or no hired labor, the reality in Amiata suggested a good deal of hired labor through part-time hiring of migrant farm workers, full-time wage labor employment, and part-time reliance on international volunteer farm workers. The presence of these workers on farms is the focus of this chapter.

Volunteer Tourism, Organic Farming, and Back to the Land: WWOOF

Cell phones blared music and snapped photos as we squatted to pick the grapes in the expansive vineyard below the castle. A New Zealander yelled to a Canadian about discount flights as an Australian complained to an American about being hungry. A middle-aged Albanian man ferried the full crates of grapes up to the cellar on the tractor. The young workers, many of them college students on summer vacation, struck a balance between working steadily and socializing lightheartedly. After we finished picking our last rows, we trudged up to the castle for lunch, weary from the morning's work but content to eat.

This scene describes the grape harvest at a neo-rural estate. While the estate only has one full-time employee, the Albanian man, it relies on significant mobilizations of labor through volunteer farm workers. Several of the producers I have presented in the ethnographic portraits in previous chapters are certified organic, and I observed a significant interest among neo-rurals in organic farming methods and alternative lifestyles choices such as energy self-sufficiency.

Arturo and Riccardo highlighted their positive experiences hosting volunteer farm workers through the World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms (WWOOF) organization. Though understudied, WWOOF is considered a part of volunteer tourism, which is a burgeoning niche of alternative tourism, sometimes also conceived of as “responsible tourism” or “sustainable tourism” (Lipman and Murphy 2012; Miller and Mair 2014). Such tourist experiences have been characterized as “decommodified,” suggesting that “rather than being an experiential commodity to be exploited within neo-liberal free market economies, a decommodified tourism experience is one that fosters new and positive attitudes, values, and actions in tourists and host communities” (Miller & Mair 2014: 2). This may include deepened cultural appreciation and cross-cultural understanding that may lead to shifts toward changed values or transformative potentials inspired by the tourism encounter (McGeehee 2002). However, such tourism is not immune to the potential of commodification and the competing interests among differently positioned actors, as commonly documented in other ethnographies of tourism (Lyon and Wells 2012).

The growing phenomenon of WWOOF is associated with broader shifts, including back-to-the-land (Jacobs 1997) and organic farming movements, especially in the United States but also in other world areas. For instance, the number of farms seeking interns in the U.S. tripled between 2007 and 2009 and highly educated young people are increasingly interested in farming and working toward policy change (Verinis 2011: 56). Anthropologist Rachel Anne Horner Brackett (2011) has similarly documented the popularity and competitiveness of a well-established three-month organic farm internship program on an Italian-American owned Tuscan estate.

WWOOF was founded as Working Weekends on Organic Farms in Britain in 1971 to provide urban professionals in London with opportunities to experience organic farming (Miller & Mair 2014). WWOOF now coordinates 6,000 host farms in 46 countries in Africa, North and South America, Asia, the Pacific, and Europe and at least 40,000 volunteers a year (Brackett 2011: 77; Yamamoto and Engelsted 2014; Azizi and Mostafanezhad 2014). After individuals gain membership to WWOOF by paying a modest fee, they are given access to a list of participating farms. They are responsible for contacting the farms to inquire about volunteering and to arrange stays. Individual farms have their own processes for screening and accepting volunteers. WWOOFers typically work from four to six hours a day or thirty hours a week, but work and lodging arrangements vary from farm to farm. Workaway is a similar organization that facilitates volunteer tourism, but it is not limited to the domain of organic farming and is more oriented toward facilitating budget travel. The phenomenon of WWOOF has developed commonly used vernacular, as one “WWOOFs,” is “WWOOFing,” or is a “WWOOFer.”

WWOOFers tend to be highly educated and interested in organic farming and sustainable food production. The phenomenon of WWOOF may reflect a reorientation of values surrounding work toward appreciation of the fulfillment of physical labor in an age of predominantly sedentary, urban-based jobs. The organization has its very roots in urban workers finding temporary respite in agricultural work.

WWOOFers inhabit a category somewhere between tourists and farm workers. As Brackett finds with the case of farm interns working at a Tuscan estate, “ironically, at Spannocchia the individuals who carry out much of the ‘peasant labor’ of Italian food production – the endless weeding of gardens, feeding of animals, mending fences, trimming grape vines, and so on – are not venerable Italians, but enthusiastic and idealistic young people

from North America” (2011: 77). The growing trend of WWOOF reflects a class reconfiguration in small-scale Italian agriculture, as Italian farmers have largely left the land to be partially replaced by a temporary workforce of educated young foreigners. But I have found that in Amiata and in analysis of the WWOOF registry, farms utilizing WWOOF tend not to be the family farm enterprises continuing over generations, but rather farms run by rural newcomers, reflecting a broader shift in rural class makeup.

Research attention has been devoted to WWOOFing from the volunteer worker perspective (Lipman and Murphy 2012; Miller and Mair 2014; McIntosh and Bonnemann 2006). According to a qualitative study on WWOOFing in Argentina, the experience can be transformative for volunteers, affecting their values and potentially also their practices (Miller and Mair 2014). This transformative potential was broadly characterized as “opening to living in interconnectedness” in this study, encompassing the facets of building bonds between humans, facilitating knowledge and exchange, harmonizing with the natural world, and consciousness-raising that enables potential activism (Miller and Mair 2014: 6; Lipman and Murphy 2012). Such findings have been echoed in other parts of the world, such as New Zealand (McIntosh and Bonnemann 2006).

On one *agriturismo* I visited, a middle-aged WWOOFer who was having personal problems in his life in northern Italy, including a divorce, ended up indefinitely extending his WWOOF experience. When I met him during the *vendemmia* (grape harvest), he had been on the same farm for over a year. I am uncertain how the terms of his volunteering changed, or if eventually some pay was offered. In the past, the farm had a few WWOOFers in the summer months and at other busy times, but this permanent WWOOFer has more or less become a full-time farm hand, replacing the temporary pool of WWOOFers. While tourism encounters are

typically characterized as transitory and non-repetitive, I have seen other WWOOFers develop relationships with farm families and become repeat visitors, extend their stays, or remain in touch with hosts.

Less is known about host experiences of WWOOF. It is not easy for farms to be accepted into WWOOF, according to my informant, Arturo. He has friends that have been on a wait list to join for more than a year, and some have been turned down. Before acceptance, someone from the organization visits to be sure the farm's production methods are in line with the philosophy of the organization. The farm must use organic production methods, but organic certification is not required (Azizi and Mostafanezhad 2016). Arturo also told me that he sees WWOOF as superior to other programs such as Workaway for its selectivity. WWOOF also provides insurance coverage for both the farms and the volunteers. He acknowledged that WWOOF can be more trying for volunteers because there is a different membership process and fee for each country, so they must arrange multiple memberships and hold different cards when working across borders, which is not uncommon.

Farm hosts benefit economically from WWOOF labor, despite that it is a labor force that generally requires a good deal of training and involves short stays. The economic benefits can be substantial for organic farms. A study calculated that a Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs provide pre-paid farm produce to customers typically weekly by delivery or pick-up) operation saved \$16,000-32,000 by having five volunteers over 24 weeks (Sheahan et al 2012). Farm volunteering in the last decade in the U.S. has become "an increasingly popular rural development strategy for small organic farmers who use WWOOF labour to subsidise the cost of food production as well as to cultivate intercultural friendships and exchange knowledge" (Saleh & Mostafanezhad 2014: 134).

Anthropologists have long recognized that exchange of goods is not simply a material exchange, but also holds deep symbolic and social meaning (Mauss 1954; Appadurai 1986). Exchange of labor must be seen in a similar social context, holding contingent meaning as wage labor and volunteer labor co-exist side by side. Hosting volunteer labor may take on variable significance and meaning depending on the host's life circumstances and affective needs. Aside from offering a supply of temporary labor and economic benefit, Arturo made it clear that the presence of WWOOFers on his farm has been fulfilling socially, offering him the companionship of like-minded people in an otherwise isolated setting. There are intangible social and cultural dimensions of farmer's engagement with WWOOF, as suggested by Arturo and others. Having WWOOFers and *agriturismo* guests on Arturo's farm is a way of "traveling without traveling" as he said, and helps him to tolerate the social isolation that characterizes Amiata. Arturo's experience suggests that bringing outsiders to the farm fulfills affective needs for cultural exchange and companionship that may otherwise be difficult to establish in Amiata. Arturo made it clear that he generally feels more kindred with the foreigners that come to his farm to work or stay and with other ex-pats living in Amiata than he does with residents who are native to Amiata. This represents a gulf between neo-rurals and long-term residents echoed by other neo-rurals I encountered. The Cerullos also indicated that they saw interactions with WWOOFers, and especially English language speakers, as valuable opportunities for their sons' learning.

There has been a lack of research attention to the motivations and experiences of hosts participating in WWOOF. A qualitative study of WWOOF host farms in Hawaii (Azizi and Mostafanezhad 2014) offers some insights into farm characteristics and motivations for participating in WWOOF. All of the farms "consider their operation to be some form of political

and/or social activism” (140). They also conceive of farming as a lifestyle choice, almost always coming from non-farming backgrounds including “the arts, humanities, theology, and other life paths with strong moral, ethical, and social underpinnings” (143). The study found that participation in WWOOF is strongly linked to deeply held values of environmental sustainability. WWOOF offers a platform for sharing interests, lifestyles, and worldviews.

A recent study in the U.S. analyzed geographical characteristics of WWOOF farms in relation to areas of conventional agriculture. It found that WWOOF “thrives on the margins of dominant modern agriculture,” with farms tending to be located in “bohemian cultural settings” that are “outside conventional farm regions” (Yamamoto and Engelsted 2014: 979). This supports the hypothesis that farmers associated with WWOOF tend to seek out areas associated with natural and cultural amenities, in line with the idea that WWOOF farmers are strongly centered around a certain rural lifestyle. WWOOF farms are not necessarily linked to large, urban centers but are markedly more established along the eastern and western coasts of the U.S. They are also not especially linked to areas of low socio-economic well-being and the study finds “weak evidence that WWOOF has the local development-assisting potential that is often associated with volunteer tourism” (Yamamoto and Engelsted 2014: 979).

Farmers in Amiata who participate in WWOOF most often come from non-farming backgrounds and perceive their farm as being part of broader alternative social, environmental, or political movements or statements such as sustainability, self-sufficiency, and voluntary simplicity (Elgin 1981). I also found that WWOOF farms tend to be located in areas that are apt to be deemed naturally or culturally desirable that are not necessarily socio-economically less advantaged.

The few farms I encountered that participated in WWOOF were somewhat diverse compared to each other in terms of family configuration and crops, but they all had non-farming, non-local, and educated backgrounds in common. Interestingly, only neo-rurals in my field site participated in WWOOF. I did not encounter any established local farmers who utilized WWOOF, nor are any such farms listed in the area of Amiata in the WWOOF registry. In my experience, those who accept WWOOFers on their farms are apt to be people whose values, backgrounds, and life experiences might have led them to potentially work through WWOOF at some point in their lives. They tend to be well traveled, younger, and educated, coming from non-farming backgrounds and often maintaining urban connections. Alternative farming practices resonate strongly with them and they are often active politically.

However, WWOOF should not be considered as a monolithic organization with consensus and unity of its purposes. I observed that WWOOF sometimes served as an arena for competition and tensions between farms. For example, one neo-rural wine producer issued a strong critique of an elite wine estate's use of WWOOF workers. He was curious about my experience working there, and suggested that the estate brought so many WWOOFers to work that "they do not have a real experience" and "it is not a real exchange" in which they can learn and share. He also accused the owners of being "*un po' snob*" [a little snobbish]. His critique of their use of WWOOF was phrased in terms of authenticity of experience and the devotion to providing a true agricultural learning environment for WWOOFers. He also suggested that the value of the exchange is not always equal between farms, with the estate allegedly offering a less valuable and authentic experience of work, cultural exchange, and learning. This was also said in the context of competition in wine production between these producers, them holding different national backgrounds, and the estate having a well-known upper-class reputation. The

estate has the ability to house at least a dozen WWOOFers, while the producer critiquing them is only able to house one at a time, reflecting clear differences in resources. This vignette does illustrate some shades of difference in the class privilege of neo-rural producers using WWOOF.

Overall, WWOOF seems to be of interest primarily to a certain class of producer (middle-to-upper class Italian and European neo-rurals) and a certain class of tourist (relatively privileged younger Westerners holding or developing cultural capital). Volunteer farm labor such as WWOOF exhibits the mobility, hybridity, and classed sensibilities underlying neo-rurality. Ultimately, it may be argued that WWOOF works toward maintaining and building the cultural capital of neo-rurals rather than supporting established agrarian livelihoods. In this sense, it contributes to the neo-rural transformation of the countryside.

MIGRANT LABOR AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN EUROPEAN COUNTRYSIDES

Another category of temporary or occasionally full-time worker of importance to farmers' entrepreneurial strategies is migrant farm workers. Often, these workers are located and secured through temporary employment services for migrant farm workers based in towns. The institutional structure and preponderance of these services suggests an important source of part-time labor for small farms, and global flows of migrants, capital, and labor associated with repeasantization.

Ethnographic Portrait: OLAN

I was curious to learn more about a service several farmers had mentioned. They told me that there were many *agriservizi* in the area to provide temporary labor for seasonal agricultural tasks, and many farms utilized such services for the grape, olive, and chestnut harvests and pruning. Several had mentioned one service based in a nearby hill town, so one day while running errands Elsa and I stopped in the town to seek out the service.

The office of the *agrizervizi* was easy to find, though small, positioned on the main piazza across from the *panificio* (bread baker). We entered the office and were welcomed by a woman in her early-forties working at a computer behind a desk. She was the only person in the office and her desk was more or less the only piece of furniture. As we casually conversed, she told us that she has been very satisfied with her job over the past four years handling the administration of the service. While she has worked office jobs in many different sectors, she feels more respected and valued here than in her previous positions. She complimented her boss, calling him "*molto bravo.*" The office was small and minimalist with a desk, computer, small storage closet, and two seats opposite the desk. The desk was covered with immigration documents and photocopied visas. She told us that the boss of the service, Olan, was out front in the *piazza* if we wanted to try to talk to him.

After asking around the group of migrant men outside, we met Olan, who was stocky, in his forties, and had piercing green eyes. He was a Kurdish political refugee from Turkey, who ended up in Italy 20 years ago out of proximity and relative ease of entry as he fled instability in his home country. Olan started out working at Villa Banfi for the harvest and pruning of the 800 hectare (2,400 acre) vineyards on the 2,830 hectare (7,100 acre) American-owned Banfi estate (see Chapter 2 for background on Banfi and role in this area). Investing a good deal of hard work, he was gradually promoted to act as the head of a team of workers. After five years

working at Banfi, he started thinking about starting up his own service with some friends who also worked at the estate. He decided that if he could lead a team at Banfi he could essentially do the same on his own while having more independence.

Olan was aware of the need for such a service and he knew there were lots of available workers. His friends thought it was too risky and complicated, so he ended up taking the entrepreneurial risk on his own. He became the boss of his own service organizing squads of workers and his network of friends came to work for him. The service has been “working well” for the past fifteen years and he now oversees more than 300 workers. Olan has also been able to diversify into other businesses in the cities of Grosseto and Rome, including pizzerias and kebab shops, and his relatives have come to work in these businesses.

Olan and his family faced a chilly reception in Italy, finding it unwelcoming and difficult at first. They had trouble adjusting to life in Italy and felt socially marginalized. But Olan described how he came to the crucial realization that he had to “learn the system.” Before he “learned the system” everything was impossible and bureaucracy was crushing and immobilizing. He came to realize that every part of doing business in Italy depends on having contacts. “Everything depends on who you know,” he told me. He spoke proudly of how he came to master the system. For instance, the residence permits for his workers normally takes six years to earn, but he can now get it approved within three weeks because he “knows the right people.” He still complained of the high taxes for businesses in Italy.

Despite Olan’s success and relatively speedy upward mobility, he does not want to raise his children in Italy. He eventually wants to stop working and go back to Turkey, citing Italy as culturally too different. As we talked outside the office, his two older kids rode their bicycles around the piazza. Olan and his family live in an apartment next to the office. After our

conversation, he insisted we come to meet his newborn twins. He proudly called up to his wife through the window to bring them out. She quietly greeted us and smiled down at the half-awake twins, as Olan happily cradled one of the babies in his arms, saying how proud he was.

Rural migrant labor

Olan's experience illuminates several transformations in rural Europe. Recent demographic changes toward aging populations, lower birth rates, and the rural exodus have fueled a need for low-cost labor and have made the migrant presence more acute in Europe (Cole and Booth 2007). Policing of European borders has also become increasingly contentious in recent decades (Andersson 2014; Feldman 2011). Ethnographic studies of labor that have often centered around occupational sectors (Cole and Booth 2007; Lawrence 2011; Lucht 2011) or specific migrant groups (Andersson 2014; Carter 1997; Lucht 2011; Suarez-Navaz 2004; Zontini 2010) have variously documented the lived experiences of new migrants as they participate in European labor markets and societies (Giordano 2014). Immigrant farm labor, though widespread, has been paradoxically understudied by anthropologists (Lawrence 2011; MacClancy 2015). In the international migration and ethnic relations literature, rural areas have been similarly ignored (Crenn 2015).

Migrant labor markets tend to be strongly gender divided. Several studies (Cole and Booth 2007, Zontini 2010) document how female migrants often appeal to the domestic service sector for their low cost and ability to accommodate various middle-class European household sensibilities. Both studies reveal that labor opportunities are often patterned by country of origin, fueling a sort of hierarchy of labor within the immigrant labor force. They also explore the strategies and tensions that emerge as migrant women balance the dual concerns of work

and domestic roles. My research also points to a growing demand for female migrant labor to work preparing rooms and cleaning in *agriturismi*, most commonly fulfilled in Amiata by Romanian women.

Migrant farm labor provides a window into the political, social, and economic frictions that may emerge with the exploitative structures of global industrial agriculture. The industrial agricultural system (Barlett 1989) has come to rely on a supply of cheap labor for fruit and vegetable production in the form of migrant farmworkers laboring under precarious conditions, especially in Europe (Cole 2007; Kasimis and Papadopoulos 2013; Lawrence 2011) and the U.S. (Benson 2008, Holmes 2013, Horton 2016; Wright 1990). The greenhouse district of southeastern Sicily represents one such area, where intensive cultivation of fruits and vegetables for European markets through contract labor has largely depended on the labor of Tunisian men since the 1980s (Cole 1997). Just as Sicily represents a dramatic shift from being a region of emigration to one of immigration, so too it demonstrates a shift from agriculture being a primary source of employment for Italian nationals to it being strongly associated with migrant workers. Sicilians are largely uninterested in agricultural work, due to the low job status and it not accommodating their “modern” consumption patterns and identities, a pattern well documented in other parts of Southern Europe (Cole 1997, Collier 1997; Cole and Booth 2007).

While North African farmworkers are economically crucial, they are socially marginalized, stigmatized as potentially threatening and unsuitable partners for Sicilian women, and occasionally painted as dangerous religious fanatics. Similar stereotypes have been documented in the case of Senegalese immigrant farmworkers in Andalucía (Cole 1997). In the Sicilian case, the frictions work in both directions, as North Africans isolate themselves while conceiving of their working in Sicily as a temporary source of much-needed income, rather than

a new life and home. Their employment reflects the precarious conditions in terms of health, housing, legal status, and pay documented in other parts of the world (Holmes 2013). Muslim religious observance is also denied in practice through the nature of agricultural employment. As of the early 2000s, a new migratory flow of Polish women was proving competitive with the North African labor force for agricultural employment, reflecting new trajectories of migration and labor with recent European integration (Cole and Booth 2007).

In Amiata, too, a few of my established farmer informants or their family members articulated concerns about immigrants. One said that in the past, it was entirely normal to leave one's car unlocked when parked in the town. The change he highlighted that prompted him to start locking his car involved immigrants who may or may not be worthy of trust. He went on to tell me a story of how he decided to pick his wife up at the bus stop when she was returning from Grosseto because it was "full of immigrants." The wife told me with a smile that she "would have been better off with the immigrants" since her husband's truck was in such disarray. Whenever this farmer saw women with their heads covered, he complained, "why don't they adapt to our ways if they are here in Italy?"

More recently, migrants from Eastern and Central European countries have been numerous and constitute a large presence in the agricultural labor markets of Western Europe. This trend took off in 2002 when most EU member states allowed citizens of several Central European countries visa-free entrance. Many engaged in informal labor and stayed long-term. The trend has become more pronounced with the European Union ascensions of Romania and Bulgaria in 2007, as nationals of these countries are able to become permanent residents and also benefit from free movement through Europe. Romanians have become the "largest group of foreign nationals in Italy" (Perotta 2014: 17). The phenomenon is marked enough to

contribute to a social category of “strawberry orphans” in Romania – children left by their parents to be raised by other kin and remittances as the parents work in Western European strawberry fields (MacClancy 2015).

The reception of migrant farmworkers may also be characterized by a certain degree of variation. Recently in Laconia, Greece, migrant farmworkers have been participating in small-scale olive farming and contributing to the formation of “neo-rural values” and pride in agricultural work (Verinis 2011). Migrant labor is coming to be regarded more favorably by Greeks, as Albanian migrants have restored the rural economy and infrastructure. Albanian males earn relative independence, if they can gain proper immigration status, by combining agricultural labor with work in construction. They can then use the cash income to invest in their own land, restored farmhouses, or businesses. This case study offers one example of upward mobility and comparatively positive social relations between migrants and locals (Verinis 2011). Similar dynamics have been recently documented in a village in Calabria, Southern Italy, but such efforts also occur in the shadows of notoriously violent past race riots against immigrant fruit pickers in the region (MacClancy 2015: 20; Perotta 2014).

Unlike the Greek case documented by Verinis (2011), immigrant involvement in agriculture in Italy takes place primarily in the context of migrant farm labor, as agriculture “emulates the ‘Californian model’ of intensive agriculture with intensive exploitation of immigrants” (Perotta 2014: 17). In short, this can be seen as “a neo-feudalism in the modern age, where immigrants eager for long-term work permits are forced to become ‘ritual supplicants’ to the state, while rural bosses create a twenty-first century clientelism, acting as patrons to foreign jobseekers who know they must be submissive, at times servile, to gain even a temporary income” (MacClancy 2015: 17-18).

It remains to be determined to what extent services like Olan's exploit workers. While one might assume Olan's shared past experience of working in agriculture as an immigrant may confer a higher degree of understanding and responsibility toward social justice and working conditions, it seems that he has benefitted a good deal from the enterprise. A hierarchy of migrants with some benefitting from the labor of their fellow migrants would follow a common pattern in agricultural labor elsewhere in the world (Striffler 2005).

There may be parallels between services like Olan's and the organization of migrant labor in districts of Southern Italy characterized by intensive fruit and vegetable production, especially tomatoes and citrus fruits. In this sector, labor is organized by *caporali*, informal contractors who "trade in migratory employment" (Labrianidis and Sykas 2009: 242; Perotta 2014), and their role is mirrored by *furgoneros* in Spain and "gang masters" in the UK (Holmes 2006). *Caporali* are involved in organizing the employment and temporary accommodation of fruit and vegetable pickers, and they also arrange transportation, food, water, and credit, which are deducted from workers' earnings. They supervise the farm work and collect pay from the employers, which they distribute to workers under a piece-rate system after they deduct a broker's fee and living costs. Despite growing concerns for social justice and consumer demands for ethical food sourcing, farmers prefer to source their labor through the *caporali* (Perotta 2014: 17). The *caporali* who organize labor crews are often the same nationality as the migrant farmworkers (Perotta 2014).

Migrant farmworkers are likely better off working in Tuscany's agricultural system (primarily olive groves and vineyards) and organized into squads by services like Olan's than they are in districts of intense fruit and vegetable cultivation in Southern Italy that involve mobile labor circuits and temporary housing camps. Migrant farmworkers in Southern Italy

often move between tomato cultivation and harvesting in Puglia and Basilicata from June through October, picking citrus fruits in Calabria in the winter, and picking strawberries in Campania in the spring (Perotta 2014: 17). Layoffs from factories in Northern Italy during the recent economic crisis have also fueled increased competition for work in Southern Italian agriculture (Perotta 2014). Several of my informants told me how immigrants mostly from Eastern Europe, Turkey, and Albania were almost entirely responsible for the repopulation of certain local hill towns that had been vacated through old age and death.

During the *vendemmia* (grape harvest) on a small farm I worked alongside the extended family of the farm owners and two hired Moroccan workers. The workers were part of a group that had been located through a service like Olan's in order to supplement the family labor of the harvest for a few days. Both of the Moroccan men had been in Italy for around five years. They worked under a man from Macedonia, with whom the farm operator had formed a relationship to supply the necessary annual part-time labor. I do not have any knowledge of the realities of pay for these workers, but working conditions seemed much more favorable than those documented in Southern Italy. The harvests involve long days of physical work, but all of the workers took a long break for lunch and avoided some of the peak heat of early afternoon. On this farm, the workers had their own lunch arrangements and ate apart from the family members and me.

On another small *agriturismo*, three young workers from Bangladesh and Albania helped with the exhausting work of moving and loading the heavy crates filled with grapes. A large extended network of the owner's friends, mostly from Rome, gathered to stay in the *agriturismo* and help with the harvest over the weekend. The owner and his friends were very warm and friendly with the young workers, whom the owner referred to affectionately as

“boys.” As we sat at a long table for a well-earned communal lunch, he made a special toast to them for their work and to me as a guest, proclaiming, while raising his glass, that “*qui siamo aperti al mondo*” [here we’re open to the world]. The self-conscious way the owner of the farm announced his openness suggests that he and his friends were engaged in a reflexive project of combining their urban sensibilities of appreciation for cultural diversity and worldliness with their roles as farm employer and temporary weekend working on the farm. While they acknowledged they were learning how to produce wine and oil in an incomplete process of gaining information and experience, they also rather formally highlighted their urban sensibilities during the communal meal. When I returned to this farm for the *raccolta* (olive harvest) a month later, the same young Albanian who helped with the grape harvest was working, suggesting that the owner’s satisfaction had likely led him to form a longer-standing relationship with this particular worker.

Agriservizi such as Olan’s service fill a role for seasonal agricultural labor in areas such as Amiata. Rural areas have fewer people interested in agricultural labor and a rapidly aging population. Cole and Booth (2007) importantly foreground how local cultural elements such as informality shape how migrants are integrated into European communities. Local farmers themselves had varied perspectives on these services. Most farms use the services at least once a year and they are acknowledged to be “a reality in this area.” One older farmer said outright that they operate “like a mafia” but “of course we use them.” He clearly acknowledged the lack of social justice he perceived, but at the same time recognized the economic imperative when there are few other possibilities for seasonal labor. Another young farmer who was passionately concerned with environmental sustainability actually referred to these services as “cooperatives” for labor. When I asked another young farmer friend of his about the

“cooperative,” he laughed and told me they did not exist and corrected his friend, with other farmers echoing his assessment of the services. Not only did he misrepresent the services, but he did not even begin to question the social justice dimensions of such a phenomenon. His friend, on the other hand, suggested that the owner of the service profited greatly from the business while the workers were paid very little. The actual dynamics and impacts of *agriservizi* such as Olan’s warrant further study, as does the “new, rural underclass” constituted by migrant farmworkers (MacClancy 2015:18).

Conclusion

In summary, small farms in Amiata mobilize part-time and sometimes full-time labor through multiple institutions and migrant flows. The international WWOOF movement supplies farms with an energetic supply of young workers who are eager to experience farm life in Italy. The migrant-run *agriservizi* in rural hill towns organize migrant farm workers from many parts of the world in order to meet demands for part-time farm labor, especially during the peak harvest periods. Lastly, female migrants from Central European countries play a significant role in supporting the domestic work necessary for agritourism. Neo-rural estates and farms — those farms that would likely be associated with trends of “repeasantization” — are especially reliant on the labor of these migrant flows. Additionally, they are well-positioned with the language skills, lifestyles, tastes, and sophistication to successfully mediate the experiences of WWOOFers and hosts often find the presence of these workers socially and emotionally fulfilling. Established farmers are not able to tap into this neo-rural, low-cost source of labor to the same extent, often lacking English language skills and the particular sensibilities to connect with an audience of young, volunteer farm workers primarily from North American and

Australia. This chapter has explored how labor strategies are shifting and unequally available to neo-rural and established farmers. Most often, established farmers rely on hired migrant farm labor in order to compensate for shifts away from family farm labor.

PART IV
UNCERTAIN FUTURES

CHAPTER 9 | CONCLUSION

UNCERTAIN FUTURES: THE HEGEMONIC PRODUCTION OF NEO-RURALITY

A plurality of rural livelihoods have taken root in Amiata following the demise of the sharecropping system and the profound transformations of the industrialization of agriculture and the collapse of wheat production. EU policy interests have become increasingly committed to creating rural areas for cultural consumption through tourism and recreation and protecting rural environments, which has shaped farming landscapes (Heatherington 2011; Stewart and Strathern 2010). Long-term established farmers and neo-rural farmers have variably utilized the strategies of high value-added wine and olive oil production for international markets, organic production, agritourism, and heritage crops and breeds. The establishment of the DOC and DOP territorial certifications for wine and olive oil have been key in allowing farmers to earn higher prices and reach international markets. Farmers in Amiata have also received funding support to develop agritourism, which has proven to be an economically profitable strategy in the area.

Some of these strategies — such as keeping a diversified mix of livestock and crops and organic cultivation — show signs of promise in terms of long-term environmental sustainability of farming systems. Agritourism and volunteer tourism through WWOOF may also raise awareness of issues facing rural livelihoods and food producers. Most neo-rural farmers live on their land and tend to it meticulously, serving as environmental stewards. Moreover, they often find great personal satisfaction and meaning in their work as producers, environmental stewards, and tourist hosts. The emerging space of neo-rurality that they play a key role in crafting involves a constellation of new values for both producers and consumers. Neo-rural

residents are generally well suited to play an important role in these emerging landscapes by participating in niche production, using organic or low impact farming methods, and educating tourists. However, I have highlighted how some younger neo-rural residents like Elsa and Davide face affective struggles and disappointment as their lived realities fail to line up with their imagined desires for their relocation to Amiata, echoing the ethnographic findings of Micaela Benson with lifestyle migrants in France (Benson 2011).

In addition to agritourism, production of high quality wine and olive oil have been key strategies for neo-rurals such as the Cerullios, who find personal satisfaction and economic success in organic wine production. However, neo-rural families overall are less oriented around the farm, hire permanent and seasonal labor, and are more oriented towards attainment of certain forms of cultural capital and discernment such as building a global elite clientele, and provisioning for the higher education, worldliness, and professional training of their children. Neo-rural in-migrants mostly secure their livelihoods through some combination of agritourism, off-farm labor, agricultural production, and personal savings rather than through rigorous agricultural production.

However, long-term farmers have often struggled to adjust to the emerging landscape of neo-rurality. Farm families like the Gallis — who are entirely centered around their closed-loop, agro-ecological farm — face growing difficulties with EU regulations around animal rearing and increasing basic costs, such as for trash removal. Like the Marinos, they have been interested in pursuing funding support for farm investments but have been excluded from this support in practice since they are unwilling to take on debt. This dissertation has highlighted how emerging policy and farming landscapes of neo-rurality favor more entrepreneurial farming styles. It is long-term farmers with highly educated children — such as the Valentis, the Contis,

and the Bonacores — who most readily and successfully engage with neo-rural strategies such as marketing of high value-added products for international markets, agritourism, and certified organic production.

Elements of neo-rurality are not entirely restricted to those entrepreneurial established farms with highly educated children involved in the farm enterprise. Even Beppe Gaspari and his brother have adopted aspects of neo-rurality, gaining funding and marketing support to run their shop, butcher operation, and restaurant in town as supplying local food products including meat from their farm, a local food distinction known and valued throughout Italy as “zero kilometer.” In addition, they have their two *agriturismi*, although I have discussed the frictions and challenges that have emerged as Beppe’s values of autonomous agrarian work run up against the hospitality demands of engaging with tourists. While their other business endeavors may well survive under the leadership of their children, the farm likely will not even though it is the main meat supplier for their butcher shop and restaurant. In this case, the uncertainty of the future of the farm also casts some doubt on the ability of the family’s other business enterprises to source meat locally and remain a node in an otherwise sparse local food system in Amiata. The loss of their farm would also jeopardize the two large *agriturismi*.

The vulnerability, tensions, and marginality associated with certain established farming livelihoods and the growing presence of neo-rural residents is a dual process that illustrates Herzfeld’s concept of the global hierarchy of value (Herzfeld 2004). Like “tradition,” neo-rurality is a category that is constructed and deemed desirable through the global hierarchy of value, especially as discontent with the global agro-industrial food system grows and as middle-class actors increasingly seek out experiences with landscapes of food production and perceived rural idyll. Neo-rural residents in Amiata share values and practices across many different

nationalities and types of professional backgrounds and a distinctive neo-rural subjectivity is apparent. Neo-rural subjectivities in Amiata are characterized by interests in the aesthetics of place, farming and place-making as life projects, agro-ecological farming and gardening, and command of forms of cultural capital and distinction that provide for success in hosting tourists. They also tend to have the business savvy and entrepreneurial sensibilities to engage favorably with EU rural development funding programs.

The emerging hegemony of neo-rurality is apparent in how established farmers variably either adopt aspects of neo-rurality or define themselves in relation to the emerging landscape of neo-rurality. Neo-rurality has come to largely constitute the “yardstick,” using Herzfeld’s term, by which farmers in Amiata judge themselves and chart their futures. In Amiata, established farms that have taken more entrepreneurial paths have adopted some aspects of neo-rurality. Among the farmers I encountered, this primarily takes place through the higher education and deep involvement of children with higher education in the farm. This has led a number of established farms to become successful with niche marketing of high quality and often organic wine and olive oil, opening up new possibilities for economic success by engaging with global tourists and international niche markets. However, the long-term sustainability of these strategies is uncertain.

By exploring the range of strategies employed by neo-rural and established farmers in Amiata amid changing landscapes of rurality and policy structures, this research has brought otherwise separate literatures into dialogue with each other in order to critically assess an ethnographic case study of the claimed phenomenon of repeasantization. I bridged economic anthropology’s attention to farming livelihoods and strategies, critical rural theory’s interest in power and inequality, an emerging literature on neo-rurality (Heatherington 2011; Verinis

2011), and a broad literature on lifestyle and labor migration and tourist mobility in order to scrutinize emerging rural transformations in Amiata. While scholars such as Van der Ploeg (2009) would see the situation in Amiata as a promising example of “repeasantization” and rural reinvigoration, this ethnographic research provides caution, instead suggesting a more critical examination of emerging dimensions of neo-rurality and post-modern rurality.

Through my ethnographic research in Amiata with long-term and neo-rural farmers, I have identified significant shortcomings in the concept of repeasantization. Repeasantization invokes problematic references to “the peasantry” and makes often inaccurate claims of producer autonomy, eclipsing important flows of migrant labor and global markets. It also shrouds the increasing currency of forms of cultural capital in shaping rural areas and informing the life chances of rural actors, as areas like Amiata simultaneously become destinations for neo-rural lifestyle migrants, middle-class tourists, and flows of global capital.

First, repeasantization as a term and concept rests on a misleading reference to an ambiguous continuation or reinvention of a peasant past. The so-called “peasants of the 21st century” (Ventura and Milone 2007) in Amiata bear little resemblance to peasant households of the past under the sharecropping system, nor do they typically utilize peasant household strategies such as mixed production centered around household consumption, avoidance of hired labor and debt, modest material consumption, and limited reliance on a cash income. Further, I have drawn attention to how the category of “peasant” still functions as a culturally loaded, stigmatizing, and potentially marginalizing term in Italy (Krause 2005) and in other cultural contexts (Edelman 2013; Heller 2013; Verinis 2011), calling into question the symbolic undercurrents of “repeasantization” as a concept.

In the same vein, the concept of repeasantization issues claims of producer autonomy associated with “peasant farming” (van der Ploeg 2009) that are inaccurate in the context of Amiata. As I have examined, the realities of most farming households I engaged with were underpinned by hired or volunteer labor and off-farm work. Farm families are seldom entirely oriented around the farm as a productive unit, and family members often have off-farm work. Beyond labor, farm economies are propped up by EU subsidies, tourist flows, and international markets that demand sophisticated Internet marketing and producer travel.

Further, hidden flows of migrant and volunteer workers served as important sources of labor for both long-term and neo-rural farmers, while farm labor rarely revolved around the household as a work unit. Temporary migrant farm labor is significant enough to be widely institutionally supported by migrant-run services, demonstrating the demand for such work and an avenue of migrant entrepreneurship running these services. How these institutions operate and what work and life chances they represents for migrants is poorly understood. Central European women also play an increasingly significant role in supporting the work of farm tourism and rural hospitality, a migrant flow that warrants further research (Swain 2016). As the European Union expands, it is crucial to examine how new migrant flows and underclasses are being formed to meet the demands of aging Western European societies and economies and depopulated rural areas. It remains to be determined whether the growing migrant presence in rural areas like Amiata will result in a new cosmopolitanism in rural towns, or whether further division and hostility will be fueled through support for groups like the Lega Nord. This research resonates with other work that considers how migratory flows reshape agricultural production and social life in rural areas, such as anthropologist James Verinis’s (2011, 2015) work in Greece, which reveals unexpected opportunities for upward mobility for

hard-working Albanian migrant farmers. This research also contributes to a burgeoning literature on volunteer farm labor, finding it personally meaningful and satisfying for both the workers themselves and for their neo-rural hosts.

Further, neo-rural farmers and long-term farmers adopting neo-rural elements revolve their farms and often their lifestyles, as well, around demonstrations of distinction, taste, and a quality of lifestyle through sophistication, knowledge, and styles of aesthetics and material consumption. This reality of “hypermodern consumption” is not given attention in claims of repeasantization (Heatherington 2011). Such realities for neo-rural residents reflect a deep interest in relocating to rural areas in part to obtain a certain lifestyle framed by material and intangible markers of distinction, reflecting their aspirations to locate a desirable rural canvas for crafting unfolding life projects. This finding validates the claims of distinction and visions of a life project associated with lifestyle migration that have been described by researchers in other areas of Europe (Benson 2011; Benson and Osbaldiston 2014; Benson and O’Reilly 2009; O’Reilly 2000) and in the United States (Hoey 2014). Demonstrations of forms of cultural distinction and discernment are increasingly expected of farmers who engage in international sales and tourism, changing the “rules” by which all farmers who wish to sell internationally or engage with tourists must abide. These forms of distinction and sophistication underpin emerging inequalities between established farmers and neo-rural farmers.

The concept of “economies of sentiment” that I borrow from anthropologist Heather Paxson (2012) helps to illuminate the shifts and tensions that are emerging around established farmers’ identities and senses of personhood connected with the changing landscapes of rurality and agricultural production associated with neo-rurality. Farming successfully in Amiata increasingly requires different skills and sensibilities as Amiata becomes a tourist destination

and niche wine and olive oil production region. Meeting these new expectations is difficult for many established farmers. My data in Amiata finds that rural transformations toward tourism and consumption are reconfiguring masculinities in surprising ways that demand investigation, as suggested in other European farming contexts (Aure 2015). The “economies of sentiment” of many established farmers, including Beppe Gaspari, see farm work as inextricably bound to embodied values of independence and autonomy, key axes of farmer identity in their farms, their families, and their social worlds. These farmers tend to see engagement with tourists as affronts to their autonomy, often expressed in terms of threats to their masculinity. I have explored such changing “economies of sentiment” through a discussion of masculinity and self-marginalizing discourses of established farmers.

I have also explored the “economies of sentiment” of neo-rural residents. Neo-rural residents often articulate great satisfaction and meaning in rural life and the products of their and others’ labor. They often speak of rural living and agricultural production as deeply tied to their aspired for lifestyle and deeply held values of environmental stewardship and simplicity. But neo-rural producers must also seek to distinguish their products and farms to attract consumers and tourists, crafting narratives of authenticity, distinction, and quality. The lived experience and strategically constructed narratives of production and rural life become a key axis of meaning making and identity for neo-rural producers. Further, my ethnographic data validates Greg Peter and colleagues (2000) finding that alternative, more equitable patterns of masculinity are associated with the transition to sustainable agriculture.

By considering the changing “economies of sentiment” (Paxson 2012) surrounding farming and rurality, the deep tensions and uncertainties that characterize rural transformations in Amiata come into clearer focus. Emerging processes of neo-rurality also change the

landscape of farming in the area and create new contexts of farming, belonging, and welfare for long-term established farm families. This dissertation has highlighted that unfolding dynamics of neo-rurality and global migratory contexts unequally restrict or enable the life possibilities of long-term farmers. Ethnographic analysis of the diverse range of farming livelihoods in Amiata provides caution for claims of repeasantization, since most of the farmers that are tied to the “peasant” sharecropping families of the past are struggling and the so-called “peasants of the 21st century” rely on global flows of hired labor, off-farm employment, tourists, and the privilege of their cultural capital, engaging in differing degrees of food production.

This research suggests that the lens of neo-rurality or post-modern rurality is more appropriate for a fine-grained, culturally representative examination of rural transformations that does justice to how local experiences are actively unfolding amid broader spheres of European expansion, global migration, and emerging ruralities. This theoretical move is in line with anthropologists who have worked in other European contexts, such as James Verinis (2011), Tracey Heatherington (2011), and Pamela Stewart and Andrew Strathern (2010). The lens of neo-rurality accounts for dimensions of identity and emergent inequalities in a way that the lens of repeasantization tends to occlude by narrowly privileging the material aspects of rural change. This dissertation has shown that there are serious implications of neo-rurality and changing EU agricultural policy structures that play out both materially and symbolically. As geographer Paul Milbourne (2007) suggests, case studies focusing on differently positioned social groups are crucial for identifying the generalities and specificities of unfolding patterns of rural change in different cultural settings. This research also responds to calls by David Goodman (2004) and Cristobal Kay (2008) to examine class and power dynamics associated with

agrarian transformations, in this case tied to the growing presence of middle-class residents and farmers (Milbourne 2007).

Ultimately, the marginality of many established farmers in Amiata is simultaneously, and to varying degrees, embodied, enacted or performed, and lived. It is embodied as Valeria accused Beppe of speaking badly, behaving badly, and lacking manners, an example of how “urban categories of judgment penetrate the rural world” (Bourdieu 2004: 579). Marginality is enacted and performed as Beppe and his friends refer to themselves as “*rozza*” and “*contadini*” in a way that is both self-deprecating in their eyes and in the eyes of non-farmers, while also being protective of their values of independence and autonomy. Not least of all, it is lived in the most tangible way in the subjective daily realities and trajectories of the farm and household. It is lived in Mara Galli’s downcast eyes as she wondered whether or not her son would find a wife. It is also lived in Franco Marino’s quivering voice as he bemoaned the fact that he and his brother were old, almost too old, to bear the burden of keeping up with their farm expansions that were made in the names of their absent sons. And it is lived in Beppe Gaspari’s scoffing that “the university has ruined” his son, who has replaced his affinity for the tractor with a computer, to his father’s dismay.

This research echoes scholars who note significant emerging transformations associated with neo-rurality and patterns of agro-ecological farming as the hegemony of industrial agriculture is increasingly challenged (Halfacree 2007). With rural geographer Keith Halfacree, “the future shape and shaping of the whole geography — physical and human — of rural areas in the global North is in transition” (Halfacree 2007: 4). While emerging landscapes of neo-rurality and the proliferation of neo-rural livelihoods in Amiata signal hope for the repopulation and revitalization of Amiata as a tourist destination and site with a reputation for high quality wine

and olive oil production, the transformations in agriculture and population that have taken place over the past fifty years have been profound and acutely felt by long-term farmers. This research contributes an ethnographic understanding of producer livelihoods in a particular corner of Tuscany, which extends historian Dario Gaggio's (2017) understanding of Tuscany as a historically contested landscape and long-standing place of many imaginings and life aspirations for diverse groups of people and interests. As noted elsewhere, long-term European farmers often identify "a resurgent ambivalence about the future of agriculture, and a sense of vulnerability about their own future in agriculture" (Heatherington 2011: 2; Stewart and Strathern 2010). How long-term farmers and their families will figure into the emerging landscape of neo-rurality is still unfolding, signaling an uncertain future that will likely be fraught with tensions and transitions as highlighted in the case of Amiata. While neo-rurality may signal hope and opportunity for some, this research suggests that its effects will likely be uneven. How differently entangled actors such as long-term farmers, neo-rural farmers, and migrant farm workers benefit unequally provides an opportunity for anthropological engagement in emergent globalizing European countrysides.

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