Cultivating Organic winemaking through affective care: an anthropology of organic winemakers in Marche, Italy

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AD FUNDUM

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Per Aspera ad Astra

ABSTRACT

"Ad Fundum" is a research project that embarks on a conceptual journey through the world of winemaking, focusing on the affective and intrinsic values of winemakers and their relationship to embodied resilience. This multimodal research, consisting of both a written article and a documentary film, aims to illuminate how winemakers navigate the challenges of an increasingly technocratic craft amidst the uncertain turbulence of climate change while maintaining a deep sense of care for their craft and the environment.The study explores how winemakers embody resilience in their daily practices, adapting to changing environmental conditions and regulatory frameworks while maintaining a deep sense of care for their craft. These vignettes, informed by participant observation and interviews, provide rich insights into the emotional depth of winemaking and the ways in which winemakers forge connections with their surroundings and communities.

Complementing the written analysis, the documentary film "Ad Fundum" offers a sensory exploration of the themes discussed in the thesis. The film captures the case of Maria Pia Castelli Winery, a Family owned winery based in the Marche region, Italy and allows viewers, through a combination of visual, audio and ethnographic methods, to experience firsthand the embodied resilience of winemakers and the importance of care in their craft.

"Ad Fundum" contributes to our understanding of winemaking as a deeply human endeavor, driven by care, resilience, and a commitment to sharing. By combining conceptual analysis with firsthand accounts and visual storytelling, the two outputs offer a unique perspective on the affective dimensions of winemaking, enriching our appreciation of this ancient craft in the face of contemporary challenges.

FIGURE 1: FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: ABOVE ARE THE TWO SONS EDOARDO AND ALESSANDRO; AT THE BOTTOM WE HAVE ALESSANDRO MANDOLESI, OLGA (EDOARDO'S GIRLFRIEND), MARIA PIA AND LUCIA (ALESSANDRO'S GIRLFRIEND). ENRICO (THE HUSBAND) WAS BUSY MAKING A BUSINESS DEAL WITH FRIENDS AND DID NOT HEAR THE CALL FOR THE PICTURE.

CONTENTS

INTO THE VINEYARD

Have you ever felt what it's like to move away from home? To take flight, to anticipate new beginnings, only to come back to the very place you so eagerly left? And once you do return, have you felt that familiar unfamiliarity which you left behind? The loneliness, the alienation, the feeling of not belonging anymore. Eventually, however, you will come across someone; an old friend, a new connection. They might smile at you and shake your hand, and before you know it, your heart skips a beat. And in that moment you begin to realize – it is not the place that made your home feel as one. It is the act of mutual care that kept the fire burning. That's exactly what I experienced at the beginning of my research.

As I'm leaving my hometown of Perugia behind me – the city slowly disappearing in the rear mirror of my car – to reach my temporary home in the Marche region, I'm overcome with somewhat opposing feelings. While I am extremely excited about my upcoming fieldwork and the chance to learn more about one of my passions – winemaking – I'm also overcome with a certain restlessness and anxiousness that I cannot explain or shake off. I arrive at the apartment at night, which doesn't help with the overall feeling. The tour of the apartment is very quick and as soon as the owners close the door behind me I feel so out of place, a stranger, and I start to spiral down about my stay, my research and my qualities as a researcher. The next morning I struggle getting out of bed. I decide to go out to discover more of the town; To my surprise, it's completely empty– everything is closed, almost abandoned – no café to be found. The long beach walk is the only thing that cheers me up. Now I'm impatiently waiting for the afternoon when I will meet with Maria Pia, Owner of the winery and a friend of my parents. The ride to their town, Monte Urano, takes around 20 minutes – 20 very long minutes. Everything changes as soon as I drive onto the property, the big wine cellar imposing over the street, surrounded by the vineyards. As I knock on the big green door, I hear many busy voices inside, but someone joyfully screams my name, and there is Maria Pia[1], arms open, ready to greet me as if we were very close friends. Enrico – her husband – immediately welcomes me and orders for a glass of wine to be poured so we can toast on this little journey we will embark on together. These words alone already fill me with a warmth that eliminates the uneasiness of the previous day. I meet Alessandro[2], with whom I will end up spending most of my time in the vineyard. Maria Pia eagerly sits me down and starts talking about everything and nothing. What comes next is everything I could have hoped for and more. She gives me what in her mind is a short introductory tour; more like 45 minutes of interesting stories, little details and anecdotes – how they acquire specific French barrels, how they clean the metal tanks and how the place changed over the years. Then she tells me to hug the big wooden barrel, feel the temperature and the humidity of the wood. She can vaguely tell at what stage the wine is just from touching it. I'm astonished, feeling like this is what I came here for in the first place.

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[1] Maria Pia is the owner and founder of the winery. Having inherited the 8 acres of vineyard form her father, she runs the winery as a family business with her husband Enrico, and her two sons Alessandro and Edoardo. Alessandro has become more involved and will in turn one day take over the business form Maria Pia. They only have up to 2 extra workers employed, who they treat like family and also consider part of it.

[2] Alessandro Mandolesi, not to be mistaken with the son of Maria Pia Alessandro, has been working with the family since the birth of the winery, coming fresh out of agrarian study, eager to get some real experience. He has since then become an important, indispensable, member of the family, taking care of and being part of every step of the winemaking process.

> Driving back home, I'm completely overwhelmed by what I just experienced. I'm now sure that I am in the right place and that this evening is just the beginning of experiencing a level of care for the craft of winemaking that no amount of literature could have prepared me for.

INTRODUCTION

I believe this first encounter is a good representation of what I wanted to achieve and was hoping to find during my research. An ethnographic study into the lifescapes of organic winemakers where Care, in its purest and most affective form, permeates every aspect of the winemakers' lived realities.

In the ever-evolving landscape of winemaking, the discourse surrounding organic winemaking stands as a significant and multifaceted domain that intersects with various perspectives, challenges, and academic debates. From the **environmental perspective**, concerned with the advancement of ecological balance and methods to foster biodiversity (Corbo et al., 2014; González & Parga-Dans, 2021; Rossero & Barbieri, 2022), to **health and security** (Silverstein, 2006), **ethical and social**, impacting both producers and consumers alike (Charters et al., 2022; Viecielli, 2021), **economic and practical**, exposing challenges arising with low yields and bothersome certifications (Fraga, 2019; Grandjean, 2021) to **anthropological and cultural** perspectives, concerning the relationship of human-environment, care, resilience and broader socio-cultural values and practices (Demossier, 2018; Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017).

As the environmental impact of human activities becomes increasingly evident, particularly in the context of climate change, sustainable agricultural practices have garnered heightened attention. Within this framework, organic winemaking emerges as a proactive response to the pressing concerns of environmental sustainability and resilience in viticulture.

Organic winemaking, as a holistic approach to grape cultivation and winemaking, embodies a commitment to ecological balance and stewardship. By eschewing synthetic chemicals and embracing organic farming principles, winemakers seek to minimize their environmental footprint while producing wines that are both environmentally friendly and of high quality. This approach is rooted in a deep appreciation for the interconnectedness of ecosystems and the recognition of the vital role that biodiversity plays in sustaining agricultural landscapes. What lies behind this commitment and interconnectedness is an affective care, both for the environment and for the socio-cultural relationship that this craft produces. The concept of care is deeply rooted in a

feminist theory of care and environmental sustainability. Within organic winemaking, it becomes a lens through which we can understand the motives that move winemakers to practice and adhere to resilient methodologies.

The significance of organic winemaking extends beyond its environmental benefits to encompass broader sociocultural and economic dimensions. Within the realm of agriculture, organic practices represent a departure from conventional agricultural methods, challenging the dominant paradigm of industrial agriculture. Moreover, organic winemaking is situated within a broader discourse on climate resilience, particularly in the context of viticulture. With climate change exerting unprecedented pressures on grape cultivation, winemakers are faced with the challenge of adapting to changing environmental conditions while maintaining the integrity of their craft. But what if the resilience of their methodologies is not an active strategy but an inherent consequence of their actions and philosophy?

The purpose of this thesis is to explore the embodied practices of winemakers engaged in organic viticulture, with a focus on how a form of care, deeply rooted in affective values and sustainability, contributes to resilience in the face of climate change while simultaneously building a strong network of like-minded people. By examining the intersection of environmental sustainability, embodied knowledge, and resilience, this study seeks to shed light on the complex dynamics at play in organic winemaking and their implications for the future of viticulture.

FINDING THE VINEYARD

A short paragraph should be dedicated to the explanation of the context of my research and why I specifically chose this winery for my master's research.

The winery is nestled just under the picturesque town of Monte Urano, in the Marche region[3]. The vineyard lies mostly on hills giving the vines optimal exposition to the sun and winds coming from the sea from east. Right in the middle of the vineyards lies a restored countryhouse, that has become their home. Living in the middle of one's own vineyard creates a unique and deeply intertwined relationship between professional and private life, where the boundaries

[3] The Marche is located on the central east side of the Italian peninsula, boasting the Ionic sea on one side and the Mountainous ridge of the Appennini on the other. The region is has a good variety of indigenous grapes, like Verdicchio and Lacrima.

between work and home blur seamlessly. This entanglement fosters a profound sense of place and belonging, as the family becomes intimately connected to the land they cultivate and the fruits of their labor. The vineyard is not merely a place of work; it is an extension of their home, a living and breathing entity that shapes their daily routines, relationships, and identities.

In such a setting, the vineyard becomes a constant presence in the family's life, influencing their rhythms and rituals. The cycles of the vines, from pruning to harvest, dictate the flow of the seasons and the family's activities. Morning coffee might be shared while surveying the rows of grapevines, discussions about vine health and weather conditions become part of dinner conversations, and evening walks through the vineyard provide moments of reflection and connection with nature. This close proximity cultivates a relationship of care and stewardship. The family develops an intimate knowledge of their land, understanding its nuances and needs through daily interactions. This deep familiarity fosters a sense of responsibility and pride, as every decision made in the vineyard directly impacts their home and livelihood. The vineyard is not just a workplace; it is a legacy, a source of identity, and a space where personal and professional aspirations converge.

For how I found and chose this winery the story is very simple and personal. A big contribution was, big surprise, the fact that I lived for 13 years in Italy. Where doesn't really matter, but what matters is that we, my family, love wine. As I will argue a few times in this thesis, my parents, like many others, met the owner of the winery by tasting one of their wines and desiring to visit them to know more. From this encounter sprouted a lasting friendship, allowing me to have immediate contact when I came up with my research topic. While I was first focused on purely biodynamic wine, I was told by Maria Pia that they practice a varied set of organic practices that cannot be put under one specific banner. That was the sign for me to broaden the scope of my research and focus not so much on the methods but on the lived experiences of those who practice them. I truly believe that the familiarity and trust established through my family's longstanding friendship with Maria Pia provided a unique entry point into the intimate workings of the winery. This relationship allowed me to delve deeper into the nuanced practices and philosophies that underlie their approach to organic winemaking.

EFFECTIVE AFFECTIVTY

To gain insight into/understand any kind of affective reality it is necessary to question how we can begin to approach, capture and in turn share any knowledge gained on affectivity. The study of affectivity in anthropological research necessitates a multifaceted methodological approach. I employed multimodal [4] ethnography, encompassing both conventional ethnographic methodologies and visual methods to capture the nuanced expressions of affect in the practices of organic winemakers. We must stay self-reflexive when thinking of who we are doing research for and whom we want it to reach. It's always crucial to find, as Fassin argues, an "appropriate format for an extended readership while respecting the ethnographic epistemology" (Fassin, D., 2013: 627). Within this perspective multimodal ethnography, as an innovative kaleidoscopic method in anthropology, allows for an immersive, long-term engagement with the community, enabling a deep understanding of their everyday practices, beliefs, and emotional landscapes (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Participant observation complements ethnography by providing real-time insights into the social interactions and embodied experiences of the winemakers (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2011). Visual anthropology, through the use of audio-visual recordings and photography, i.e. photo elicitation, further enriches the data by capturing the affective dimensions of winemaking that are often difficult to articulate through words alone (Pink, 2006).

Affectivity, encompassing the range of human emotions, sensations, and feelings, plays a crucial role in shaping social and cultural practices. In the context of organic winemaking, affectivity is integral to understanding how winemakers relate to their work, their environment, and each other. Studying affectivity reveals the deeper, often unspoken motivations and values that drive sustainable practices. It also highlights the emotional labor involved in maintaining organic vineyards and the sense of care and responsibility that underpins these practices. As anthropologist Kathleen Stewart (2007) argues, affective experiences are central to the way people navigate their worlds, making it essential to capture these dimensions in ethnographic research.

An affective lens in anthropological research prioritizes the emotional and sensory experiences of individuals, emphasizing the importance of feelings, moods, and atmospheres. This approach

[4] Multimodality refers to the use of multiple modes or forms of communication and representation within a single study to capture a more comprehensive understanding of a phenomenon. This approach often combines textual, visual, auditory, and interactive elements to provide a richer, more nuanced analysis. It is particularly useful in ethnographic research to capture the complexities and multifaceted nature of human experiences.

recognizes that affect is not merely an internal state but is socially and culturally constructed, influencing and being influenced by broader social processes Applying an affective lens to the study of organic winemaking involves paying close attention to the sensory and emotional engagements of winemakers with their environment. It shapes the research process by guiding the researcher to focus on the subtleties of human experience, from the tactile sensations of working the soil to the shared joy of a successful harvest.

In my exploration of affective dimensions within organic winemaking, I implemented the concept of "skilled vision" as articulated by Grasseni (2018) and further developed in collaborative ethnographic work (Grasseni et al., 2022). This methodological approach focuses on the cultivated ability to perceive and interpret the environment in ways that are deeply informed by embodied practice and cultural context. By observing and participating in the winemaking processes at Maria Pia Castelli, I sought to develop my own skilled vision, attuning myself to the subtle cues and practices that reveal the affective connections between the winemakers, their land, and their craft. This approach enabled me to capture the tacit knowledge and affective investments that are often overlooked in more traditional ethnographic methods. By reskilling myself to see through the eyes of the winemakers, I aimed to document the intricate ways in which care, attention, and emotional engagement are woven into the fabric of their daily practices, highlighting how these elements contribute to the resilience and sustainability of their organic winemaking efforts.

ORGANIC WINEMAKING

As we are walking past the shed with all their tools I ask Maria Pia about the different winemaking methods, their analogies and differences. I want to know how they got to their specific set of methods and processes. She tells me it's a complex world, where strict regulations are set for specific certifications, like biological or biodynamic. In her opinion, this limits the creativity and freedom of small winemakers to adopt different methods and strategies depending on their own needs. Biological certification for example is easier to obtain than the biodynamic one, as it mainly focuses on the type and quantity of substances that are used during the winemaking process[5]. However, slightly deviating from these regulations lose you the certification and thus possible funding and help from the government. She believes that the most important thing is to listen to and look at the soil and overall environment one finds oneself in, and should, within their personal ethical and moral agenda, experiment with techniques and methods to see how to create a long-term healthy and sustainable vineyard. While saying this she indicates three rusty barrels on wheels. They look like very old barbecues, barely holding together, ashes still coloring the insides grey. They use it to burn the leftovers of the pruning, and by cutting the bottom of the barrels the ashes are allowed to disperse between the rows of vines, aiding in the purification process of the soil. They copied this technique from French winemakers after studying them for a while and noticing their environments were very similar. "this is one of many things we have copied here and there" she nods to me, adding that the mixing of techniques, all still organic, allows the greatest flexibility, and thus to be able to respect ones philosophy, which is way more important to her then any type of official certification or label.

Winemaking techniques have evolved tremendously since the first amphoras were filled in Georgia around 8000 years ago (McGovern, 2003 & 2009). From conventional methods to alternative or indigenous methods, biological or biodynamic to organic, this vast array of methods that often overlap and intertwine have made the production of wine and in turn its marketing and labeling very competitive. Not to mention the complex world of certification policy which greatly influences how winemakers handle their vineyards and the products they use (Delmas, 2021). In recent years conventional winemaking methods, mainly the industrialized mass-producing giants, have had a great backlash for their impact on the environment, and in turn, suffered great losses

[5] According to the European Union Regulation (EU) No 203/2012 To obtain a biological certification in winemaking, vineyards must adhere to strict guidelines that prohibit the use of synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides. They must employ organic farming practices that promote soil health and biodiversity. This includes using natural compost, cover crops, and crop rotation. The winemaking process itself must avoid synthetic additives and adhere to specific processing standards.

For a Biodynamic certification, the same regulations apply as the biological one, additionally, they have to follow a strict agricultural calendar that aligns farming activities with cosmic rhythms (Demeter International e.V. (2023). *Demeter International Standards for Biodynamic Agriculture*.)

because of the irregular change in climates. As a consequence, a return to traditional, Indigenous and sustainable methods was promoted by mainly local, small winemakers, usually family-based. While there are arguments for each method to be the best option for the environment and their adaptive resilient capabilities towards climate change, It is more a case of what works specifically and locally depending on certain geo-socio-cultural elements. Debates surrounding the differences of winemaking methodology are abundant, mostly advanced by philosophical or ethical reasons (Pineau, 2019). These debates are accentuated by the strict regulations of certifications and the different understandings of what makes organic winemaking depending on where we are geographically (Goldberg, 2011; Teil et al., 2015; Viecielli, 2021). I follow in the steps of those who'd rather define their practice as "minimal intervention", as Maria Pia told me, to steer away from a theoretical debacle, and use organic winemaking as the overarching concept to delineate all those practices and methods were winemakers see their wines as "a vehicle to convey an ethical message and engender social and economic transformation through practice" (see: Teil et.al., 2015 in González & Parga-Dans, 2021: 2).

It is a method of grape cultivation and wine production that eschews synthetic chemicals and embraces natural processes to maintain the ecological balance of the vineyard. This approach is rooted in a philosophy that seeks to create a harmonious relationship between the vineyard and its surrounding environment, emphasizing soil health, biodiversity, and sustainability. The goal is to produce wine that authentically reflects the terroir— the unique characteristics imparted by the local environment, including soil, climate, and topography (Demossier, 2018). As described in *The Routledge Handbook of Wine and Culture*, organic winemaking has evolved from a niche practice to a significant movement within the wine industry, driven by increasing consumer awareness and demand for sustainable products (Charters et al., 2022; Goode & Harrop, 2011; Moscovici, D., 2018).

Organic winemaking, with its emphasis on natural processes and ecological balance, represents a profound commitment to sustainability and care. This approach aligns with broader movements towards sustainable living and environmental stewardship, enhancing soil health and biodiversity. Different approaches and theories abound within the realm of organic winemaking. According to Alonso González and Parga-Dans (2023), organic winemaking involves producing wine with grapes grown under organic or biodynamic agriculture without adding or removing anything during the production process. Biodynamic winemaking, pioneered by Rudolf Steiner, takes this a step further by viewing the vineyard as a living organism that requires holistic care and

attention (Grandjean, 2021). This method involves specific agricultural practices that align with lunar and cosmic cycles, aiming to foster a balanced and self-sustaining ecosystem.

However, opinions on organic winemaking vary. Some critics argue that organic methods can be less efficient and more labor-intensive than conventional practices, potentially leading to higher costs and lower yields. Proponents, on the other hand, emphasize the long-term benefits of organic farming, including healthier soils, better-tasting wines, and a more sustainable relationship with the environment. These differing perspectives highlight the complexity and nuance of organic winemaking as both an agricultural practice and a cultural phenomenon.

In the face of climate change, organic winemaking has gained prominence as a sustainable alternative to conventional viticulture. The impact of climate change on viticulture is profound, affecting grape ripening patterns, disease prevalence, and water availability (Fraga, 2019). Organic practices, which focus on enhancing soil health and biodiversity, can improve the resilience of vineyards to these changes. By fostering a diverse ecosystem, organic winemaking helps create conditions that can mitigate some of the adverse effects of climate change, such as increased pest resistance and improved water retention in soils (Demossier, 2018). The commitment to sustainability in organic winemaking is not only an environmental necessity but also a reflection of broader societal shifts towards more responsible and ethical consumption patterns.

> Maria Pia is a great storyteller, and I have enjoyed her stories, about the vineyard and her family, on many occasions. One particular that stood out to me was about the women in her family, how they all lived together with other farmers on the property they have now restored and live in today. Both her mother and grandmother were farmers, working in the fields. They lived with 20 people in what can be considered a big barn, sharing the internal space with animals and agricultural equipment. The space, although harsh, invited conviviality and allowed for shared experiences. They didn't have much except the land they worked and the connections they made with other farmers. Their livelihoods were based on these connections and on the success of crop yields. They treated the environment with the utmost respect, sharing knowledge and tips. One of the big factors, Maria Pia noted, was the fact that they were in the fields every day, weather allowing, which gave them a very nuanced relationship with the development of the crops, and in turn knowing how to treat them the best. She translated all this knowledge into their modern-day winemaking process, deciding to operate as a small family, always in deep contact with the vines and the soil, almost creating a symbiotic relationship.

From an anthropological perspective, organic winemaking is deeply embedded in cultural practices and local knowledge systems. It represents more than a set of agricultural techniques; it embodies the values, beliefs, and traditions of the communities involved. According to Viecielli (2021), organic winemaking among female natural winegrowers in Italy illustrates how these

practices are intertwined with notions of identity, heritage, and place. These winemakers often see their work as a continuation of family traditions and a way to preserve their cultural heritage. The anthropological lens allows us to understand organic winemaking as a holistic practice that encompasses ecological, social, and cultural dimensions, highlighting the interplay between humans and their environment (Silverstein, 2006).

> In another instance, Maria Pia shared with me the family's approach to composting. Instead of relying on chemical fertilizers, they use organic waste from the vineyard and household to create rich compost that nourishes the soil. "It's a cycle," Maria Pia explained, "what we take from the earth, we must give back." This practice not only enhances soil fertility but also reflects a deep-seated ethic of care and responsibility towards the environment.

Organic winemaking differs significantly from conventional winemaking in its approach to vineyard management and wine production. Conventional winemaking often relies on synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides to maximize yield and protect crops from pests and diseases. In contrast, organic winemaking uses natural alternatives, such as compost and cover crops, to enhance soil fertility and promote biodiversity. This fundamental difference reflects divergent philosophies: conventional winemaking prioritizes efficiency and yield, while organic winemaking emphasizes ecological balance and sustainability (Rossero & Barbieri, 2022).

The natural wine phenomenon, as discussed by Alonso González and Parga-Dans, represents a radicalization of organic principles, pushing the boundaries of minimal intervention in both the vineyard and the winery. Natural winemakers often avoid additives and technological manipulations, striving to produce wine that is as close to its natural state as possible (Alonso González & Parga-Dans, 2021). This approach is not without its critics, who argue that the lack of intervention can lead to inconsistencies in wine quality. However, proponents believe that it allows for a more authentic expression of terroir and the winemaker's craft.

Organic winemaking is intrinsically linked to the concepts of care and resilience. The practice embodies a form of affective care that is deeply rooted in the winemakers' relationships with their land, their vines, and their community. This care is evident in the meticulous attention to detail in vineyard management, the use of traditional techniques passed down through generations, and the commitment to preserving the health of the ecosystem (Howland, 2022).

In my fieldwork at the Maria Pia Castelli wine estate, the importance of affective care became immediately apparent. From the moment I arrived, I was welcomed as part of the family, invited to join meals, and included in the daily rhythms of vineyard life. This experience highlighted how

care extends beyond the technical aspects of winemaking to encompass social and emotional dimensions. Maria Pia and her family exemplify how care for the land translates into care for people, fostering a strong sense of community and shared purpose.

Resilience, in this context, emerges not merely as an adaptive strategy but as an inherent consequence of these affective practices. The care that organic winemakers invest in their vineyards builds resilience by fostering a robust and diverse ecosystem capable of withstanding environmental stresses. This resilience is also social, as the strong networks of mutual support and shared knowledge among organic winemakers create a community that can collectively respond to challenges (Grandjean, 2021). The case of Maria Pia Castelli demonstrates how resilience is cultivated through a deep-seated commitment to care, sustainability, and the continuity of tradition.

In conclusion, organic winemaking represents a holistic and affective approach to viticulture that integrates environmental sustainability, cultural heritage, and social resilience. By examining these practices through an anthropological lens, we gain a deeper understanding of how organic winemaking not only responds to but also actively shapes its environment, creating a resilient and caring community of practice. This perspective invites further exploration of how affective practices in agriculture can contribute to broader discussions on sustainability and resilience in the face of contemporary challenges.

CARE

One evening – after a long day in the vineyard – I am sitting at the big wooden tasting table in the cellar. It's flanked on one side by a large cabinet were all the different tasting glasses are kept. In the middle is a collection of old vintage and special bottles, all opened and tasted of course. The dust on the bottles tells a story of past family tastings and good stories. On the other side of the room, an old cabinet is adorned with memorabilia of the cellar and flanked by an old barrel. On top of it is a picture of Maria Pia's father, Erasmo Castelli. On the side, beautifully exposed, are the 4 different bottles of wine[6] that they produce. Hearing about the deep emotional connection that Maria Pia has with each wine and their label, I question her about their meaning. Creating the labels for the wines is akin to crafting a family heirloom quilt. Each label, like a carefully chosen patch of fabric, holds a story, a memory, and a piece of the family's soul. Together, these patches are sewn into a larger tapestry that tells the tale of their heritage, their care for the land, and their devotion to their craft. The key, the priest, the town, the stars and flowers – each symbol is a patch in this quilt, a fragment of their story and a testament to their care. Just as a quilt wraps its wearer in warmth and history, these labels envelop each bottle with layers of meaning and affection, making every sip a journey through the vineyard's heart and soul.

In the realm of feminist literature, particularly within the discourse of care theory, care is understood as a complex and multifaceted concept that extends beyond mere physical or emotional nurturing. Rooted in feminist ethics, care theory emphasizes the relational, interdependent nature of human existence and highlights the importance of nurturing and sustaining relationships, both between humans and of humans and non-humans (Gilligan, 1977, Puig de la Bellacasa, 2012-2017, Haraway 2011, Van Dooren, 2014). My approach to care and its importance within the framework of organic winemaking thus leans on an extensive body of literature advancing the nature of care as "a vital affective state, an ethical obligation and a practical labor"(Puig de la Bellacasa, M. 2012: 197). Care, within this framework, involves a deep sense of responsibility and attentiveness to the needs and well-being of others, as well as a recognition of the interconnectedness of individuals and communities. It encompasses practices of empathy, compassion, and reciprocity, and is grounded in a commitment to fostering meaningful connections and promoting social justice (Held, 2006). the concept of care provides a framework for understanding the ethical dimensions of organic winemaking. Care entails a commitment to

[6] They produce 2 Red wines, 1 Rosé and 1 white. The red ones are respectively 100% Sangiovese and 100% Montepulciano, the Rosé is a 50% blend of the previous grapes and the white is a mix of 4 grapes (Pecorino 50%, Passerina 30%, Trebbiano !0% and Malvasia 10%).

nurturing and preserving the well-being of both human and non-human entities, including the land, the vines, and the community.

It is through this lens of care that the true essence of winemaking is revealed, as a labor of love and a testament to the beauty and complexity of the natural world.

SHARING IS CARING

> From the moment I arrive at the winery, I am taken care of as if I am part of the family. I am told I can join for lunch any time I wish , an extra plate is always available for me . At the beginning, I feel like I'm profiting from their hospitality, or that they are just being polite. I had learned the first day that in the past months, they lost two important people and are still dealing with the emotional aftermath. Maria Pia's mother is also having some health issues and is staying over at their place for a while – as is usual in Italian culture. Nonetheless Maria Pia and Enrico, her husband, always welcome me in their home with joy and laughter.

Care can be understood differently depending on the etymological origin we choose. I intend it as the verb 'to care for', which can then be applied to a larger set of elements; care for someone else, for something, about someone or something, but also the passive state of being taken care of. It entails this reciprocal notion and perhaps cyclical state in which we recognize that in taking care of something 'other' we will, in turn, be taken care of (Thelen, T. 2015). When understood in these different forms, care became apparent to me on many different occasions during my fieldwork at the winery. First and foremost it's the care that I experienced towards myself. This is how I envision the affective side of care entailed by Puig de la Bellacasa. Caring thus in some way deals with the act of sharing in some form or manner. Sharing emotions, objects, ideas, space and time all create meaningful connections that in turn can bring other fruitful consequences.

> Every lunch Maria Pia has some local products that she will use, and each of those products has a story. The tomatoes she uses come from a lady who lives close by; she has her own organic vegetable garden, and produces 4 different types of tomatoes with which she makes the different sort of preparations. Sometimes Maria Pia buys from her and other times they exchange products, wine or olive oil for tomato sauces. Another neighbor has different fruit trees, which of course she treats organically, and when she has excesses – which she appears to have often – she shares them with others. The meat comes from a local butcher whom Enrico knows personally. He is very fond of the prosciutto and usually has the butcher put a whole pork leg on the side for him.

We should then not forget about the effect that affective care can have on the creation and maintenance of community and social networks. Caring for each other through the act of sharing fosters long-lasting connections and friendships that in turn promote the sharing of values, ideals, and memories. This is also very apparent in the environment of organic stewardship. If we understand organic stewardship as the culturally embedded practice of managing and caring for resources, environments, and communities in a way that reflects deep-seated values, beliefs, and social responsibilities (Berkes, F. 2017) we can envision a network of like-minded people found to enjoy sharing ideas, products, thoughts, and of course some gossip. Care in winemaking encompasses the relationships forged between the winery and the wider community of workers and collaborators. It involves fostering a culture of mutual respect, communication, and cooperation, where each individual's contributions are valued and acknowledged (Alarcon, et al., 2020).

Care as an ethical obligation can be tied back to the intrinsic values of a family heritage. When certain values are transferred from generation to generation the next in line usually feels compelled and committed to upkeep a certain philosophy, ideal or practice. In this context, for a practical craft as winemaking, we can see how care as an ethical obligation then is an embodied manifestation of this heritage. Within a winemaking family, care extends not only to the vines themselves but also to the entire ecosystem in which they are situated. It involves a conscientious approach to farming that prioritizes sustainability, biodiversity, and the preservation of the land for future generations.

Care in organic winemaking is manifested in every aspect of the process, from the cultivation of the grapes to the fermentation and aging of the wine. It involves nurturing the soil through practices such as composting and cover cropping, minimizing the use of synthetic chemicals and pesticides, and promoting natural methods of pest and disease control. While these practices are common for any kind of winemaking, from conventional to biodynamic, the difference lies in the attention and personal care that is/can be dedicated to each process.

> One afternoon the vineyards are more silent than usual. I don't hear the cutting noise of the electric pruning shears that always lead me to Alessandro's location. Nor do I hear or smell the burning of twigs which has been a constant for the last month. As I look for signs of life I approach the cellar. The sound of laughter and chatting is mixed with the vibrating sound of metal. One of the big metal tanks which contained wine for a period of time is on its side, it seems to have a life on its own until I see Alessandro coming out with cleaning tools in his hands. Today seems to be the day for transferring wine from upstairs and filling the barriques downstairs. He is using nothing more than a cloth and a set amount of sulphuric acid[7]. "This might be the most

[7]Sulphuric acid is occasionally utilized as a cleaning agent for equipment in some wineries. Its use in organic winemaking contexts must adhere to stringent regulations to ensure sustainability and environmental safety. European

important part of what happens inside the winery", Alessandro's voice reaches me as an echo from inside the tank; "if we want to be clean outside we must be clean inside as well or all the work will be lost". He refers to a previous conversation we had about how they keep track of every step in the vineyard, as they don't have as much control there, and that the real hard work starts inside, where the success of their labor depends on their thoroughness and attention….

Practical labor of care manifests in the meticulous attention given to the entire production process, from vine to bottle. In this context, it can be understood through the lens of feminist care ethics, which emphasizes the relational, interdependent nature of human existence and the moral significance of caring practices. As articulated by scholars such as Joan Tronto and Berenice Fisher, care involves "everything we do to maintain, continue, and repair our 'world' so that we can live in it as well as possible" (Fischer, B., Tronto, J. 1990). This broad definition encompasses not only direct caregiving activities but also the environmental stewardship necessary for sustainable agricultural practices. The labor is characterized by a deep engagement with the material aspects of winemaking, where each action is performed with a mindful consideration of its impact on the environment and the quality of the final product (González & Parga-Dans, 2021).

I spend many days inside the Castelli's house, enjoying the warm atmosphere, writing my notes and talking with Maria Pia and Enrico. Most of my interesting talks that are not recorded happen right after lunch when I help with cleaning and Maria Pia starts telling one of her stories, or gossip about something she discovered the day before. Within these seemingly unrelated stories I uncover many of their caring qualities, realizing that truly their commitment to fostering a sustainable environment is a lifestyle more than a professional choice. From the natural cleaning soap to a recycling bin for almost every type of waste. Their compost will be used to fertilize the flowers and plants outside. They care very much about how the house is kept clean, but without using abrasive and chemical stuff. Most of the house is kept as they have found it and renovated meticulously with the materials still available from the house. Flattening the place would have been quicker and more cost-effective, considering all the reparations and ongoing issues with mold they face. But to Maria Pia there was and is a story to be told in that house that is now their home. They transformed the annexed hay barn into a cozy meeting point. Enrico tells me that there was a small oven in the corner, and they expanded it to make this place an inviting space for their Sunday roasts. I could feel the coarseness an rough edges of the old bricks and stones, how the few new ones were seemingly mixed in to create something that respected both the material and its history. This same type of attention transpires when Enrico tells me about the new winery they have been renovating in Falerone, a town half an hour from their place. They bought it together with 3 acres of vineyard from an old

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Commission. (2018). *Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/1584 of 22 October 2018 amending Regulation (EC) No 889/2008 as regards detailed production rules for organic wine*. Official Journal of the European Union.

family, who also held the recipe for an old indigenous recipe for a white wine. They approached the Castelli's as they believed in their philosophy of winemaking, and since then the family has been busy with bringing the two new places back to their old glory with the same care they have for their home and their winery.

The embodied experience of care is palpable in the rituals and rhythms of daily life in and out of the vineyard. It is felt in the tender touch of a farmer's hands as they prune the vines, in the careful attention paid to the fermentation process, and in the shared moments of celebration and communion over a glass of wine. It is through this lens of care that the true essence of winemaking is revealed, as a labor of love and a testament to the beauty and complexity of the natural world.

RESILIENCE

RESILIENCE IN ANTHROPOLOGY: BETWEEN CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABILITY

Resilience, a concept originating from the ecological sciences, refers to the capacity of a system to absorb disturbances, reorganize, and retain its essential functions, structures, and feedback (Holling, 1973). In broader terms, resilience encompasses the ability of individuals, communities, or systems to withstand, adapt to, and recover from various shocks and stresses. Within anthropology, resilience is often linked to how communities adapt to environmental, social, and economic changes, frequently intersecting with discussions on climate change and sustainability (Fraga, 2019). However, interpretations of resilience can vary significantly depending on the disciplinary and contextual focus, highlighting its multifaceted nature.

When exploring resilience it is essential to consider the embodied human-environment connection that underpins these practices. Cooke, West, and Boonstra (2016) emphasize the significance of dwelling, the state in which we humans cannot be considered outside of the environment in which, precisely, we dwell. This suggests that resilience is not merely an adaptive strategy but a deeply ingrained practice rooted in the physical and emotional engagement with the environment. This perspective aligns with Hampton's (2012) examination of wine's unifying qualities, where the act of winemaking and wine consumption fosters a profound sense of community and interconnectedness. The vineyards become a space where human and environmental elements coalesce, creating a resilient system through shared practices and values. Additionally, Howes (2022) critiques the conventional understanding of environmental perception, advocating for a more nuanced approach that incorporates sensory experiences and affective dimensions.

In anthropological discourse, resilience is predominantly discussed in the context of climate change and sustainability (Dove, M. R., Carpenter, C. 2008; Brightman, M,. Lewis, J. 2017). This framework views resilience as an active strategy or method employed by communities to mitigate the impacts of environmental changes (Kopnina, H., 2017). For instance, sustainable agricultural practices, such as organic farming and water conservation techniques, are seen as resilience strategies that enhance the capacity of communities to cope with climatic variability (Netting, 1993). This approach emphasizes proactive measures and adaptive strategies aimed at preserving ecosystems and ensuring long-term sustainability.

While resilience is often framed as an intentional strategy, it can also be understood as a consequence of inherent socio-cultural and behavioral patterns. This perspective suggests that communities are resilient not necessarily because they consciously adopt specific strategies but because they possess ingrained values, behaviors, and social norms that inherently support adaptability. For example, traditional knowledge systems, communal resource management, and intergenerational transmission of skills and practices contribute to a community's resilience, often without deliberate intention (Adger, 2000). This view shifts the focus from resilience as a deliberate approach to resilience as an emergent property of cultural and social systems.

Exploring resilience as a consequence of behavior, values, and morals reveals the deep-rooted cultural factors that contribute to a community's ability to adapt. In many societies, adaptive behaviors are embedded in everyday practices and rituals, reflecting a long history of interaction with and adaptation to the environment. For instance, the principles of stewardship and respect for nature in many indigenous cultures foster a resilient relationship with the environment. These cultural practices and moral frameworks provide a foundation for resilience that is not necessarily articulated as a formal strategy but is inherent in the way of life (Berkes & Folke, 2000).

Every year, around the last days of January, the winery turns into a small festival for friends, locals and buyers to grab their share of "vino sfuso"[8]. It is called "I giorni della merla[9]", due to a popular folk tale about how the presence of a blackbird during those days would inform farmers about the upcoming weather. Different farmers or local producers are invited to advertise their biological products. Usually cheesemakers, butchers or pasta makers that they have met through other festivals, shared meals or by word of mouth, the winery becomes a gravitational pole for like-minded people to celebrate and support local producers, their culture and the products. Food and wine are central, biut what really transpires is this web of interconnectedness where people share ideas, stories, memories and hell even business deals.

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[8] *Vino sfuso*, or "loose wine," refers to wine that is sold in bulk rather than in bottles. This traditional practice allows consumers to purchase wine directly from the producer or retailer, often bringing their own containers. *Vino sfuso* is typically more affordable and encourages sustainable practices by reducing packaging waste.

[9] "I giorni della merla," or "the days of the blackbird," refers to an Italian legend about the last three days of January, often considered the coldest of the year. According to the legend, a white blackbird and her chicks sought warmth in a chimney to escape the harsh winter. After three days, they emerged covered in soot, turning them black. This is why blackbirds are now black, and these days are remembered as a symbol of endurance and transformation through hardship. Additionally, In agricultural tradition, it is believed that if the last days of January are cold it means spring will be pleasant, and vice-versa. This in turns influences the steps farmers will have to take in preparation for the next season.

> As more people start filling the place I see Maria Pia flying from left to right to say hello and explain the products of this year. While she entertains newcomers in the back Alessandro is filling the demijohns[10] with the bulk wine. The weather is pleasant and the big doors are open, inviting a warm light and a soft breeze inside. Most of the people I see interacting with Maria Pia or Enrico seem to know them well by how they greet each other. It's like they know every person in the neighboring towns. All the interactions are joyful and filled with laughter. As the day go on I meet very interesting characters. There are many internationals, some who came even form their country just to be here. An old Polish medical doctor questions my presence as he has never seen me there, I happily tell him about the reason for my stay, "You are in the right place", he responds with great enthusiasm. He tells me of the first time he tasted one of their wines and had to know who made them. After coming to the winery unannounced he was welcomed with open arms and received a full tour which ended up in him spending the evening there and having dinner in their home. This same story is told to me by other couples and individuals I meet, all agreeing on the amazing charismatic nature of Maria Pia. It is as if their wines include fragments of their passion and their quality awakens in people the desire to know more. Everyone I meet tells me they met them through their wines. Even the two vendors

The resilience observed at the Maria Pia Castelli wine estate exemplifies how resilience can emerge from ingrained cultural practices and values. The family's commitment to organic winemaking is not just a strategic response to climate change but a continuation of their traditional practices and a reflection of their deep-seated values of care and stewardship. Maria Pia's meticulous attention to the vineyard, her respect for the land, and the communal sharing of resources and knowledge illustrate how resilience is woven into the fabric of their daily lives. This form of resilience, rooted in affective care and cultural continuity, highlights the importance of understanding resilience as a multifaceted and context-dependent phenomenon.

> At the end of the first day I encounter Massimiliano, who presents himself as an old friend of the family. He tells me about the role the encounter with Maria Pia has had in his life. He used to work as a director for a big coffee brand for many years, working long hours, yes earning a lot of money but getting no satisfaction. Thanks to his work he traveled a lot and with each trip his daily joy and satisfaction became less, he was yearning for something worthy, something different, "but what?" he dramatically expressed. Then, as if fate was involved, he met Maria Pia at a food convention. From that moment he was mesmerized by their story, how they started with little knowledge of making quality organic wine, and figured it out by having a community supporting them, failing and learning along the way. After visiting their place he immediately decided he would quit his job and start his own little winery not far from theirs. "The work is super hard, and since I started only recently, without knowledge, I am heavily impacted by the climate", he said with serenity, "but that doesn't matter, cause the satisfaction of slowly seeing my

[10] A demijohn is a large, narrow-necked bottle typically made of glass, used for fermenting and storing liquids such as wine, cider, or beer. It often holds several gallons and is sometimes encased in a wicker or plastic basket for protection and easier handling. Demijohns are commonly used in homebrewing and traditional winemaking processes.

> vineyard becoming more resilient, and the connections and friendships I make along the way are all more than worth it".

Reframing resilience in anthropological research involves recognizing the interplay between strategic adaptations and inherent cultural practices. While resilience can be an active strategy in response to specific challenges, it is also a consequence of long-standing behaviors, values, and social norms that support adaptability. By acknowledging this dual nature of resilience, anthropologists can gain a more nuanced understanding of how communities navigate and thrive amidst change. This approach underscores the importance of cultural and social dimensions in shaping resilience, offering deeper insights into the diverse ways in which human societies sustain themselves in the face of adversity.

In the study of resilience, particularly within the context of organic winemaking, the concept of affective care emerges as a pivotal method that sustains communities amidst various challenges. Through my fieldwork at the Maria Pia Castelli wine estate, it became evident that the extensive care practiced by the family serves as the bedrock of their resilience. This care is not merely a set of actions but a deeply embedded ethos that permeates their daily lives, shaping their interactions with the land, the vines, and each other. Affective care, as observed in the Maria Pia Castelli family, goes beyond the physical nurturing of the vineyard. It encompasses emotional and relational dimensions that foster a profound connection to their work and environment. This form of care includes meticulous attention to the health of the vines, the use of biodynamic preparations, and the nurturing of a vibrant community network. These practices reflect a holistic approach that prioritizes the well-being of the entire ecosystem, creating a resilient foundation that can withstand environmental stresses without the need for drastic strategic changes.

> During my fieldwork, I witnessed how this care manifested in various aspects of their winemaking process. Maria Pia's dedication to maintaining the health of the soil through organic fertilizers and natural pest control methods is one example. Her approach is rooted in a deep understanding of and respect for the natural cycles of the vineyard. This meticulous care ensures that the vineyard remains robust and adaptable, capable of thriving even as climate conditions change.

The resilience observed at the Maria Pia Castelli estate can be attributed to this ingrained practice of care. Unlike other vineyards that may need to actively develop new strategies in response to climate change, Maria Pia and her family have been able to maintain their methods and practices. This continuity is not because they are resistant to change but because their approach

inherently includes the adaptability and attentiveness needed to cope with environmental variations. Their resilience is a natural outcome of their daily practices and values, rather than a reactionary strategy.

> In explaining their yearly process there is never a mention of adaptive strategies, of mitigative methods or tools. Everything they do, from the pruning to the burning, the composting and the biological treatments, they are the same methods they used when they just started. In the meantime, two decades, climate change has worsened. I ask Alessandro if and how they had to counter the environmental changes and their impact on the vineyard. Surprisingly I'm told that their average yearly harvest yield has remained the same. The losses they had were within their losing margin, compared to many larger regional and national conventional winemakers. Just like Maria Pia told me at the very beginning of my research, they feel a deep connection to the vineyard, en the surrounding environment, thus they listen, they look, skilfully and consciously, to what each year the soil, the vines, the grapes require of them.

TO BE OR NOT TO BE (RESILIENT)

In the canonical anthropological discourse, resilience and climate change are often intertwined, with the latter frequently cited as a primary driver necessitating the former (Kopnina, 2017; Leedon et al. 2021; Van Leeuwen et al., 2019). However, through my fieldwork at the Maria Pia Castelli wine estate, it becomes clear that resilience is not solely a response to climate change. Instead, it is an inherent quality, deeply embedded in cultural practices, values, and social behaviors, that transcends immediate environmental challenges.

The theoretical framework of resilience often emphasizes its connection to climate change and sustainability. While these links are important, they do not fully capture the multifaceted nature of resilience. As Netting (1993) argues, resilience is also a product of cultural and social systems that have evolved over time to adapt to various challenges. The practices at Maria Pia Castelli illustrate this broader perspective, showing that resilience is embedded in the daily lives and values of the community. This understanding of resilience challenges the canonical view that it is primarily a response to climate change. Instead, it suggests that resilience can be a pre-existing condition, shaped by cultural traditions, social bonds, and affective care. By recognizing resilience as an inherent quality rather than a reactive strategy, we can appreciate the depth and complexity of how communities sustain themselves amidst various challenges.

> Spending many afternoons at their house I observed how the family's daily practices embodied this inherent resilience. For example, their use of biodynamic preparations and organic fertilizers is part of a holistic approach to farming that prioritizes ecological balance and biodiversity. These practices are

not new responses to climate change but are deeply rooted in their understanding of and respect for natural cycles. This approach ensures the health and longevity of their vineyard, creating a resilient ecosystem capable of withstanding various challenges.

Anthropological studies traditionally frame resilience within the context of climate change, emphasizing how communities adapt to increasing environmental stresses (Fraga, 2019). This perspective suggests a reactive approach, where resilience is developed as a strategic response to external pressures. However, resilience at the Maria Pia Castelli estate challenges this view, illustrating that resilience is an embodied condition rooted in longstanding cultural practices and affective care (Elbers et al, 2021). The resilience observed at the estate is a testament to the family's enduring commitment to their land and community. Their practices of organic winemaking, characterized by meticulous care and sustainable methods, are not recent innovations developed in response to climate change. Rather, they are the continuation of traditions and values that have been passed down through generations. This form of resilience is interactive and non-exclusive; it is not solely about surviving climate change but about maintaining a way of life that has always valued adaptability, sustainability, and community.

During one of our last lunches before the start of the event, we are chatting about the past editions, and how this was going to be the first one in-person in 4 years, after COVID-19. Maria Pia missed the social part of the event very much, the chance tce connect with people and support local producers. She remembers the year in which the earthquake hit L'Aquila and displaced many families even in their region. She knew many of the farmers who lost their livelihoods and were still struggling to this day. At the time she used the event to both host these families and give them the opportunity to sell the products they had managed to save. Even to this day the damages and lack of funds are visible, she sadly admits. One of the producers coming this year, the Cheesemakers, is one of many families who lost their home back in 2009, and are still waiting for a new home, 15 years later. Maria Pia is in awe of their hard work and resilience, and tells me it is in these moments that the real strength of community comes forth.

Thus, the resilience at Maria Pia Castelli is supported by a strong social fabric. The family's connections with their community, built on mutual support and shared values, enhance their collective ability to adapt and thrive. This communal resilience is evident in their daily interactions and the ways they share resources and knowledge. For instance, Maria Pia's practice of exchanging produce with neighbors fosters a network of interdependence that reinforces their collective resilience. This social dimension of resilience underscores that it is not an isolated trait but a collective capacity nurtured through relationships and shared practices.

IN VINO VERITAS

As I reflect on my journey through the vineyards of Maria Pia Castelli, I am reminded of the profound connections that have emerged between the vines, the winemakers, and myself. This research was not merely an academic exercise but a deeply personal exploration of the values, traditions, and emotions that permeate the world of organic winemaking. Through this journey, I have come to appreciate the intricate dance of care, resilience, and affectivity that defines this craft. From the moment I stepped onto the estate, I was enveloped in a sense of belonging. The warm welcome from Maria Pia and her family made me feel as though I was returning home rather than embarking on a research project. The first meal we shared was a testament to the care and attention that defines their way of life. Freshly picked tomatoes from a neighbor's garden, locally cured prosciutto, and, of course, their lovingly crafted wines – every element on the table told a story of connection and commitment.

As an anthropologist, I approached this research with a theoretical framework in mind. However, my time at Maria Pia Castelli transformed this framework into a lived experience. I came to understand that the concepts of care and resilience are not abstract ideas but tangible practices that shape the lives of these winemakers. This realization has profoundly impacted my perspective on both my research and my own life.

In concluding this thesis, I recognize that the journey has been as much about personal growth as it has been about academic discovery. The stories, experiences, and relationships I encountered at Maria Pia Castelli have enriched my understanding of organic winemaking, care, and resilience. This research has shown me that in the world of winemaking, truth and authenticity are found not just in the wine itself but in the connections and care that bring it to life.

My time at Maria Pia Castelli has underscored the importance of viewing agricultural practices through an affective lens. By recognizing the emotional and relational dimensions of organic winemaking, we can gain a deeper appreciation for the complex interplay of care and resilience that sustains this practice. This perspective invites us to rethink how we approach sustainability and resilience, not as mere technical solutions but as deeply human practices that are woven into the fabric of everyday life.

As I invite further research on affectivity in agricultural practices, I hope that future scholars will continue to explore these deeply human aspects. Understanding the affective realities of those

who cultivate our food and drink is essential for appreciating the full richness of their work and for fostering a more sustainable and caring world.

In vino veritas – in wine, there is truth. And in the vineyards of Maria Pia Castelli, I found not just truth, but also a profound sense of care and resilience that will stay with me long after the last bottle is uncorked.

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