THE MAFIA IN ITALIAN LIVES AND LITERATURE

Life Sentences and Their Geographies

Drawing on a wide variety of documents and texts from 1990 to the present, including diaries, testimonies, fiction, films, online video postings, and contributions to antimafia social networks, Robin Pickering-Iazzi explores the mafia’s pervasive influence in contemporary Italian life. In particular she examines the complex urban geographies (the “cityworlds”), both physical and imaginative, associated with these narratives. She also shows how the texts themselves offer implicit challenges and a quiet code of resistance to the trauma and injustice wrought by the mafia throughout Italy.

Despite a long tradition of Italian drama, poetry, and fiction in which the mafia has a strong narrative presence, there have been few studies of this body of work. And at that scholars have largely overlooked the voices of women and youth. Through engagement with these voices, and a wider selection of texts and the latest theoretical approaches, Pickering-Iazzi encourages renewed critical reflection on the mafia’s role in Italian society, while shedding light on our understandings of crime fiction, Sicily and Sicilian identity in literature, the discursive strategies of the new Italian epic, and the cultural and social functions of storytelling.

(Cultural Spaces; Toronto Italian Studies)

ROBIN PICKERING-IAZZI is a professor in the Department of French, Italian, and Comparative Literature at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee. She is the editor of the widely acclaimed anthology Mafia and Outlaw Stories from Italian Life and Literature.
This page intentionally left blank
In memory of my mother, Norma C. Pickering (1931–2012)
This page intentionally left blank