

In MAFIA REPUBLIC, John Dickie, Professor of Italian Studies at University College London and author of the international bestsellers COSA NOSTRA and MAFIA BROTHERHOODS, shows how the Italian mafias have grown in power and become ever more interconnected since the Second World War, with terrifying consequences.

In 1946, Italy became a democratic republic. But deep within the nation there lurked a forgotten curse: three major criminal brotherhoods, whose methods had been honed over a century of experience. As Italy grew, so did the mafias. Sicily's Cosa Nostra, the camorra from Naples and the mysterious 'ndrangheta from Calabria stood ready to enter the wealthiest and bloodiest period of their long history.

Italy made itself rich by making scooters, cars and handbags. The mafias carved out their own route to wealth through tobacco smuggling, construction, kidnapping and narcotics. And as criminal business grew exponentially, the mafias became not just more powerful, but more closely linked.

Today, the long shadow of the mafias still hangs over a nation wracked by debt, political paralysis, and widespread corruption. The latest investigations show that their reach is astonishing: they control much of Europe's wholesale cocaine trade, while representatives from as far away as Germany, Canada and Australia come to Calabria to seek authorisation for their affairs.

Just when Italy thought it had finally contained the mafia threat, it is discovering that it harbours the most global criminal network of them all.

JOHN DICKIE is Professor of Italian Studies at University College London and an internationally recognised expert on many aspects of Italian history. In 2005 he was awarded the title *Commendatore dell'Ordine della Stella della Solidarietà Italiana*. He is the author of six books, including **MAFIA BROTHERHOODS** and **COSA NOSTRA**, his acclaimed and bestselling history of the Sicilian mafia, which has been translated into twenty-one languages and won the Crime Writers' Association Award for Non-Fiction, and **DELIZIA!**, a history of Italian cuisine which won the special commendation in the André Simon Food and Drink Book Awards and in France was voted Food Book of the Year by *RTL/Lire*.