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Praise for THE STORY OF SPANISH:

"A useful overview, strong on sociolinguistics, though historical linguists and philologists will find plenty to gainsay." —*Kirkus Reviews*

"You don't have to know any Spanish to enjoy this charming biography of what is perhaps the world's least appreciated major language. But you will come to understand its rich history and poetic beauty – and why our children and their children will, in ever greater numbers, be dreaming in Spanish."

—**Donald Morrison** former Editor of **TIME Magazine's** European edition and author of *The Death of French Culture*

Praise for THE STORY OF FRENCH:

"A well-told, highly accessible history of the French language that leads to a spirited discussion of the prospects for French in an increasingly English-dominated world."

—**William Grimes**, *The New York Times*

"[The authors] extensively examine the ups and downs of its international influence. The essence of modern French remains strong in the face of competing languages, and the authors rather convincingly argue that it remains the language of intellectuals and gentlemen. Exceptionally told, a celebration of the lasting influence of la française."

—*Kirkus Reviews* (starred)

The Story of Spanish

By Jean-Benoît Nadeau & Julie Barlow

Just how did a quirky, obscure dialect spoken by a remote tribe of cattle farmers in northern Spain grow to become the common tongue of 450 million people in 22 countries, and the unofficial second language of the United States?

Thoroughly researched and enlivened with stories and anecdotes, **THE STORY OF SPANISH (St. Martin's Press/May 7, 2013/Hardcover/\$27.99/0-312-65602-5)** explores the origins and spread of modern Spanish from its roots in Hispania's Vulgar Latin (the language that also spawned French and Italian) to its fascinating, global predominance today.

Internationally bestselling authors of *Sixty Million Frenchmen Can't Be Wrong* and *The Story of French*, Jean Benoit-Nadeau and Julie Barlow, now turn their attention to a language that shaped the world we know.

Full of surprises and honed in Nadeau and Barlow's trademark style combining personal anecdote, reflections and deep research, *The Story of Spanish* is the first full biography of a language that shaped the world we know, and the only global language with two names – Spanish and Castilian.

Through characters like Queen Isabella, Christopher Columbus, Cervantes and Goya, **THE STORY OF SPANISH** shows how Spain's Golden Age, the Mexican Miracle and the Latin American Boom shaped the destiny of the language. This book also explores more somber episodes like the Spanish Inquisition, the expulsion of Spain's Jews, the destruction of native cultures, the political instability in Latin America and the dictatorship of Franco. It is the passionate and intriguing chronicle of a vibrant language that thrived through conquests and setbacks to become the tongue of Pedro Almodóvar, Gabriel García Márquez, of tango and ball room dancing, of millions of Americans, and of hundreds of millions of people throughout the world.

Other interesting Spanish facts include:

- More than 37 million people in the U.S. speak Spanish. If demographic trends continue, the U.S. will be the largest Spanish-speaking country in the world by 2050.
- 417 million people speak Spanish alone in Hispanic Countries.
- An estimated 15 to 20 million Americans have learned Spanish as a second language.
- Spanish is the third most spoken language in the world.
- While Latin is the root of Romance languages, Arabic has had an even greater influence on the Spanish language and its development.
- Spanish is the official language in 21 countries, including Bolivia, Uruguay and Equatorial Guinea.
- No other European language has two names: castellano and español. Spanish speakers call their language different names depending on where they are from.

This linguistic study shows there is much more to Spanish than tacos, flamenco and bullfighting. It explains how the United States developed its Hispanic personality from the time of the Spanish conquistadors, to Latin American immigration and *telenovelas*. It also shows how fundamentally Spanish many American cultural artifacts actually are, like the dollar sign, barbecues ranching, cowboy culture and more.

THE STORY OF SPANISH shares how the culture and origins of Spanish have enriched and informed our lives.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

JEAN-BENOIT NADEAU and JULIE BARLOW are the authors of *The Story of French* and the bestselling *Sixty Million Frenchmen Can't be Wrong*.