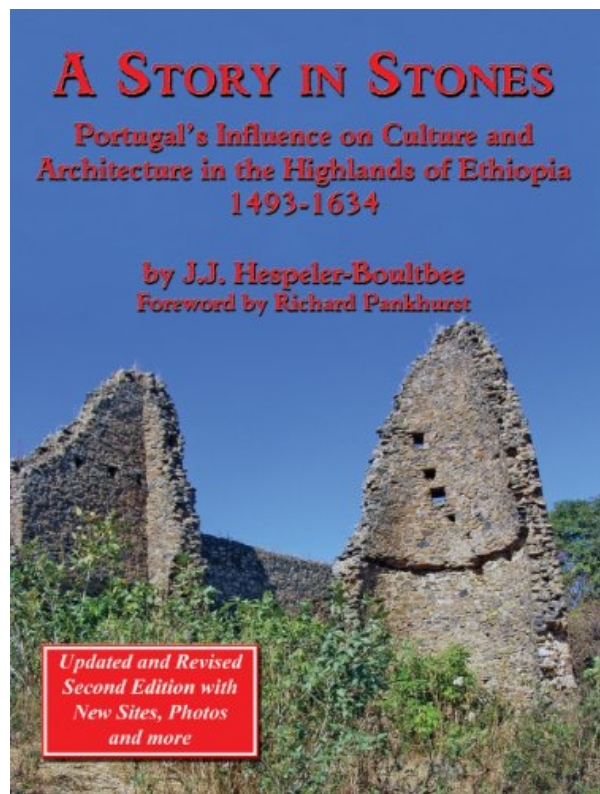
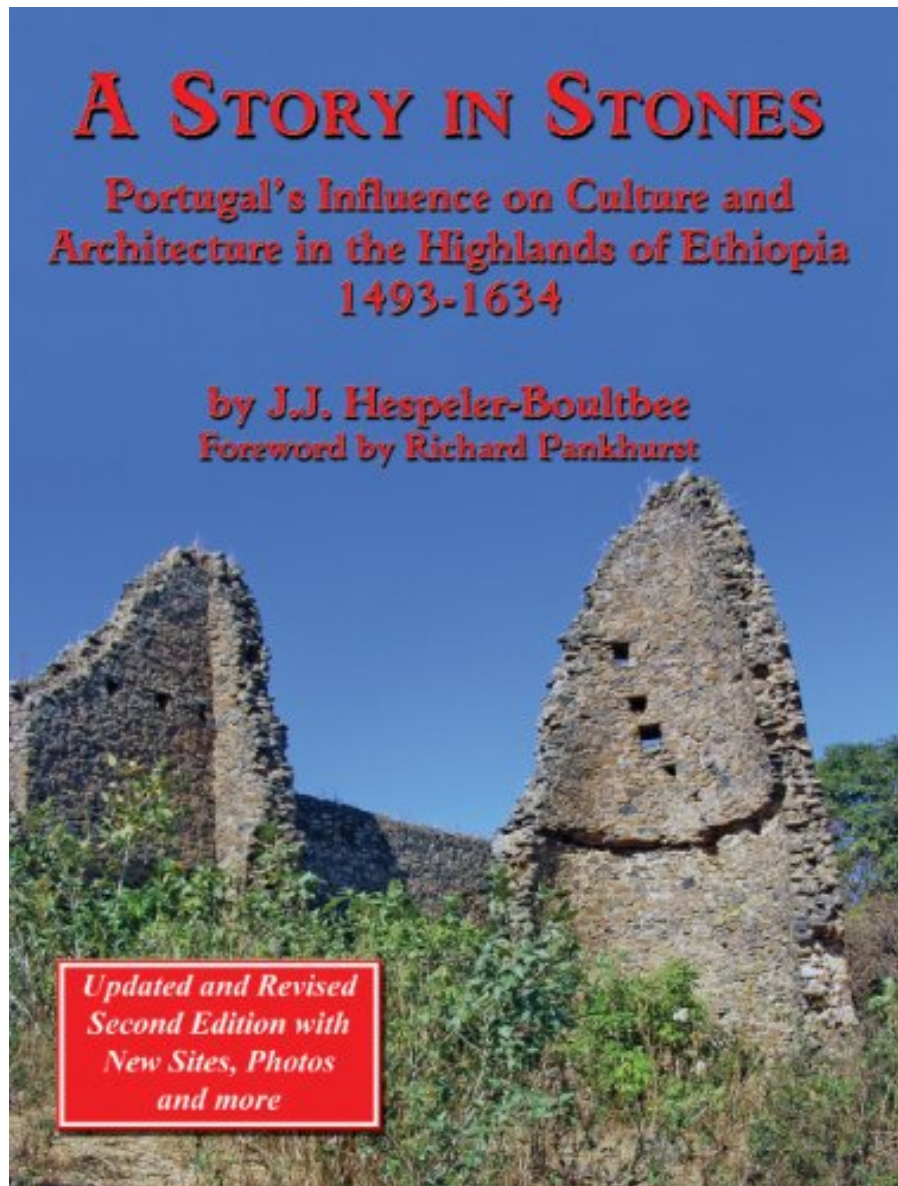


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Review

"We are deeply indebted to Jeremy Hespeler-Boulton... for his initiative in studying Portuguese, Portuguese-Indian or Ethio-Portuguese buildings in Ethiopia, and thus opening an entirely new field of Ethio-Portuguese studies."

- Richard Pankhurst, Institute of Ethiopian Studies, Addis Ababa University

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This newly updated and revised second edition of *A Story in Stones* explores the relationship between Portugal and Ethiopia during the XVI and XVII centuries from the unique perspective of stonework. Through research and many years of working in the field, J.J. Hespeler-Boulton examines the first early Renaissance links between the principal European superpower of the day and the ancient Christian empire of Ethiopia's Highlands – using contemporary architectural vestige as a catalyst for his findings.

What began as Portugal's mission to discover an unknown world soon became a quest to find Prester John, the legendary Christian priest/king presumed to be living on the far side of Islam. In an attempt to form a Christian military alliance, the search was both concluded and, in a manner, initiated by explorer Pêro da Covilhã in 1493 with his overland journey to the Highland court of Emperor Eskendar. This was instrumental in setting up a string of ties between the two nations – diplomatic, military, religious, cultural and (most long-lasting of all) architectural – almost three decades before Portugal's diplomatic mission of 1520.

The fascinating story contained in the stones can yet be seen in the Portuguese and "Gondarine" ruins that dot the Gojjam and Lake Tana regions; they continue to influence today's Highland architectural design. Hespeler-Boulton examines over thirty different sites, many of which are remote and rarely visited. Fully illustrated with colour photos and drawings.

About the Author:

J.J. Hespeler-Boulton is an Art & Architectural Historian and Associate of the Institute of Ethiopian Studies, Addis Ababa University. He lived for twenty-five years in Portugal, during that time making several forays into the Ethiopian Highlands on behalf of the Department of History and CIDEHUS (Centro de Investigação e Desenvolvimento em Ciências Humanas e Sociais), the research and development institute at the University of Évora. For the two year period, 2007-2009, he lived in and conducted research from Bahir Dar on Lake Tana, Ethiopia, during which time he found his historical conclusions were at considerable variance with colleagues in the History Department at Bahir Dar University – disagreements which have prompted the revisions leading to this current updated and revised edition of *A Story in Stones*.

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Review

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Important Historical/Artistic Overview

By Joseph P. Lea

While there are an increasing number of volumes, works, and articles in the press regarding Eastern/Western exchange for Asia and the Americas as well, there is precious little on this topic - other than works dealing with the slave trade. Portugal's influence - and here we are talking about Catholic and Jesuit influence as well - is an important but little know chapter in Africa's religious and artistic history.

Because there is so little on this topic I am quite pleased with the work. However, a hard back edition would be better, in my opinion, as well as a great use of color photos instead of B/W imagery. Also a few articles dealing in greater depth with the artistic nuances and historical details would be useful. There is a lot of explanation of the various sites but the work needs something more to pull it more effectively together - in my opinion. Still a very good and useable work.

Father Joseph Lea

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

A Treat to Read

By George Ferris

A Story in Stones was a treat for me to read, having lived in the midst of some of the sites and visiting many others by horse in the 60's while in the Peace Corps. The book is well written, engaging and thorough. J.J. Hespeler-Boulton has the rare combination of being a good writer and historian along with a lot of experience in Portuguese stone masonry. He included considerable history to put everything in perspective. Highly recommended.

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