



Asmara: Africa's Jewel of Modernity

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The Northeastern African nation of Eritrea spent much of the early 20th century as a colony of Italy, and more recently shook off another invader, Ethiopia. Its capital city, which dates back more than 700 years, exploded into life and growth with the arrival of Italian colonists in the 1930s, and then stagnated under Ethiopian rule. The surprising result is a living museum of Italian "Nuova Architettura," where decorative smokestacks tower over street markets and portholes look out onto bicycle traffic. Futuristic, monumentalist, rationalist and cubist work is not just preserved, but dominant on the skyline.

In this new reformatted edition of *Asmara*, photographer Stefan Boness frames private, public and industrial buildings to incorporate their sometimes jarring contemporary African surroundings. He succeeds in conveying the unique atmosphere of a city where architectural time has, in some pockets, stood still. An essay on the city complements extensive illustrations.

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