**Asmara – Africa’s Modernist City**

Turning a historical page

A charming quiet city comes of age

Asmara is listed as a World Heritage

Come, visit, and discover a cultural stage.

Asmara outlived extended unjust subjugation

Colonisation, federation, annexation, occupation

Balancing integrity with measured integration

Valiant and dignified, without hesitation.

Arba’te’s women seeking friendship and peace

Met four feuding Chiefs each with her piece

Cemented ties with her eloquent pleas

Asmara, named to honour Arba’te women’s potency.

Cutting edge design in futuristic architecture

Experimental and pioneering infrastructure

Built to suit Italian love for life, style and nurture

Alas, the Campo Cintato is their exclusive enclosure.

Ambitious colonial utopia was shortly crushed

Asmara emerged tall, free, not embittered

From long years of hurt unbridled

To own, live in, and to restore the fractured.

Asmara evolves to embrace her iconic facade

To merge and to manage the human complexity inside

To include, not exclude or leave anyone aside

Nor to forget memories when elders were dehumanised.

World Heritage inscription is not in tribute, nor to venerate

It is for Asmara to lead, educate and celebrate

A positive message that heritage can regenerate

And be the bridge joining local and global in aggregate.

Asmara, the African city of culture and stature

Clean, artistic, pretty as a picture

Leaving bygones to stand in upright posture

A milestone reached; now on the next phase to a bright future.

Seble Ephrem