

In Memory of Dr. Paulos Daffa

By Ethiopian community and friends in Muenster, Germany

May 31, 2007



Dr. Paulos Daffa passed away on Friday, May 11, 2007 at the University Clinic in Muenster. His funeral service was held on May 18, 2007 in Muenster.

Paulos Daffa was born on August 19, 1946 in Aira, Wallaga, Ethiopia as second son of Rev. Daffa Djammo and Woizero Kanntu Karorssa. He attended elementary school at the German Mission School in Aira and junior secondary school at the Entoto Swedish Mission School in Addis Ababa. Later he attended General Wingate Secondary School in Addis Ababa. He was an outstanding student, a fine athletic person and a development activist already during his teenage years. He received several awards in athletics including first prizes in 800 and 1500 m race from the hands of the late Emperor Haile Selassie.

As a teenage student he initiated development projects in his home town, Aira. He organized the people in the neighborhood in mass association, known as “Wayessa”. Through Wayessa, he mobilized the people of the locality for the construction of wooden bridges, water wells, and shelters for the homeless, cooperative civic action to improve agriculture and animal husbandry.

The local official became furious about the Wayessa movement because he felt that his authority was being undermined. He intimidated the people and threatened to stop the activities. Paulos Daffa marched at the head of tens of peasants to the residence of the local official and challenged him with his programs. The official was overwhelmed by the dedication of the teenage boy to his cause and ability to mobilize such a huge number of people. He dropped his threat and instructed his subordinates to cooperate with the young boy.

In 1966, Paulos Daffa left Ethiopia to pursue university studies in Germany. He received his first degree in tropical agriculture from the University of Kassel in 1972. He continued his post graduate studies in Geography at the Westfaeliche Wilhelms University in Muenster and obtained his PhD in agricultural geography in 1979. In 1980, he started to work as a lecturer in development studies at the Institute of Political Science in the same university.

Paulos Daffa has been a member of staff at the University of Muenster and Osnabruck for 14 years, working in several projects on development policies and development theory with particular reference to Africa. More recently, he was committed to research on transnational migrants in Muenster.

Among his scientific works are: *Historische und sozio-oekonomische Hintergruende aktueller Regionalisierungsbestrebung am Horn von Afrika – Das Beispiel Aethiopien* (1997);

Entwicklungshilfe – wohin? Programmentwicklung der deutschen Entwicklungshilfe (1995);
 Muss das reiche Afrika hungern? Ursachen und Hintergründe der jüngsten
 Hungerkatastrophen in Afrika (1986); Oromo. Beiträge zur politischen Geschichte
 Äthiopiens (1984); Dritte Welt im Abseits? Konfliktfelder in den Beziehungen zwischen
 Industrie- und Entwicklungsländern (1983); Stichworte zum Nord-Süd-Konflikt (1982);
 Agrarwirtschaft in der Region West-Wollega (1980), etc.

Paulos Daffa has been a founding member of several associations in Muenster, been dedicated to the cause of the economic and political development of developing countries. He remained loyal to the spirit of Wayessa throughout his academic life, fighting for what he firmly believed is right for Ethiopians and other peoples. As a teacher and as a private person he worked tirelessly with individuals and groups on the issue of development, liberty and peace. His deep knowledge in agricultural science, humanity and political science is a huge source for African educators and scientists.

Paulos Daffa met Sabine Klocke during his studies period in Munster in 1975; they got married in 1987. The death of Paulos Daffa was a great shock for his wife. We wish her the strength to endure the great loss of her beloved husband. We hope she will try to make the published and unpublished works of Paulos Daffa more accessible to a greater audience.

Paulos Daffa was a great thinker and a dear friend. He strongly believed in communication and cooperation among peoples. His lifetime commitment to justice, equality, liberty, courage and patriotism are exemplary to us. He contributed a lot to make life for immigrants bearable and integration possible through his relentless research on migration in general and immigrants in Muenster in particular. His valuable recommendation and information to the administration and the people had its share in making our city one of the best places to live in.

In the 1980s, at a large seminar on Africa the speaker held on to the view that the West were responsible for the underdevelopment of Africa and they must work for its development. Paulos Daffa, from the floor challenged the people in the podium that the Africans themselves must tackle their problems. The podium and the floor changed places in roles. The chair asked the floor as how can the Africans find the necessary means to tackle their problems? Paulos responded, “They must find the answers themselves how to solve their problems”.

Dr Paulos Daffa organized Ethiopian cultural and social holidays such as Ethiopian New Year and Christmas annually. He brought together all Ethiopians and gave them the possibilities to enjoy an Ethiopian community in deep central Europe. We enjoyed the rich wealth of our languages, cultures, folklores and dances during the several annual events. He prepared an Oromo language manual for those of us who are not yet familiarized with the language.

Dr. Paulos Daffa is survived by his wife, Dr. Sabine Klocke-Daffa, his mother, Woizero Kannatu Karorsa, his sisters and brothers, Samuel, Girma, Hanna, Abby, Daniel, Tsion, Deribe and many nephews and nieces as well as many of his friends. May God give the family strength and courage to endure this great loss.

Ethiopian Community and friends in Muenster, Germany