

Baalu Girma

34th Commemoration

*I do not contemplate life – other than being alive.
The purpose of life is to live
This cherished life, nothing but a tiny fragment
Like Abraham with no sanctuary I consider my own
Like Moses with no clue of my final resting place
I exist so I can write, eternally optimistic about life
Seeing the future and deliberating the past, not about me but my writings
Even writing a novel, I seldom plan. Isn't fiction a reflection of our very existence?
I just keep on writing, simply because I feel it coming.
Baalu Girma – Derasiw (The Author)
(As translated by Mesfin Felleke Yirgu)*

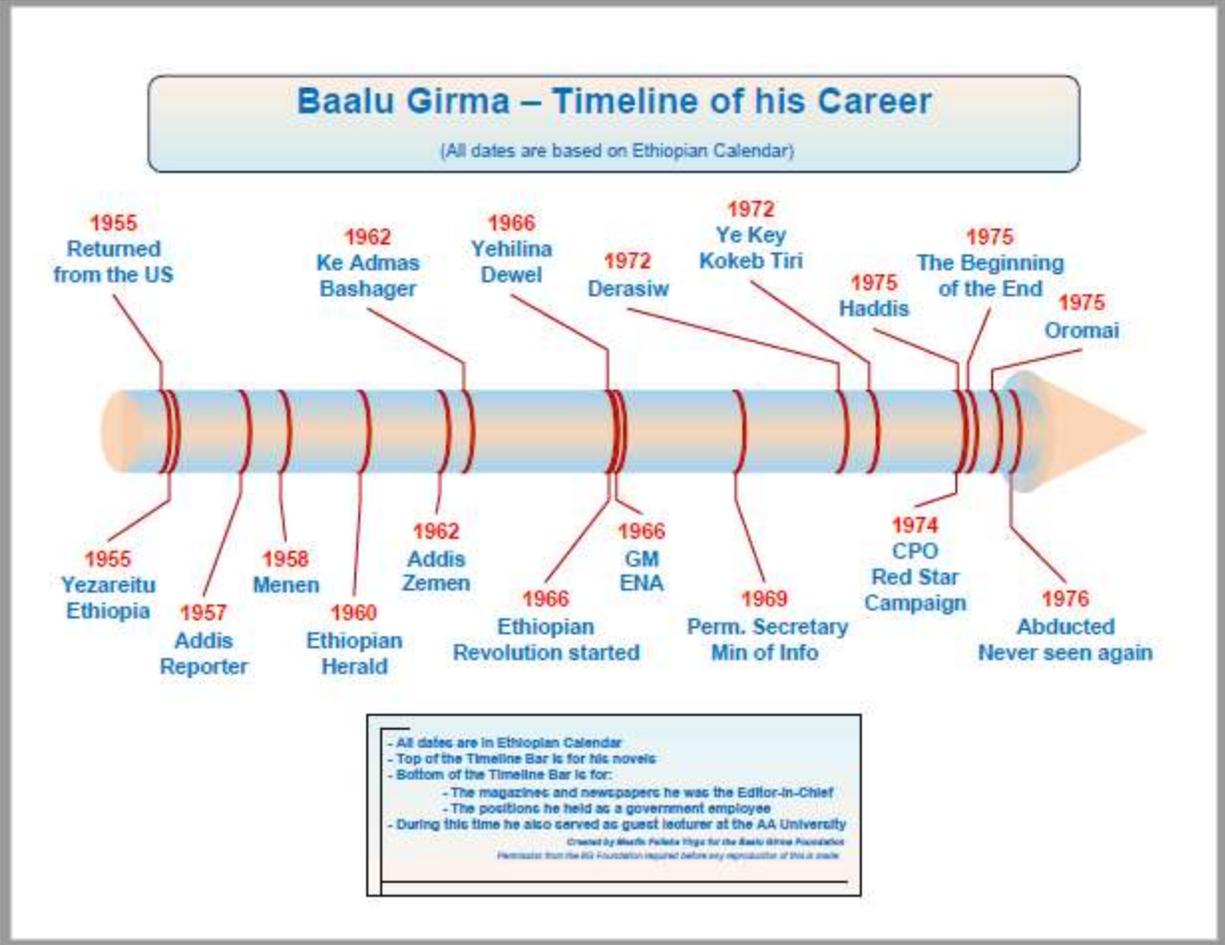
On Thursday, February 14, 1984 (GC), Ethiopia lost one of its most acclaimed journalists and influential novelists. Baalu Girma left his home around 5:30 p.m. that evening - not knowing that it was to be the last time he would ever see his family. A devoted father, loved for his kindness and gentle demeanor, and widely respected for his professional work, his vanishing from the scene has left a big void in the hearts of many.



Baalu's disappearance came seven months after his last novel, *Oromay (The End)*, was abruptly removed from bookstores and banned from the market. Shortly thereafter, Baalu was dismissed from his permanent secretary position at the Ministry of Information and was accused of jeopardizing the revolution.

To this day there is no other Ethiopian writer that has touched the soul of so many people across generations, ethnic lines or religious affiliations as Baalu Girma did with his six books, one short story and a host of editorials while he was managing some of Ethiopia's famous newspapers and magazines. As the country is undergoing yet another upheaval in its unending search for an equitable form of government, one cannot help but wonder the novels Baalu would have written to depict the realities, the heartaches and desires of the people.

During these past three plus decades a lot has been said and written about Baalu, his life and his many works as a writer. In view of that, on this 34th year commemoration of his disappearance, we at the Baalu Girma Foundation (baalugirmafoundation.org) would like to celebrate his short but eventful life by presenting to you the following chart that depicts his work.



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