



The Golden Gospel contains several documents related to the history of Däbrä Sahel in which historical figures are mentioned. There are three notes in Ge'ez (translated by Ewa Balicka-Witakowska) **Ge'ez 1**, **Ge'ez 2**, **Ge'ez 3** and one in **Arabic** (translated by J. Retsö), all added on the folios left empty, at the beginning, in the middle and at the end of the manuscript. In the book also a **letter** was kept on a piece of paper written in Amharic by the emperor Haile Sellasé to the Agwaza community (translated by E. Fritsch).

Ge'ez document nr 1 notes that the book was executed in 1440 during the reign of King Yeshak and lists the land donation given by him to Däbrä Sahel. It also mentions the contemporary head of the Coptic Church, *abunä* Gabriel, and the Ethiopian metropolitan Bärtäломéwos who is connected to Däbrä Sahel by the local oral tradition. Ge'ez document nr 2 tells about the commemoration of the Coptic Metropolitan Gabriel and King Yeshaq. Ge'ez document nr 3 was added during the time of king Zär'a Ya'eqob and confirms his land donation on behalf of a certain Zéna Gabre'él, a high ranking ecclesiastic from Däbrä Sahel. The document in Arabic repeats more or less exactly what is noted in the Ge'ez document nr.1.

It was suggested that the documents written in a Gospel Book, in **Coptic and Arabic**, microfilmed by St. John Library at Collegeville, Minnesota (Ms EMMML 6907), should be connected with Bärtäломéwos. Although the relation is not obvious and the problem needs further investigation, for the time being the documents with translations (by U. Zanetti) are also enclosed. Moreover, Bärtäломéwos is mentioned in a note in the Ms Borgianus 26 dated to 1409, in a tri-lingual document (Coptic-Ge'ez-Arabic) added to a Gospel book kept in the church of Mäadhané Aläm in Lalibäla and in a note in the Gospel Book from Kebran Gabriel (Kebran 1).

For the reader not familiar with the history of Ethiopia and Ethiopian Church a short explanation concerning the persons mentioned in the documents are given in the file entitled **Who is who.**

See also

S. Grebaut & E. Tisserant, *Codices aethiopici Vaticani et Borgiani*, Città del Vaticano 1935, p. 843.

E. Hammerschmidt, *Äthiopische Handschriften vom Tanasee I*, Wiesbaden 1973, p. 87-88.
A. A. Monti della Corte, *Lalibala. Le chiese ipogee e monolitiche e gli altri monumenti medievali del Lasta* (Rome, 1940), pl. XXXV, p. 136, 138-139.
M. Schneider, « Deux actes de donation en arabe », *Annales d'Ethiopie* 8 (1970), 79-88, part. 82-83.