Ethno mammalogical folks of the endemic *Theropithecus gelada*: A religious links in afro alpine ecosystem of Abune Yosef Monastery, Northern Ethiopia

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**Short Communication**

Abune Yosef monastery is situated 500 km away from the capital city Addis Abeba in Northern Ethiopia. The site is best represented by Afro Alpine ecosystem with diverse floristic and faunistic community. Local peasants of Lalibela settling adjacent to the monastery have a long term interaction with wildlife starting 14th century. In the locality there was an intensive human primate conflict lasting long. The problem animal was *Theropithecus gelada* one of the big five endemic mammals of Ethiopia. As to the clergies of the monastery *Theropithecus gelada* was too problematic in crop riding within large scale farms of the local peasants. Subsequently, the farmers were misperceiving and persecuting *Theropithecus gelada* in reverse to the crop losses caused. Once up on a time the then spiritual father who have remarkable community acceptance called Abune Yosef find a child crying around farmlands adjacent to the Afro Alpine Ecosystem of their monastic yards. Paternally, he asked him why he is crying and responded because of his mother’s death and not attending the funeral to shield the farm against crop ride of Gelada. He let him go the funeral and gives his word to look after the animals by his spiritual influence. According to the local monastic clergies, Abune Yosef had a meeting with all *Theropithecus gelada* and positively influenced to attend a wider meeting which was arranged to introduce cooperative living. Following the conformity of *Theropithecus gelada* Abune Yosef organized a connected community (*Theropithecus gelada* - peasant) meeting to deal with the complaint of both parties. According to folk’s of the clergies, the platform of the meeting was held with local community being in one side and *Theropithecus gelada* on the other side headed by his holiness Abune Yosef. The point of concern was how we can live mutually one another. At the end of the discussion Abune Yosef convinced the peasants to harvest the first phase of thier product and not to collect the remaining crops. This is in consideration of supplying feed to the wild animals. Afterward, the command was incorporated in the religious book of the life of Abune Yosef in the late 14th century. Currently keeping his spiritual words of conservation importance is considered as a means of finding heavenly life after death by Ethiopian Orthodox followers of the locality. Generally, the conservation status of *Theropithecus gelada* was sustained in the light of religious values of Ethiopian orthodox Tewahedo church prior to 14th century until the contemporary generation. Thus, further ethno mammlogical folk studies should be conducted to make use of religious values in support of wildlife conservation outside the monastic yards in Ethiopia.