

MANRESA HOUSE

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2 February 1998

Dear Barbara,

Big news, indeed, and what a most pleasant surprise! Welcome to Ranchi, where I am now residing for the last two years. It will now be easy to meet. ~~As~~ for your project, you can start by looking up the Encyclopædia Mundarica, if you can find one, at the word HO where you will find 4 to 5 pages about the tribe. I have ~~as~~ several research papers about them: one by Fr. Mathew, titled Socio-Cultural and Religious Movements among the Ho tribals; another by Kumar Suresh Singh on Script Reform and Development - a Study of Two Movements among the Hos; another by Fr. Mathew again, Outline History of Tribal Movements in Chotanagpur; then, Rites of Passage; also, Ancestor Veneration among Mundas, Hos, Santals and Oraons.

These will be at your disposal, and they may hopefully save you a lot of research. Of course, you will have to meet Fr. Mathew Areeparampil in Lupungutu, 3 miles from Chaibasa, who is the director of the Tribal Research & Training Centre. Fr. Deeney is now working among the villages and you will have ~~to~~ go out of your way to meet him. He is a charming man. For your information, the Daughters of St. Anne have a high-school in Chaibasa, where you could find shelter when you stay there.

The student of JNU of Delhi, Miss Rittambara, stayed in Chaibasa, I was told, and returned to Delhi without meeting me. I haven't her address.

About your project, The Relation between Religion and Politics you mean their tribal religion, because Christianity has still little hold on the Hos, and as far as I know, their politics have been, at least in the past, a continual fight for independence, hence they were called the Larika Kols (the fighting Kols) by the British. As for the Messianic Movements, you will find them explained in Fr. Mathew's paper mentioned above. I don't understand what you mean by the Process of formation of an inter-tribal identity, unless you mean the very close similarity of Ho language with Mundari, and perhaps their religion, of which I know nothing.

And now I am waiting to receive you in Manresa House and serve you a cup of coffee with our cow's milk!

In spite of being so busy with your studies, you found time to fall in love with an Italian! During holidays, I imagine. Congratulations! No danger, now, of falling in love with a Ho!

And a very happy New Year!

With love,

Peter

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