

# COMMUNICATIONES

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## FATHER FRANCISCO DE MENEZES THE FIRST ASIAN REDEMPTORIST, 1830-1863

### SUMMARIUM

Semel iterumque ultimis annis petitiones notitiarum ac documentorum patrem Franciscum de Menezes (1806-1863) respicientium directae fuerunt ad archivum generale Congregationis SS.mi Redemptoris, cuius sodalis fuit ann. 1830-1863. Ideoque rem non inutilem ducimus praesentare studiosis conspectum, ordine chronologico digestum, omnium notitiarum quas circa p. de Menezes ex dicto archivo haurire potuimus, addentes transcriptionem quorundam maioris momenti documentorum.

Animadvertimus his notitiis primam tantum partem vitae religiosae et sacerdotalis p. de Menezes illustrari, scil. ann. 1829-1843, et quidem lacunose. Ad vitam et actuositatem eius per ultimos viginti annos in India et in Ceylon cognoscendas, archivum S. Congregationis pro Evangelizatione Populorum (De Propaganda Fide) et archiva complurium dioecesium in India et in Ceylon consulenda sunt.

About seventy-five years before the Redemptorists began their apostolate as a religious community in Asia — 1906, founded by the Fathers of the Irish Province in the Philippines<sup>1</sup> — an Indian youth, Francisco de Menezes, had joined the Congregation in Portugal. From 1830 to 1843 he worked in several countries in Europe. Then he went back to Asia and spent the last twenty years of his life in various apostolic works in India and Ceylon.

Although thousands of miles away from his confrères and hardly ever in communication with them, he always remained convinced that he was a member of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, and repeatedly declared himself to be such. However, he was for many years considered to have abandoned the Congregation, because contact between Menezes and the Fathers in Europe had been completely broken off in the autumn of 1848. It was only in June 1869 that the Superior Gen-

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<sup>1</sup> In January 1939 the Irish Redemptorists founded a monastery in Kandy, Ceylon, and a few months later also began their work in India, settling permanently in Bangalore the following year.

eral had news of his death, which had occurred six years earlier in 1863.

For several years we have been collecting, occasionally, data and notices regarding Menezes from the documents kept in the General Archives of the Redemptorists in Rome<sup>2</sup>. Several scholars have recently shown some interest in Menezes, and since very little has hitherto been published about him<sup>3</sup>, we think it may be useful to pass on in this article what we have found so far, plus the text of a few significant documents. Although this information covers only the first, and less interesting, period of his religious and priestly life, viz. the years 1829-1843, it may be of some help for further study.

About Menezes' activity in India and Ceylon, 1843-1863, we know hardly anything as yet<sup>4</sup>. For this period thorough research will have to be done in the Archives of the Sacred Congregation for the Evangelization of Nations or 'de Propaganda Fide'<sup>5</sup> and in various diocesan archives in India and Ceylon. The presentation of the following notes may encourage this research. Menezes' personality and apostolic activity are certainly worth the trouble of such a study.

Francisco Luis Rosario de Menezes, son of José Antonio and Francisca Josefa Maria Coutinho, was born in Aldea de São Mathias das ilhas de Goa<sup>6</sup> on March 6th, 1806<sup>7</sup>. He spent his childhood and youth in Goa, where he entered the seminary and received the tonsure and the first two minor orders. Then he changed his mind because he wanted to pursue a military career. He left the seminary and towards the end of 1828 he went to Lisbon with an older brother, leaving behind his widowed mother<sup>8</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> Archivum generale CSSR; quoted hereafter: AG. Several documents regarding Menezes have been put together under Nr. XXIII W 1-10 (*olim* under Nr. V 8-11).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. HENZE in *Analecta CSSR* 9 (1930) 168 and 15 (1936) 79-80; A. SAMPERS in *Spic. hist.* 4 (1956) 47, n. 16.

<sup>4</sup> However, his name is mentioned in some publications about the mission in India; f.i. in J. GENSE, *The Church at the Gateway of India, 1720-1960*, Bombay 1960.

<sup>5</sup> In the Secret Vatican Archives, Arch. della Nunziatura di Lisbona, div. II, pos. XLI, sez. 6: *Carteggio di documenti relativi alla Congreg. del SS.mo Redentore o Padri Redentoristi o Liguorini*, only one document with information about Menezes was found; quoted below in note 19.

<sup>6</sup> Full name, name of parents and birth-place only in Menezes' last will; AG XXIII W 9. In his *Fides Ordinum* for major orders (see note 19) the name is given as «de Menezes e Noronha»; in *Annales Provinciae Hispanicae CSSR* I (1863-1886), Madrid 1925, 13 as «Rodriguez de Menezes», for which no documentary evidence could be found.

<sup>7</sup> Date of birth only in Menezes' biographical sketch, written in July 1867 by Fr. José d'Oliveira Valle, who was his steady companion during the first six years of his life in the monastery (1830-1836); AG XXIII W 1. This document is quoted hereafter: BSM.

<sup>8</sup> So far, the only known source for Menezes' youth is the biographical sketch written by Fr. Valle.

In the spring of 1829 Menezes happened to enter the Church of St. John Nepomucene, run by the Austrian Redemptorists who, in 1826, had come to Lisbon to take care of the local German-speaking Catholics<sup>9</sup>. He came in contact with Fr. Johann Bapt. Pilat<sup>10</sup>, and not long after this he made a retreat under his direction. Both came to the conclusion that Menezes had a real vocation to the priesthood. Therefore, he gave up his former plan to enter the army and soon afterwards joined the Redemptorists.

On August 1st, 1829, Menezes received the habit of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer and became the first Redemptorist novice to be admitted in Portugal<sup>11</sup>. On March 18th, 1830, a few months before he finished his year of probation, another novice was accepted, José d'Oliveira Valle<sup>12</sup>. The novicemaster was Fr. Pilat until July 5th, when superiors were changed and Fr. Franz Weidlich<sup>13</sup>, the former superior of the community, took his place<sup>14</sup>. On August 1st, 1830, Menezes was professed and so became a full member of the Congregation<sup>15</sup>.

After his profession he was appointed socius to the novicemaster and meanwhile continued his theological studies under the direction of Fr. Pilat<sup>16</sup>. « Endowed with an excellent intelligence and a good memory, he made great progress in a short space of time »<sup>17</sup>. So, he was ordained subdeacon, deacon and priest by the Nuncio in Lisbon, Archbishop Alessandro Giustiniani<sup>18</sup>. The ceremonies took place respectively on April 10th, May 1st and May 8th, 1831, in

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<sup>9</sup> About the foundation of the Redemptorists in Lisbon and their work in Portugal, 1826-1833, there is a detailed and accurate eye-witness account, written by Fr. Valle in May-June 1867. Original in AG XXIII V 5; edited by A. Sampers in *Spic. hist.* 13 (1965) 249-289.

<sup>10</sup> Biographical note on Fr. Pilat (1799-1878; professed 1823) in *Spic. hist.* 4 (1956) 283, n. 5.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. *Spic. hist.* 13 (1965) 278, n. 99; BSM, p. 2. R. TELLERIA, S. Alfonso M. de Li-gorio II, Madrid 1951, 866 seems to be of the opinion that Menezes entered the novitiate after ordination.

<sup>12</sup> *Spic. hist.* 13 (1965) 279, n. 100.

<sup>13</sup> Biographical note on Fr. Weidlich (1796-1848; professed 1822) in *Spic. hist.* 4 (1956) 56, n. 36.

<sup>14</sup> *Spic. hist.* 13 (1965) 278, n. 99; 280, n. 106.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.* 280, n. 105; BSM, p. 2-3.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> BSM, p. 3.

<sup>18</sup> Biographical note on Mgr. (later Cardinal) Giustiniani (1778-1843; Nuncio 1827-1832, and Pro-Nuncio 1832-1833 in Portugal) in *Spic. hist.* 13 (1965) 50, n. 9.

the chapel of the nunciature in the Rua de São Miguel<sup>19</sup>. On the feast of St. John Nepomucene, May 16 th, he celebrated his solemn first Mass. As a mark of honour, two friends of the monastery, the Marquis d'Abrantes and the court-physician Joachim da Luz, served him at the 'lavabo'<sup>20</sup>.

After his ordination, he worked assiduously as a preacher and confessor. His biographer, Fr. Valle, particularly praises his zeal during the cholera epidemic which broke out at the end of 1831. Together with the other members of the community, he was occupied day and night in looking after the sick and dying, and the people showed themselves most grateful for this self-sacrificing work. Fr. Valle also speaks highly of Menezes' religious life in the monastery, his modesty, his kindness and willingness to help his confrères, his exact observance of the Rule down to the minutest detail<sup>21</sup>.

On July 24th, 1833, the rebellion against King Miguel, fostered by his brother Dom Pedro, the Emperor of Brazil, broke out violently in Lisbon<sup>22</sup>. A week later, Fr. Menezes and four Portuguese student clerics left the monastery for good to take refuge in the palace of the Marchioness da Ribeira Grande near Belém<sup>23</sup>. They were offered, but refused to accept, a dispensation from their vows and the possibility of leaving the Congregation. They remained in hiding for ten days<sup>24</sup>. Then, on the evening of August 10th, Menezes and three students<sup>25</sup> made a brave escape under the eyes of the watching militia and boarded a Dutch galiot<sup>26</sup> which sailed the following day<sup>27</sup>.

After a none too pleasant voyage of 30 days, they finally disembarked on September 9th at Ostend in Belgium and arrived the

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<sup>19</sup> The dates are taken from the *Fides Ordinum*, kept in the Secret Vatican Archives; see above, note 5. The dates when Menezes received major orders were not known to his biographer Fr. Valle.

<sup>20</sup> *Spic. hist.* 13 (1965) 273, n. 81; BSM, p. 3.

<sup>21</sup> *Spic. hist.* 13 (1965) 270, n. 66; BSM, p. 3.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. P. SIEBERTZ, *Freimaurer im Kampf um die Macht*, Hamburg [1938], 374-375.

<sup>23</sup> *Spic. hist.* 13 (1965) 286, n. 126; 14 (1966) 419.

<sup>24</sup> The superior explicitly offered to dispense the vows of anyone who wanted to remain in Portugal, but all felt extremely humiliated by this proposal and refused (« tutti risposero di no e restarono estremamente mortificati da simile proposizione »). *Ibid.* 287, n. 128.

<sup>25</sup> Brother Francisco Esteves remained in Lisbon because of his bad health. He died there on December 11, 1834. *Ibid.* 280, n. 104.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.* 288, n. 132.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.* n. 133.

following day at the temporary Redemptorist residence in Rumillies near Tournai<sup>28</sup>. On November 10th this community was transferred to a house in Tournai itself, put at their disposal by the Baroness de Cazier<sup>29</sup>. The students, Azevedo, Silva and Valle, left for St-Trond on November 18th in order to continue their studies<sup>30</sup>. Menezes, however, remained provisionally in Tournai until August 18th, 1834, when he likewise went to St-Trond<sup>31</sup>. He arrived the following day<sup>32</sup> and stayed for one year.

During his two-year sojourn in Belgium, Menezes continued his theological studies and applied himself to the French language so that he was able to help his confrères in their apostolic work<sup>33</sup>. He adapted himself as well as he could to the strange country and people, but suffered constantly from the cold and wet northern climate, which was so completely different from the one he was used to. This affected his health and made it difficult for him to apply himself to serious work. Consequently the superiors agreed to send him to Italy<sup>34</sup>, where the Austrian Redemptorists had begun a foundation in Modena on March 2nd, 1835<sup>35</sup>.

Supplied with passports made out in Modena<sup>36</sup>, Father Menezes and his travelling-companion Brother Valle left St-Trond on August 18th, 1835<sup>37</sup>. On their way south they probably visited the

<sup>28</sup> *Spic. hist.* 14 (1966) 419-420; BSM, p. 4; *Chronica Provinciae [Belgicae] et Collegiorum* I 58. The chronicles of the Belgian Province are quoted hereafter: CPB.

<sup>29</sup> CPB I 58.

<sup>30</sup> CPB I 53 and 59.

<sup>31</sup> CPB I 90.

<sup>32</sup> CPB I 94.

<sup>33</sup> In the chronicles of the Belgian Province CSSR we did not find any details of Menezes' apostolic work in Belgium, 1833-1835.

<sup>34</sup> BSM, p. 45. In his letter from Vienna, dated November 16, 1835, to the Superior General, the Transalpine Redemptorist Vicar General Fr. Joseph Passerat, indicates clearly the reasons for Menezes' transfer from Belgium to Italy: impossibility of exercising the ministry, because of lack of sufficient knowledge of the language spoken in the country, and difficulty with the climate. « Quod autem e Belgio duos [sodales] miserim Mutinam, fuit, quod ibidem nullius auxilii esse possint cum nec gallice nec germanice valeant exercere ministerium, quae duae linguae valde difficiles ipsis sunt addiscendae, non vero italica, cum sint Lusitani; praeterea quod unus eorum nequeat sufferre frigus aeris belgici ». AG IX D (unter date).

<sup>35</sup> On the foundation in Modena, which was made only after many years of negotiations, see the excellent study of G. ORLANDI, *La Congregazione del SS. Redentore nel Ducato di Modena, 1835-1848*, in *Spic. hist.* 18 (1970) 382-394.

<sup>36</sup> On the passports, see the letters of Fr. Passerat, summer 1835 and February 27, 1836. AG IX E, p. 479 and 490 (copies).

<sup>37</sup> CPB I 130 and 141. In a short note on Menezes in *Spic. hist.* 14 (1966) 198 he is stated as « exul in Belgio atque in Hollandia ». But the first Redemptorist house

Redemptorist houses at Liège and Bischberg (Alsace) and certainly the monasteries in Fribourg and Innsbruck<sup>38</sup>. From there they continued over the Brenner Pass to Italy, arriving in Modena on the evening of September 20th<sup>39</sup>.

During the period October-December, Menezes preached several times to the Portuguese political refugees in Modena, who appreciated his assistance very much<sup>40</sup>. But even here he did not settle down properly, suffering again very badly from the cold, as the Modena winter was particularly hard that year, and also because he did not feel at home with the community<sup>41</sup>.

As early as the end of October, Menezes applied to his immediate superior, Fr. Franz Doll<sup>42</sup>, to obtain from the Superior General a transfer from Modena to a Redemptorist monastery further south, preferably in Sicily<sup>43</sup>. Fr. Giovanni Camillo Ripoli<sup>44</sup> readily granted this request but at first postponed the execution of the arrangement until the spring of 1836<sup>45</sup>. This delay depressed Menezes, and he himself wrote several letters to the Superior General in an attempt to speed up the transfer<sup>46</sup>.

At last he obtained permission and left Modena on February 9th, 1836<sup>47</sup>. He was provided with a handsome viaticum by Archduke

in the Netherlands (at Wittem, Limburg) was founded only in 1836, that is, after Menezes' departure for Italy.

<sup>38</sup> In the chronicles of these houses Menezes' visit is not mentioned. BSM, p. 5, gives a few details about his visit to Fribourg and records his passing in Innsbruck.

<sup>39</sup> *Registro cronologico per servire alla storia della casa di Finale di Modena* (1835-1866), p. 9-10. AG XXII R 10. Cf. AG XXII R 9b, p. 58.

<sup>40</sup> AG XXII R 9a, p. 3; AG XXII R 10, p. 10; BSM, p. 6.

<sup>41</sup> According to BSM, p. 5, Menezes suffered seriously in Modena, but not only from the rigorous climate: « Il Menezes s'avvili e veramente pativa assai nel suo fisico, non potendo quasi più digerire il cibo ch'egli ridusse per necessità ad una minestra ed un piatto di peperoni; inoltre si trovava in mezzo a Padri del tutto sconosciuti e di carattere poco simile al suo ».

<sup>42</sup> Biographical note on Fr. Doll (1795-1855; professed 1821) in *Spic. hist.* 2 (1954) 248, n. 49.

<sup>43</sup> Fr. Doll's unsigned petition but in his own handwriting in AG XXIII W 4.

<sup>44</sup> Biographical note on Fr. Ripoli (1780-1850; professed 1799, Superior General 1832-1849) in *Spic. hist.* 2 (1954), 269, n. 142.

<sup>45</sup> Ripoli to Passerat, January 12, 1836: « R. P. Menezes, cui ad ferendum frigus in Belgiis animus defecerat, cuique Mutinae commoranti idem nunc pariter deficit, petiit a me ut ipsum in aliquam ex nostris Siciliae domum accersam; quod ego compassionis motu lubenter ipsi concessi, sed non nisi circa vernum, ne frigore necaretur in via ». AG IX C 105.

<sup>46</sup> Menezes to Ripoli, December 15, 1835 and January 18, 1836; AG XXIII W 4. The first letter is printed at the end of this article, Doc. 1.

<sup>47</sup> AG XXII R 10, p. 10; BSM, p. 6.

Francesco IV<sup>48</sup>, and went first to Rome<sup>49</sup>. From there he continued on March 13th<sup>50</sup> to Nocera de' Pagani, the residence of the Superior General, where he arrived on March 16th<sup>51</sup>. In a letter of April 10th, the secretary of the Superior General, Fr. Johann Sabelli<sup>52</sup>, made a few remarks about Menezes to his former superior in Belgium, Fr. Friedrich von Held<sup>53</sup>. From this letter — in which Menezes inserted a paragraph himself — it becomes clear that the superiors in Pagani did not really know what to do with the newcomer<sup>54</sup>. The general attitude towards him seems to have been friendly, but he also met with considerable criticism of his character and somewhat peculiar way of life<sup>55</sup>.

Menezes spent most, if not all, of the next seven years, 1836-1842, as a member of the Redemptorist house in Frosinone in the southern part of the Papal States<sup>56</sup>. A letter to the Superior General dated May 18th, 1840, written by him as acting superior of the monastery gives the impression that he did not feel quite at ease<sup>57</sup>.

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<sup>48</sup> Doll to Ripoli, February 20, 1836: « Non posso [far] a meno in quest'occasione di farle parola della gran bontà e dei contrassegni di distinta amorevolezza che porta Sua Altezza verso di noi, e dei benefizi di cui ha ricolmato quel povero Indiano. Lo ha vestito tutto di pelle per l'inverno e ha dato del proprio un buon viatico di 50 scudi di Milano ». AG X D 9. Also Menezes himself mentions that the Archduke paid for his journey; see Doc. 2.

<sup>49</sup> In the chronicles of the Redemptorist house at S. Maria in Via Monterone, Rome, Menezes' visit is not mentioned.

<sup>50</sup> Procurator General Fr. Giuseppe Mautone to Ripoli, March 12, 1836: « Secondo i suoi ordini domani mattina parte da questa capitale il P. Menezes, indiano, per la via di Terracina per Napoli, ed indi si porterà costà per sentire la sua destinazione ». AG VIII B 17. This letter, carrying no postmark, was probably delivered personally by Menezes.

<sup>51</sup> For this date see note 98 at Doc. 2.

<sup>52</sup> Biographical note on Fr. Sabelli (1780-1863; professed 1803) in *Spic. hist.* 2 (1954) 297-300.

<sup>53</sup> Biographical note on Fr. von Held (1799-1881; professed 1821) in *Spic. hist.* 2 (1954) 252, n. 71.

<sup>54</sup> This letter is printed at the end of the article, Doc. 2.

<sup>55</sup> Sabelli to von Held, May 1, 1836: « Der Pater Menezes ist nun bey uns [in Ciorani], ohne auf Sciacca mehr zu denken. Er war mit dem Uiberzeugen hieher gekommen, dass wir hier relaxiert sind; sein Betragen scheint aber diese Meynung nicht zu missbilligen. Täglich will er ausreiten, raucht Taback, isst, was und wann es ihm beliebt, und ist in den Conversationen nicht der letzte. Sein Amt, das er bey dem Pater Rector Major versieht, ist das nämliche, das alle Indianer und Mohren bey den grossen Herren in Europa versehen, zu dem giebt er ihm zweimal des Tages Lektion im Französischen und erhält von ihm jene im Italienischen ». Archives of the Belgian Province CSSR, Brussels-Jette.

<sup>56</sup> BSM, p. 6.

<sup>57</sup> Menezes to Ripoli, May 18, 1840: « Se le dicerie del P. [Francesco] Citarella ed assai più qualche molestia da parte del P. Rettore [Sebastiano Perciballi] contro

It confirms somewhat the opinion of the Vicar General of the Transalpine Redemptorists, Fr. Joseph Passerat<sup>58</sup>: Menezes will not be content anywhere<sup>59</sup>. Unfortunately, there is no other evidence to show how he got along with the superiors of the house and his confrères, but in the canonical visitation of 1838, held by the Consultor General Fr. Vincenzo Fusco<sup>60</sup>, his needs were attentively considered and provided for with much charity<sup>61</sup>.

During 1838 the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith repeatedly urged the Superior General to reinforce the Catholic mission in Philippopol (Filippopoli; Plovdiv) in Bulgaria. As Fr. Passerat, on account of lack of personnel, was unable to send missionaries from Austria, Cardinal Franson asked Fr. Ripoli to send one from Italy<sup>62</sup>. From a document of 1843 it appears that Fr. Ripoli presented the Propaganda with Fr. Menezes as a man fit for this work<sup>63</sup>. But in all probability he objected to this mission; was it only because of the climate? This much is certain — Menezes did not go to the Osmanli Empire.

The turning-point in Menezes' apostolic life came in 1843, after he had spent nearly eight not overly-satisfying years in Italy. In January of that year he went to Rome<sup>64</sup> and got in touch — on whose initiative we do not know — with Propaganda. Consequently, the Cardinal Prefect proposed sending him as a missionary to the Vicariate Apostolic of Bombay, and communication thereof was made to the Procurator General of the Redemptorists, Fr.

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di me, povero forastiero, non mi facessero temere grandi dispiaceri [...], avrei fatto conoscere al detto fratello ». AG XXIII W 5.

<sup>58</sup> Biographical note on Fr. Passerat (1772-1858; professed 1796, Vicar General of the Transalpine Redemptorists 1820-1848) in *Spic. hist.* 2 (1954) 265, n. 125.

<sup>59</sup> Passerat to Ripoli, November 16, 1838: « Duo individua in domo Finale de gentia, nempe Patres Portugienses [i.e. Lusitani], P. Valle et P. Azevedo, inconstantes nempe sunt, non vere contenti et proprio sensui nimis inhaerentes. [...] Non possum quin R. mam Paternitatem Vestram rogem, ipsos admonendi ut maneant et ne sequantur exemplum P. Menezes, qui, ut mihi praesumere licet, nullibi contentus erit ». AG IX D (under date).

<sup>60</sup> Biographical note on Fr. Fusco (1785-1842; professed 1805, Consultor General 1832-1842) in *Spic. hist.* 2 (1954) 250, n. 60.

<sup>61</sup> An extract from the report on this canonical visitation is given at the end of the article, Doc. 3.

<sup>62</sup> Several documents about the Redemptorist mission in Bulgaria, 1835-1840; in AG XLI B 2. See also the correspondance Ripoli-Passerat; AG IX C-D.

<sup>63</sup> See below, Doc. 4.

<sup>64</sup> Sabelli to Passerat, March 20, 1843: « Er [i.e. Menezes] war seit dem Jänner immer in Rom ». AG XII B 7.



Giuseppe Mautone<sup>65</sup>, on March 10th, 1843<sup>66</sup>. The superiors of the Congregation readily agreed and Menezes received his definitive appointment within a few days<sup>67</sup>.

On April 4th he left Rome for Bombay. From a letter of Fr. Sabelli (in which this date is given), it appears that Menezes intended to establish a Redemptorist foundation in India<sup>68</sup>. But he did not succeed in this<sup>69</sup> as no other confrères accompanied or followed him to Asia<sup>70</sup>. Before leaving Italy, he wrote from Civitavecchia to the Superior General<sup>71</sup>. Another letter, from Suez, dated April 21st, to Fr. Ripoli has been preserved<sup>72</sup>. Herein he again states his « sincerissimo e filiale affetto e gratitudine », and says that in a day or two he will board an English steamer to reach his destination.

After having worked for some time in the Vicariate Apostolic of Bombay, Menezes went on to Ceylon. From there he wrote a letter dated January 20th, 1847, to the Superior General<sup>73</sup> complaining that none of his previous letters had been answered<sup>74</sup>. Menezes' sincere attachment to the Congregation is clear from this letter. In

<sup>65</sup> Biographical note on Fr. Mautone (1765-1845; professed 1786, Procurator General 1827-1845) in *Spic. hist.* 2 (1954) 260, n. 106.

<sup>66</sup> The letter of the secretary of Propaganda, Mgr. Giovanni Brunelli, to Fr. Mautone is edited below, Doc. 4.

<sup>67</sup> On March 20 Fr. Sabelli informed Fr. Passerat that the appointment had been made: « Der Pater Menezes ist vom Kardinal Fransoni als Missionär der Propaganda nach der Stadt Bombay in Ost-Indien bestimmt worden, und wird mit Einwilligung des P. Rector Major nach Ostern dahin absegeln ». AG XII B 7.

<sup>68</sup> Sabelli to von Held, April 6, 1843: « Nun ist endlich am 4. dieses der Pater Menezes von Rom nach der Stadt Bombay in Ost-Indien, in Eigenschaft eines apostolischen Missionärs, absegelt, nachdem er dazu alle Fakultäten von dem Papsten erhalten hatte. Vermuthlich wird er dort eine Fundation machen, denn er hatte es immer im Sinne gehabt ». Archives of the Belgian Province CSSR, Brussels-Jette. — See also Doc. 6.

<sup>69</sup> As already mentioned in note 1, the first Redemptorist community in India was founded in 1940 in Bangalore.

<sup>70</sup> Probably misled by Sabelli's statement that Menezes wanted to establish a community in Bombay, von Held asked his correspondent about other confrères accompanying the missionary. Sabelli replied that there was no question whatsoever of Italian Redemptorists going to India. Von Held's letter to Sabelli, dated April 22, cannot be traced; Sabelli's answer of May 18 is in the Archives of the Belgian Province CSSR, Brussels-Jette.

<sup>71</sup> We cannot find this letter. It is mentioned, however, in Menezes' next letter of April 21.

<sup>72</sup> In AG XXIII W 6.

<sup>73</sup> This letter is printed below, Doc. 5.

<sup>74</sup> No letters of Menezes, between those of April 21, 1843, and January 20, 1847, are in AG. The last one, carrying no postmark, was taken along by Mgr. Orazio Bettacchini, Coadjutor of the Vicar Apostolic of Ceylon, Mgr. Gaetano Antonio.

this connexion it is noteworthy that all his information about the Church in Ceylon is of specific interest to his confrères. He limits himself, evidently on purpose, to what can be called Redemptorist information. He is pleased to notice that the missionaries sent out by Propaganda followed the moral system of St. Alphonsus, which was also well received by the people. Again, he preached missions — at that time considered the specific work of the Congregation — in seventeen churches.

The secretary of the Superior General, Fr. Sabelli, noted down on the letter that it was answered on April 15th, but unfortunately no copy of the reply can be traced in our general archives. In a postscript to a letter of April 20th, written to Fr. von Held, Fr. Sabelli mentions briefly Menezes' work in Ceylon and gives his actual abode, in case Fr. von Held wanted to renew contact with his one-time subject<sup>75</sup>. There is no evidence that the Belgian Provincial wrote to the far-away missionary, and it seems rather unlikely that he did. In his answer to Fr. Sabelli, dated June 9th, Fr. von Held does not refer to the news regarding Menezes<sup>76</sup>.

In the first half of 1848, Menezes returned to Europe. The precise reason for this journey is unknown, but there were probably some urgent arrangements to be made by Propaganda concerning the mission in India. On this occasion, Menezes also visited the ailing Superior General of the Redemptorists in Pagani. After finishing his business in Rome, he went to Lisbon, at the beginning of August, where he wrote a long and very affectionate letter to Fr. Ripoli on September 12th. This letter is the only contemporary document known so far about his visit to Europe in 1848<sup>77</sup>.

As in his previous letters, he expresses his invariable attachment to the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, of which he is convinced he is a member, although living so far from his confrères. Well knowing that the acceptance of dignities was strictly forbidden to the members of the Congregation, he apologises for the fact that Pius IX had appointed him Papal Chamberlain and had conferred upon him the degree of « Doctor utriusque juris ». Menezes seems

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<sup>75</sup> Sabelli to von Held, April 20, 1847: « P. S. Der Pater Menezes befindet sich in der Stadt Galle, auf der Insel Ceylon. Dort hat er in 17 Kirchen Mission gehalten, viele Menschen bekehrt. Er bleibt bis August dort, wann Sie ihm etwa schreiben wollen ». Archives of the Belgian Province CSSR, Brussels-Jette.

<sup>76</sup> Fr. von Held's letter is in AG XII. C 114.

<sup>77</sup> Extracts from this letter are printed at the end of the article, Doc. 6.

to have been given these honorary titles to enhance his prestige in view of his future work as rector of the seminary in Bombay<sup>78</sup>.

Although he had asked Fr. Ripoli to console him as frequently as possible with his paternal letters, no answer was sent. Fr. Sabelli laconically noted at the top of Menezes' letter that no answer had been given, because of his departure for Bombay<sup>79</sup>. And so, for more than twenty years, all contact between the Redemptorists in Europe and their confrère in India regrettably remained broken off, until — six years after Menezes' death in 1863 — his last letter reached the Superior General in June 1869<sup>80</sup>.

In spite of this complete lack of communication over so many years, Menezes' attachment to the Congregation, surprisingly, never changed. Probably with a presentiment that his end was drawing near, he made his will on February 17th, 1863, in which — explicitly stating himself to be a professed member of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, founded by St. Alphonsus Maria de Liguori — he made this Congregation his heir general<sup>81</sup>. On July 2nd of the same year, he wrote a letter to the Superior General, to be delivered only after his death, together with his will<sup>82</sup>.

In this touching document Menezes mentions the principal data of his life as a Redemptorist and stresses the fact that both in 1843 and 1848 the superiors had given him permission to accept the nomination by Propaganda for India. In 1848 the Superior General had put him at ease about being a full member of the Congregation, though not leading a community life under a Redemptorist superior, and had assured him that he always would be considered as a professed member of the Institute, just like all those who were living in community. He had lived all those years under this conviction and had made his will according to the « Rules of our Congregation, approved by Pope Benedict XIV, and the Constitutions drawn up in the Chapter General of 1764, presided over by St. Alphonsus ».

On July 28th, 1863, Menezes handed over his will to the proper authorities and on that same day he died in Bombay at five

<sup>78</sup> See below, Doc. 7.

<sup>79</sup> « Non si è risposto al medesimo perché partito per Bombay ».

<sup>80</sup> We can find no indication whatsoever in AG of any contact between Menezes and the Redemptorists in Europe between 1848 and 1869.

<sup>81</sup> Copy of Menezes' will (in Portuguese) in AG XXIII W 9.

<sup>82</sup> This letter is printed at the end of the article, Doc. 7.

o'clock in the morning<sup>83</sup>. The document was opened on August 6th and registered on September 5th<sup>84</sup>.

Although Menezes had instructed his executors to send notice of his death, the letter itself, and a copy of his will, as soon as possible, to « the Most Reverend Father Rector Major and Superior General of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer aforesaid, at present residing in Rome »<sup>85</sup>, this was not done for six years. The long delay may perhaps be explained — at least in part — by the difficulty in contacting the General.

In 1869 the Vicar Apostolic of Bombay, Mgr. Léon Meurin SI, came to Rome to take part in the First Vatican Council<sup>86</sup>. He visited the Redemptorist Superior General, Fr. Nicolas Mauron<sup>87</sup>, and delivered to him Menezes' will and letter of 1863<sup>88</sup>. On behalf of the executor, Mr. Luis do Rosario, Mgr. Meurin also handed over a bill for 12,200 Francs on the Comptoir d'Escompte in Paris. Fr. Mauron's receipt is dated June 16th<sup>89</sup>. In an autographed but undated note at the foot of Menezes' letter Fr. Mauron states that over 350 Masses were celebrated for the deceased<sup>90</sup>. In the list of various expenses, drawn up by the Procurator General, Fr. Brixius Queloz<sup>91</sup>, for the second half of 1869 is a corresponding item of 350 Lire for Masses « celebrated by order of Fr. General for the repose of the soul of our ex-Father and benefactor Menezes »<sup>92</sup>.

<sup>83</sup> The hours are not computed from midnight, but from sunrise.

<sup>84</sup> All these dates are mentioned in two addenda to the will.

<sup>85</sup> From this instruction it appears that Menezes wanted notice to be given to the Superior General of the Transalpine branch of the Redemptorists, the only one residing in Rome, but he gives neither name nor address.

<sup>86</sup> Cf. Th. GRANDERATH, *Geschichte des Vatikanischen Konzils I*, Freiburg/Brsg. 1903, 494, n. 645.

<sup>87</sup> Biographical note on Fr. Mauron (1818-1893; professed 1837, Superior General 1855-1893) in *Spic. hist.* 2 (1954) 260, n. 105.

<sup>88</sup> Bishop Meurins' visit is not mentioned in the chronicles of the General House. However, he is mentioned in the list of visitors drawn up by Fr. Mauron; cf. *Spic. hist.* 10 (1962) 448.

<sup>89</sup> Copy of the receipt in AG XXIII W 10.

<sup>90</sup> « Sono state celebrate più di 350 messe per l'anima del defunto ».

<sup>91</sup> Biographical note on Fr. Queloz (1802-1882; professed 1832, Procurator General 1855-1882) in *Spic. hist.* 2 (1954) 268, n. 136.

<sup>92</sup> *Liber acceptorum et expensorum Procurae generalis, 1869-1870*, p. 477 (Expensa mixta): « Per Messe fatte celebrare dal Rev.mo P. Generale in suffragio del defunto ex-Padre e Benefattore nostro Menezes — 350 Lire ital. » The corresponding page 143 (Accepta mixta) has been cut out of the book.

From this last note it appears quite clear that Menezes was considered at the time as having abandoned the Congregation, in spite of his own explicit — and at least to us quite convincing — repeatedly given declaration about his status. The superiors agreed with the opinion of Menezes' biographer and one-time companion Fr. Valle, who — knowing practically nothing about him after 1843<sup>93</sup> — had considered him in 1867 as being dispensed from vows at an uncertain date<sup>94</sup>.

Some forty to fifty years later, the then Archivist General of the Redemptorists, Fr. Edouard Bührel<sup>95</sup>, procured Menezes' rehabilitation as a lifelong member of the Congregation. On the basis of the documents, which nobody had consulted before, he came to the conclusion that Fr. Valle's Biographical Sketch of Menezes misrepresented the facts. He wrote a few brief but carefully argued notes on the matter<sup>96</sup> and subsequently inserted Menezes' name in the General Catalogue of the Congregation, in which he had been omitted<sup>97</sup>.

#### DOCUMENTS

1. - Letter of Fr. Francisco de Menezes to the Superior General of the Redemptorists, Fr. Giovanni Camillo Ripoli; Modena, December 15, 1835. — Original in AG XXIII W 4.

J.M.J.A.

Reverendissimo Padre!

Baciando riverentemente a Vostra Paternità la mano, con tutta l'umiltà e rassegnazione prego vivamente Vostra Paternità, che se è la vo-

<sup>93</sup> According to BSM, p. 6-7, Menezes belonged in 1843-44 to the Redemptorist community in Spoleto. At the beginning of 1845 he wanted to go back to Modena, but in fact went to India. « Come sia succeduto questo fatto (che fu senza dubbio la causa prossima della sua uscita dalla Congregazione) precisamente non lo so, essendoci stato riferito in tre diverse maniere ».

<sup>94</sup> According to BSM, p. 7-8, Menezes returned to Europe after several difficulties with the Vicar Apostolic of Ceylon — among other things about following the Moral Theology of St. Alphonsus — and « sollecitato dalle naturali attrattive del suo clima [i.e. dell'India], cedette alla tentazione e domandò la dispensa dei voti al R.mo Padre Rettore Maggiore, D. Giovanni Camillo Ripoli, che gliela concedette ». This gratuitous remark is in flat contradiction with the documents cited above. Cf. also CPB I 141: « Menezes Congregationem reliquit »; without any documentation.

<sup>95</sup> Necrology of Fr. Bührel (1843-1924; professed 1865, Archivist General 1903-1924) in *Analecta CSSR* 3 (1924) 80-86.

<sup>96</sup> Kept in AG XXIII W 1. These notes are undated.

<sup>97</sup> AG, Catalogus XIII, p. 22, n. 169 bis. Fr. Bührel added to the entry the following remark: « Fidelis vocationi obiit in Bombay, 28 julii 1863 ».

lontà di Dio e di suo grado, di ricordarsi di me, povero Indiano, chiamandomi in questa stagione favorevole al viaggio ad uno de' nostri collegj di Sicilia, come Vostra Paternità si degnò promettermi nell'ultima lettera al mio R. P. Superiore [Franz Doll]. [Im]perocché confesso con ogni verità e sincerità che nelle regioni fredde patisco moltissimo nel mio fisico e perciò anco nel morale, benché io abbia una natura sana e nessuna infermità. I due anni che sono restato nel Belgio, dopo che uscì dal Portogallo, mi furono un continuo patire, nonostante tutta la carità de' miei Padri Superiori.

Essendo poscia stato mandato qui in Modena, con poca differenza ho sofferto molto in questo inverno e soffro ancora dal freddo, avvegnacché il R. P. Superiore mi abbia dato una camera con stufa, e nonostante anche la veste, i calzoni e gli stivaletti tutti foderati di pelle, che il Signor Duca di Modena mi ha donati, perché Modena è vicina ai monti ed il suo suolo è umido, principalmente nell'inverno. Patisco anco del capo [i.e. di mal di testa], e ciò, credo, provenga dalla stufa, per non esservi avvezzato, ma devo servirmene per difendermi dal freddo.

E così ogni giorno è per me un soffrire, di guisa che sono stato costretto dal principio d'ottobre finora di stare nella mia camera e farvi gli esercizi che posso. Ho omesso molte volte di recitar il breviario e di celebrar la S. Messa, ma adesso il R. P. Superiore ha fatto collocare un altare colla stufa in una camera vicina alla mia, dove celebro.

Il freddo mi attacca principalmente il capo ed il petto e mi rende incapace alcune volte ad ogni occupazione seria e mi priva così d'ogni appetito. Divengo perciò di giorno in giorno più debole e più sensibile al freddo.

Prego adunque di nuovo umilissimamente Vostra Paternità, per amor di Gesù e Maria SS.ma, di aver pietà di me, chiamandomi il più presto che sarà possibile, e credo che in ciò farà Vostra Paternità una grand'opera di misericordia verso di me. E se per aver ardito di scrivere sì tosto a Vostra Paternità, ho mancato alla virtù di pazienza, che Vostra Paternità mi comandò, o ad altra qualsivoglia virtù, ve ne prego umilmente la penitenza.

E prego così di darmi la paterna sua benedizione e di raccomandarmi nelle sue preghiere specialmente a Maria SS.ma ed al nostro Beato Padre [Alfonso]. E protesto d'esser

Di V. P.

umilissimo servo e figlio in G. C.  
P. Francesco di Menezes CSSR

Modena, 15 di Dicembre 1835.

2. - Letter of Fr. Johann Sabelli to the Superior of the Redemptorists in Belgium, Fr. Friedrich von Held; Nocera de' Pagani, April 10, 1836. — Original in the Archives of the Belgian Province CSSR, Brussels-Jette.

V.J.M.J.B.A. Nocera de' Pagani, 10. April 1836.

Hochwürdiger Verehrtester P. Held

Der Pater Rector Major [Generaloberer] ist geängstigt, dass etwa Ihr Brief-Wechsel für jene Messen, die Sie uns unter dem 3. Dezember zuzuschicken beliebten, möge auf der Reise verloren gegangen seyn; gab mir also diesen Rath, Ihnen zu wissen zu machen, dass wir bisher keinen empfangen haben. Die Messen sind indessen gelesen. Diese Nachricht diene Ihnen zur Richtschnur.

Der Pater Menezes ist unter uns seit dem 6. März<sup>98</sup>. Es scheint aber, er seye nicht gar wohl zufrieden mit diesem Hause, denn er findet manches zu rügen, das E. H. schon wissen. Indessen, die Obern denken nicht mehr, ihn nach Sizilien zu schicken; sie ziehen vor, ihn hier zu behalten. [P. Liberatore] Luciano, Rector in Neapel, möchte ihn auch gerne bey sich haben. Was dann endlich daraus wird, soll die Zeit lehren; um so mehr da er immer wünscht nach Lisbona zurückberufen zu werden. Nun lernt er Italienisch.

[*The next paragraph is written by Fr. de Menezes.*]

Il Padre Menezes ossequia distintamente V. R. e le fa conoscere di avere mancato a darle delle sue notizie dopo il suo arrivo in Modena, ciò che gli rincresce assai, mentre, dopo aver fatte delle lettere a tal uopo a V. R., non furono mandate alla posta. Ed io non ebbi altro mezzo per disimpegnarmi di tal mio dovere. Una tal cosa mi afflisce non poco. Quindi non potendo soffrire quel clima, a pari di cotesto, fui diretto qui in Italia [meridionale] e ci sono arrivato a salvamento, a spese del Signor Duca, dal quale venni provveduto di ogni occorrente. Adesso mi trovo qui sano, salvo e contento, mentre il Molto R. P. Sabelli mi serve di compagno e di sollievo, esercitandoci scambievolmente in francese. Tutti questi Padri mi vogliono bene assai, e del resto lasciamo fare a Dio. La prego de' miei più distinti ed affettuosi ossequi a tutti cotesti Padri, specialmente al mio amantissimo Padre Pilat. Le bacio umilmente la sacra mano e mi dico di cuore: suo affettuosissimo servo in G. C. — P. Menezes C. SS. Redemptoris.

Ich empfehle mich in Ihr hl. Gebeth, grüsse herzlich alle Patres und harre mit aller Hochachtung  
Euer Hochwürden

ergebenst dankbarster Diener  
Joh. Jos. Sabelli  
des allerheiligsten Erlösers

<sup>98</sup> This date can hardly be correct, as Fr. Mautone in his letter to Fr. Ripoli from Rome, dated March 12, 1836, announces that Menezes will leave the following day for Pagani (see above, note 50). We presume 6 is a slip for 16.

3. - Extracts from the report on the canonical visitation of the Redemptorist community at Frosinone made by the Consultor General Fr. Vincenzo Fusco, and signed by him on November 7, 1838. — Original in AG XIX F 26.

Diamo a tutti i seguenti avvertimenti ed ordini:

6. - Ordiniamo al fratello cuoco che avesse la carità che ne' giorni in cui la comunità mangia macaroni e carne a ragù, ossia in umido, apparecchi al P. Menezes un poco di pastina in brodo, e la sua tangente di carne l'apparecchi a polpettine; quando poi la carne si dà in lesso o in arrosto, la polpettina al P. Menezes si facci arrostita in due crostini. Quando poi ne' giorni di magro si mangiasse merluzzo secco, o sia baccalà, si faccia al detto Padre una frittatina.

In una parola, si abbi cura di dare al detto Padre, che manca di denti, qualche cosa facile a mangiarsi, onde non si alzi mezzo digiuno dalla tavola e dalla cena. Si abbi pure cura di procurare un poco di latte per mattina, e se qualche volta non si può avere il latte, se gli dia una tazza di brodo apparecchiato con carità.

Mancando il cuoco a tutto ciò, gl'imponiamo per penitenza un digiuno in pane ed acqua, tutte le volte che manca. E' di giusto che colui il quale fa digiunare gli altri, digiuni anch'egli. A sorvegliare il cuoco ne incarichiamo il Padre più anziano.

7. - Ordiniamo ai Padri di dire la Messa ne' giorni festivi secondo l'ordine d'ingresso [i.e. della professione] per dar comodo al popolo. E restano tutti pregati, che passate due ore dopo la meditazione, usino la carità al P. Menezes di fargli dire la Messa, qualora tutti staranno in casa, ond'egli possa prendersi il latte o brodo.

13. - Subito subito si facci il cappotto al P. Menezes, come pure la zimarra al medesimo.

4. - Letter of Mgr. Giovanni Brunelli, secretary of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, to the Procurator General of the Redemptorists, Fr. Giuseppe Mautone; Rome, March 10, 1843. — Original in AG XXIII W 6.

Dalla Propaganda, 10 Marzo 1843.

Avendo avuto occasione l'E.mo Sig. Cardinale Prefetto della S. Congregazione di Propaganda Fide [Giacomo Filippo Fransoni] di conoscere le buone qualità del P. Francesco Menezes, nativo di Goa nelle Indie Orientali, dimorante ora in codesta pia casa, e le disposizioni del medesimo di recarsi alle sante missioni in quelle regioni appunto, ove potrebbe recare molti vantaggi, ha stabilito deputarlo Missionario apostolico ed inviarlo in sussidio di Mgr. Vicario apostolico di Bombay [Luigi Fortini OCD], tanto più che il P. [Giovanni] Camillo Ripoli, Superiore generale dell'Istituto, fin dall'anno 1838, per aderire alle inchieste di Propaganda, avealo creduto idoneo ed invitato a recarsi alla missione di Filippopoli.

In vista di ciò è persuaso il sottoscritto Segretario di Propaganda,



che per parte dei Superiori dell'Istituto nulla osti alla spedizione del Religioso destinato per una missione più propria e conducente alla salute di lui in clima pressoché nativo.

Nel parteciparle pertanto le notizie, gradirà un riscontro in proposito di V. P. R.ma, in attenzione di che con distinta stima si rassegna

D.mo obb.mo servo  
Giovanni Brunelli, Segr.

5. - Letter of Fr. Francisco de Menezes to Fr. Giovanni Camillo Ripoli; Galle, January 20, 1847. — Original in AG XXIII W 7.

J.M.J.

Reverendissimo P. Rettor Maggiore

Nonostante aver scritto tante e tante lettere a V. P. dopo la mia partenza da Roma per le Indie, sono stato finora sempre infelice in riceverne il riscontro. Ora che ho il felice momento della partenza del mons. vesc° coadjutore [Orazio Bettacchini] di questo vicariato apostolico di Ceylon per Roma, scrivo in fretta queste poche righe in prova di quel filial affetto e profondo rispetto che sta sempre vivo nel mio cuore.

Tante notizie delle mie apostoliche fatiche, fatte in due anni nel vicariato di Bombay e poi al presente in questo dell'isola di Ceylon, avrei da dare a V. P. R.ma, però la fretta con cui scrivo non me lo permette. In tanto dico per la sua consolazione che sto sempre in salute ottima; la Morale del nostro S. Fondatore è osservata nel ministero apostolico da tutti i missionarii venuti dalla S. Propaganda, ed il popolo l'ama in pratica<sup>99</sup>; ho fatto molte conversioni degli infedeli in 17 chiese di questa isola finora, dove ho fatto la missione. Mi pare che col tempo si farà qualche cosa di più coll'ajuto di Maria SS.ma e del nostro S. Padre [Alfonso], a cui prego V. P. R.ma di raccomandarmi e di far[mi] raccomandare, mentre [c'è] bisogno molto delle preghiere nelle religiose circostanze presenti nell'India tutta, per motivo dello scisma dell'arcivescovo di Goa [João de Silva Torres OSB], mia patria.

Se sarà possibile, per mezzo della S. Propaganda mi rimetta il proprio delle Messe della nostra Congregazione, mentre molte di esse non si trovano in questi messali. Prego di dirmi se debbo celebrare le Messe pei defonti dopo la mia partenza, e me ne rimetta il numero.

Al presente sto facendo la missione in questo porto chiamato Galle, una delle città principali di questa isola di Ceylon, e dove probabilmente resterò fino al prossimo Agosto. Quindi mi diriga qui le lettere che V. P. R.ma si degnerà scrivermi, il che tanto la prego.

<sup>99</sup> Fr. Valle states in BSM, p. 7, that Menezes had « alcuni disgusti » with the Vicar Apostolic of Ceylon, Mgr. Gaetano Antonio, about the Moral Theology of St. Alphonsus.

Infine la prego di darmi la santa paterna sua benedizione [e di] raccomandarmi sopra tutto a Maria SS.ma e al nostro S. Fondatore, mentre in somma fretta finisco la presente mia con baciarle le mani e i piedi e dichiarando[mi] sempre, benché indegnissimo

Di V. P. R.ma

Servo e figlio in G. e M.  
P. Fran.co Menezes del SS. Red.

Galle, 20 di Gennaio 1847.

P. S. Benché quanto alle facultà per rapporto al ministero la S. Propaganda me ne ha fornito — perciò non mi sono necessarie — però pregherei che V. P. R.ma mi confermasse le altre, rispettanti alla mia persona in particolare come soggetto della nostra Congregazione. — Saluto tutti tutti [i] nostri, in particolare il mio amantissimo P. Ripoli<sup>100</sup>.

6. - Extracts from a letter of Fr. Francisco de Menezes to Fr. Giovanni Camillo Ripoli; Lisbon, September 12, 1848. — Original in AG XXIII W 7.

J.M.J.

Reverendissimo Padre

Prima di ogni altra cosa, mi affretto col presente mio umilissimo foglio, scritto con somma fretta a cagione della prossima partenza del vapore, a sapere [qualcosa] dello stato di salute di Vostra Paternità R.ma; tanto più perché, quando io sortì [i.e. sono partito] da costì, non la lasciai in quel buono e florido stato che io desiderava. Sono persuaso che a V. P. R.ma, più che ad ogni altro della nostra S. Congregazione, io sono debitore in ogni rapporto; e perciò mi è, fu e sempre sarà a cuore di desiderare [notizie] e sapere della sua salute, ed a questo fine porgerò tutt'i giorni le umili e fervide preghiere, sopra tutto ai piedi della nostra buona Madre Maria SS.ma, acciocché ella conserva a V. P. R.ma la salute sempre buona e piena di tutte le prosperità e pace, per la consolazione di tutta la nostra S. Congregazione ed in particolare di questo povero Indiano, suo indegno indegnissimo figlio, lontano dalla società dei suoi cari e dilette confratelli in G. C., tra gli idolatri, eretici e scismatici.

Io sto godendo sempre della più perfetta salute. E come dissi a V. P. R.ma, dopo aver conchiusi i miei affari in Roma, passando Livorno, Genova e Gibilterra sono giunto qua nel dì 6 dello scorso mese. Ed avendo terminati gli affari che qua mi condussero, partirò [i.e. partirò] da

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<sup>100</sup> Fr. Claudio Maria Ripoli, a brother of the Superior General. He was Consultor General 1833-1849. Biographical note in *Spic. hist.* 2 (1954) 269, n. 141.

questo porto, a Dio piacendo, nel dì 22 del corrente mese per arrivare quanto prima in Bombay, per così obbedire e soddisfare [a]gli anziiosi desiderii e premure del vescovo vicario apostolico di quella città e della S. Congregazione di Propaganda Fide; i quali bramano e mi pregano che io mi fermi in quel vicariato per qualche tempo per [il] bene di quelle povere anime, prima di andare in Goa, mia patria. Quindi prego V. P. R.ma che quando mi vorrà consolare con le sue paterne lettere — che prego quanto più frequentemente sarà possibile — me le diriga in quella città, alla cura di quel mons. vescovo vicario apostolico, chiamato Don Whelan<sup>101</sup>.

Qua in Lisbona fui bene ed ottimamente ricevuto, ospitato e trattato in questo palazzo del Signor Marchese de Abrantes, figlio ed erede di quella Signora Marchese d'Abrantes, la quale, come sarà bene noto a V. P. R.ma, si dimostrò in ogni tempo, anche il più calami[to]so, non solamente benefattrice, ma fino come madre la più amorosa e sollecita per tutti i soggetti, Padri e Fratelli, del nostro collegio di S. João Nepomuceno in questa capitale del Portogallo<sup>102</sup>. [...] Ella ricevette dal P. Passerat la patente della filiazione speciale della nostra Congregazione<sup>103</sup>. [...] Io in tanto dalla mia parte lo [i.e. il Marchese d'Abrantes] raccomando a V. P. R.ma, aggiungendo che la conservazione della costante amicizia di questo Signore e delle sue due sorelle sarà sempre utile, utilissima, anzi necessaria alla nostra Congregazione quando venisse a ristabilirsi in questo regno<sup>104</sup>.

Con grandissima mia pena e confusione prevengo a V. P. R.ma che il regnante Papa Pio IX mi ha nominato suo Cameriere e mi ha conferito il breve di Dottore *utriusque juris*. V. P. R.ma ben conosce i miei sentimenti ed il motivo perché la pregai permettermi [di] andare in India e [di] stare in Goa, che non è altro se non il bene delle anime abbandonate in quelle mie contrade e la propagazione della nostra S. Congregazione. Quindi, lungi di biasimarmi d'avere accettato tale dignità e titoli fuori di Congregazione, lo approverò per motivo che di questa maniera sarò meno sospetto è più alla portata di conseguire le sante mie intenzioni per [il] bene della Religione e della nostra Congregazione, unico mio fine in voler stare lungi dalla società cara e deliziosa dei miei fratelli, figli di S. Alfonso, nostro buono e santo Padre e Fondatore.

<sup>101</sup> The Dublin-born Discalced Carmelite Mgr. William Whelan, better known under his religious name John Francis, of St. Teresa. Biographical note in R. RITZLER — P. SEFRIN, *Hierarchia catholica medii et recentioris aevi VII* (1800-1846), Padova 1968, 97.

<sup>102</sup> In similar wording Fr. Franz Weidlich had introduced this Lady to the Superior General 18 years before in his letter from Lisbon, dated September 18, 1830 (AG XXIII 1 I): « Marquesa d'Abrantes D. Helena..., devotissima B.P.N. Alfonsi, iam plurima beneficia nobis tribuit et semper plus facere se praestat, ut omnino nomen bonae matris nostrae Congregationis in Lusitania mereatur ». Cf. *Spic. hist.* 13 (1965) 270.

<sup>103</sup> « Dare la filiazione (l'affiliazione) a qualcheduno » means to make that person an Oblate of the Congregation. We intend to publish a study on the history of the institution of the Oblates in the CSSR in the next issue of this review.

<sup>104</sup> Menezes says that he is enclosing a letter from the Marquis d'Abrantes. This document cannot be located in AG.

Prego V. P. R.ma di ricordarsi dei pericoli in cui io mi vado [e]sporre nell'India, e [di] raccomandarmi e farmi raccomandare sopra tutto a Maria SS.ma, affinché io non perda la mia povera anima. Saluto tutti i nostri Padri, sopra tutto il mio carissimo P. Ripoli, a cui bacio la mano. Chiedendo in fine a V. P. R.ma la paterna sua benedizione e baciandole le sacre mani, mi confermo

Di V. P. R.ma

Figlio e Servo in G. C. e M<sup>a</sup> SS.ma  
P. Francisco de Menezes del SS.mo Red.

Lisbona, 12 7bre 1848.

7. - Letter of Fr. Francisco de Menezes to the Superior General of the Redemptorists; Goa, July 2, 1863. — Original in AG XXIII W 9.

J.M.J.

Reverendissimo Padre Rettor Maggiore

Iddio vuole ch'avanti la mia morte io lasci scritto il presente foglio per esser trasmesso a Vostra Paternità R.ma, dopo la mia morte, dagli esecutori del mio testamento. Il suo arrivo adunque darà a Vostra Paternità R.ma la certezza d'avvenuta mia morte, ed insieme l'umilissima mia supplica, che da ora io genuflesso ai paterni suoi piedi porgo, pregando per amor di Gesù Cristo e di Maria SS.ma a Vostra Paternità R.ma, come Rettor Maggiore e Superiore generale della nostra Congregazione del SS.mo Redentore, ad accordare alla povera mia anima i suffragii spirituali soliti da farsi nella nostra Congregazione in beneficio delle anime de' suoi trapassati alunni sacerdoti professi.

Io sono, Reverendissimo Padre, il povero Indiano, nativo di Goa nelle Indie Orientali, entrato nella nostra Congregazione in Lisbona nel 1829, dove nel 1830 feci la professione sotto i nostri RR. PP. Tedeschi, e che poi pelle turbolenze politiche del Portogallo venni cogli altri nostri confratelli in Belgio, in Modena, ed ultimamente chiamato in Italia meridionale dal nostro R.mo Padre Rettore Maggiore, D. [Giovanni] Camillo Ripoli. Nel 1843 l'E.mo Prefetto della Sacra [Congregazione di] Propaganda [Fide] Fransoni, col previo beneplacito dei superiori della nostra Congregazione, mi mandò come missionario apostolico del Gran Mogol<sup>105</sup> in questo vicariato apostolico di Bombay e mi ci rimandò nel 1848, nel mio ritorno in Europa, come rettore del seminario di questo vicariato.

Nell'occasione di questo mio ritorno in Europa mi portai dal suddetto nostro R.mo P. Rettore Maggiore nel collegio di Nocera de' Pagani, per esporgli a voce i motivi che mi occorrevano di ritornare nell'India, e forse di restarvi fino alla morte. Quali miei motivi egli avendoli intesi, li approvò pienamente e mi accordò il ritorno e la dimora, assicurandomi che, sebben dovessi star qua fuori della vita comune ed im-

<sup>105</sup> The mission in central India was for centuries called the mission to the Great Mogul (later Vicariate Apostolic), because it was at the invitation of the Great Mogul, Emperor Akbar (1556-1605), that the Jesuits started the mission towards the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Cf. *New Catholic Encyclopedia* VII (1967) 438-439.

mediata ubbidienza ai superiori della nostra Congregazione, dovrei nondimeno sempre creder[mi] come della nostra Congregazione, e che sarei considerato e tenuto da esso e da tutta la nostra Congregazione come suo alunno professore, come tutti gli altri effettivamente esistenti nei collegi della nostra Congregazione.

In questa certezza dunque avendo io vissuto per misericordia di Gesù Cristo e materna assistenza di Maria SS.ma — ed in essa sperando anche morire — ho fatto e segnato il mio testamento nel dì 17 di Fevraro [i.e. Febbraio] del presente anno 1863. In esso ebbi in vista e mi sono guidato dalle sante Regole e Costituzioni della nostra Congregazione, approvate dal Papa Benedetto XIV ed esposte nel Capitolo generale, tenuto nel 1764 in presenza e sotto la presidenza del nostro S. Fondatore e Padre S. Alfonso M. Liguori.

Il motivo di far quel testamento previamente ed essendo io in buona ed ottima salute, sebbene in età ormai di più [di] 57 anni, è stato per prevenire ed ostare l'assegnamento ed applicazione dei miei averi temporali a persone ed a fini da me non voluti, ma per esporre e dichiarare espressamente l'ultima e manifesta mia volontà sopra tali averi. Egli è scritto in portoghese per esser capito dalle persone interessate qua nell'India portoghese. Di tutto Vostra Paternità R.ma sarà appieno informato dallo stesso mio testamento, la cui copia autentica o l'originale giungerà col presente mio foglio a Vostra Paternità R.ma dopo la mia morte.

In esso Vostra Paternità R.ma troverà quel che io, indegnissimo figlio vostro, lascio alla veneranda e sempre da me amata nostra comune madre, la Congregazione del SS.mo Redentore, in conformità alle sante Regole e Costituzioni ed in testimonianza anche del mio filial attaccamento e di sincera e costante gratitudine pei benefizii, in particolare per avermi animato fino dalla mia infanzia religiosa colla devozione a Gesù Sacramentato e a Maria SS.ma, in cui trovai sempre e spero trovar fino [al]la morte il vero refugio, rimedio e consolazione. Quindi prego Vostra Paternità R.ma ad entrarne in legal possesso. A questo fine io raccomando a servirsi del sig. Luigi Philippe di Rozario, uno dei due esecutori di quel mio testamento. Egli è ora dottore in medicina, ricco proprietario, nobile di famiglia, mio amico e figlio spirituale. S'interesserà assai assai poter servire a Vostra Paternità R.ma ed alla nostra Congregazione, senza verun interesse personale.

Non m'occorrendo altro a dire, conchiudo questo umilissimo mio foglio supplicando tutt'i nostri confratelli, RR. Padri e Fratelli, in particolare quei da me conosciuti e vissuti meco in differenti [i.e. diversi] nostri collegi, a perdonarmi tutte le mie mancanze da loro in me vedute; e pregar e raccomandar alla misericordia infinita di Gesù Cristo e alla nostra buona Madre Maria SS.ma l'eterna salute della mia poverissima anima. Lo stesso supplico a Vostra Paternità R.ma, come anche la paterna sua benedizione, mentre baciandole la sacra mano, mi dichiaro

Di V. P. R.ma

Indignissimo servo e figlio in G. e M. SS.ma  
P. Francesco Luigi Rosario Menezes del SS. Red.

Goa nelle Indie Orientali,  
oggi, 2 Luglio 1863, giorno giovedì.