



Ippolito Desideri S.J.

Spreading the Word in Tibet
1716 - 1721

Elaine M. Robson



Desideri's Manuscript - 1718



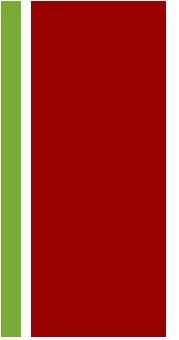
[The page contains dense handwritten text in a cursive script, likely a manuscript. The text is mostly illegible due to the image quality and the cursive style.]

B. Aloy. y. Souza, festo de S. Inacio da Vila Tracabai find imperit. 1718.

+ Desideri's Prayer – Verse 1

A thousand magnificent things
present themselves to your mind:
objects of consciousness though they are,
they are empty of existence.

Those thousand magnificent things,
though being non-existent,
when they come to your attention
appear to be existent.



+ Desideri's Prayer – Verse 2

My mind too lacks consistency (Substance?);

and if your light doesn't appear,

limitless, eternal, suffusing all things,

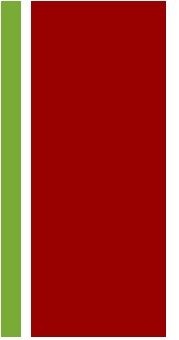
it retains its state of darkness:

It cannot see objects

It cannot see itself:

confused like a blind person in a dark place,

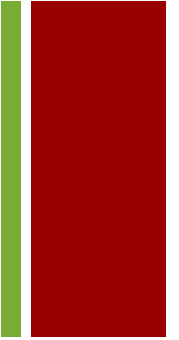
its natural condition is one of shadow.



+ Desideri's Prayer – Verse 3

But when, Oh Lord, it meets your light,
by a miracle of your grace,
it is suffused by a sparkling brilliance,
it is cloaked in shafts of light.

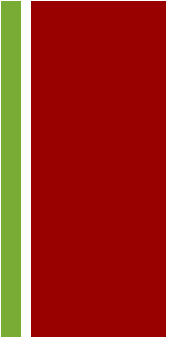
Like the sphere of the sun
with its light and its warmth
it appears to be many, but is only one.



+ Desideri's Prayer – Verse 4

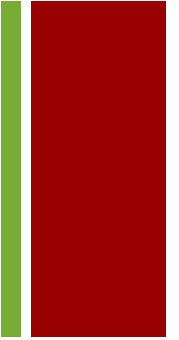
Similarly your supreme mode of existence
is a single entity
that radiates infinite goodness and grandeur.

I pray to you Oh Lord,
only resting place of this my mind,
give me your blessing
that transforms like sunlight, my mind
still obscured by the shadows
and [which] is by nature only darkness.



+ Desideri's Prayer – Verse 5

I beg you, grant me your blessing
that drives away the shadows
within me, in my innermost being. (Soul/heart)
That it might appear to my mind's eye
by means of your blinding light,
that multiplicity and unity
which until now I could not see.



+ Desideri's Prayer – Verse 6

[Oh] that your light may appear to me in this instant,

And by its appearance, disperse the shadows.

This is the true way which leads to Supreme Goodness:

[Oh] That I might embark upon it and obtain it,

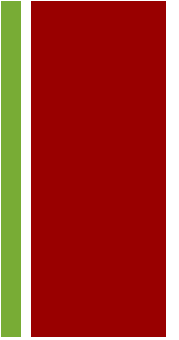
that after death I might reach this end -

the supreme stage of All Goodness.

[Oh] That Tibetans, present and future

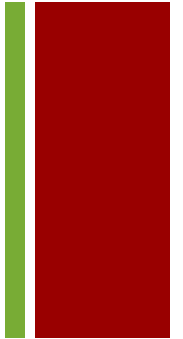
may attain it.

This is my prayer.

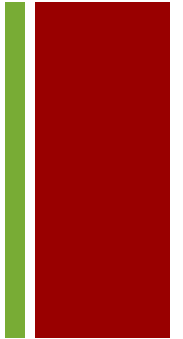


+ The Recognition of Substance

- “In order that the aim of this prayer is attained, one must meditate intensely, day and night, from the depths of one’s heart. And if one’s mind is clouded by darkness, and thrown off course by error and cannot succeed in recognising Substance, one must decide to free oneself from the darkness and error. For this reason one must search again for the source of this continuing mental clouding.
- If despite having found the root of the defects and errors he still remains in a darkness which prevents him knowing the Supreme Noble Entity, then he must free the mind from prejudice in order overcome the error.”



+ Reference



- OPERE TIBETANE DI IPPOLITTO DESIDERI S.J. Vol. IV IL ‘NES LEGS’ Roma 1989: pages 163-64.
- Translated by Giuseppe Toscano S.X. [from Tibetan into Italian]
- Publisher: ISTITUTO ITALIANO PER IL MEDIO ED ESTREMO ORIENTE.
- Note: NEG LEGS in Tibetan (nges legs) means ‘Certain Goodness’.