

Pitra Dosha

by [Peter Dreyer](#) (May 2023)



Le Bûcher de Montségur, Jacques Fauché, 1960

Do you remember an Inn,

Miranda?

Do you remember an Inn?

. . .

And the fleas that tease in the High Pyrenees,

And the wine that tasted of tar?

—Hilaire Belloc, “Tarantella” (1929)

Mount Montségur’s also in the Pyrenees,
to which ten thousand Frenchmen came one day
asked by the pope to light a holy fire
in the thirteenth century; no stakes
were necessary—when to the field led

the *perfecti* climbed freely on the pyre.
Damnation take our ancestors, brutes
that they were! I'm not sorry they are dead!

I read Belloc's poem at my high school
in Africa (it was an all-white school—
they never got my views in that regard).
He favored, it seems, freedom as a rule,
but required cock and balls to vote, the fool:
blot out his name, then—cancel the bad bard!

Note: On Mount Montségur, see
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siege_of_Monts%C3%A9gur . For
the Cathar *perfecti*,
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cathar_Perfect. The Hindu term
Pitra Dosha refers to karmic afflictions inherited from one's
ancestors—see, e.g.,
<https://vedics.in/pitra-dosha-curse-remedies>. The Franco-
British writer Hilaire Belloc (1870–1953), the author of
Cautionary Tales for Children, among them “Jim, Who Ran Away
from His Nurse, and Was Eaten by a Lion” and “Matilda, Who
Told Lies and Was Burned to Death,” a member of the Women's
National Anti-Suffrage League, campaigned against women being
enfranchised in the early years of the twentieth century.

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Peter Richard Dreyer is a South African American writer. He is
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Future of Treason* (New York: Ballantine), *A Gardener Touched
with Genius: The Life of Luther Burbank* (New York: Coward,
McCann & Geoghegan; rev. ed., Berkeley: University of
California Press; new, expanded ed., Santa Rosa, CA: Luther

Burbank Home & Gardens), *Martyrs and Fanatics: South Africa and Human Destiny* (New York: Simon & Schuster; London: Secker & Warburg), and most recently the novel *Isacq* (Charlottesville, VA: Hardware River Press, 2017).

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