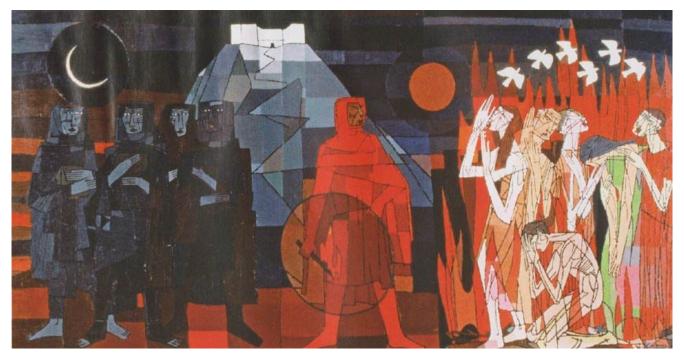
Pitra Dosha

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 the author of *A Beast in View* (London: André Deutsch), *The* 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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