

# ***Louis Pauwels, Gurdjieff and Pierre Schaeffer***

Solita Solano,

*An exchange between Solita Solano, and Margery West of Times Press,  
publishers of the 1964 English edition of Louis Pauwels' Gurdjieff*

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Hotel Vendome

Paris

January 25<sup>th</sup>, 1964

[To:Times Press]

[Douglas, Isle of Man]

Dear Miss West,

Thank you.

And if you have read the book, "Gurdjieff," I must say to you that, from my personal experience with Mr. G. for many years, I hope you do not wholly believe what the author has written about that curious, excentric [eccentric] but deeply religious teacher of Ouspensky, Orage & many another honorable pupil & follower. Speaking for myself, he saved me from a great disaster and gave my life its proper direction and my debt to him & his teachings is without bounds.

Sincerely,

Solita Solano

Did you read Margaret Anderson's "The Unknown [Unknowable] Gurdjieff"?

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[Times Press, Douglas, Isle of Man]

Miss Solita Solano,  
AT/ Hotel Vendome,  
1 Place Vendome,  
Paris 1er  
January 27<sup>th</sup>, 1964

Dear Miss Solano,

Thank you for your cheque, received this morning. It may be some days before we can post off to you your copy of "GURDJIEFF" since we are awaiting a new supply from the book-binders.

Yes, I have read Margaret Anderson's "UNKNOWABLE GURDJIEFF". It is so difficult to know what to believe about him or his teaching. He meant so many different things to so many different people. I find myself envious that you should have found a direction in life and I could wish that it were possible for me to do the same. But, so far, I have not found the answer.

My best wishes to you.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs. M. West

Please let us know should you change your address before your copy of Gurdjieff arrives.

Current Address: Orgeval S et O.

Feb. 12, 1964

Hotel Vendome

Paris

Dear Mrs. West,

The book came and, as you probably had guessed, its contents were a great shock to me and would have been to Dorothy Caruso and will be to Margaret Anderson, who says she will write to me as soon as she reads that madman Pauwels. We, and by we I mean all of my own group (1934 to 1940) in the years before the war when I was his secretary. I had to leave in 1940 & remained in America perforce until long after the war. When I saw him again, Pauwels & Co. had disappeared, having been with him but briefly during my absence. Never saw Pauwels.

Gurdjieff's daily teachings and "exercises" could not have harmed the most delicate child – examinations of conscience, learning to seek God, how properly to pray, how to undecieve oneself, conquer feelings of pride and revenge, distinguish between the true and the false, care of one's health, clean out the stables before trying to cultivate one's soul, et cetera.

Of course, all was not "holy;" he had an earthly side – food & drink, ribald humour at times, but he was always a very religious man.

I have not yet read much of the book, since I received it only yesterday – It's painful to see such lies & falseness in print.

Wish I could meet you —

Sincerely,

Solita Solano

[Times Press, Douglas, Isle of Man]

February 18<sup>th</sup> 1964

Miss Solita Solano,  
Les Bouillons,  
ORGEVAL S. et O.  
France

I was so sorry to read your distress. I posted the book to you with some reluctance, although I was sure you must have had warning of its content.

I would like to tell you that over the last six months the book has occupied much of my time and thoughts and none of Louise Pauwels' evidence ever frightened me in the slightest. Perhaps this will console a little as I feel sure that other readers will also separate the man Pauwels from the man Gurdjieff. For to me Gurdjieff was a man – not a saint. He wanted only to help people make the best of themselves and avoid wasting wonderful life. In my simple thoughts, it is as simple as that.

I was glad to receive your letter. Perhaps one day we shall meet.

[not signed]

**Paris—La Place et le Pont de la Concord**

[POST CARD]

Postmarked 24-2, 1964

Mrs. Margery West

7/11 Athol Street

Douglas

Isle of Man

Angleterre

Orgeval, 22 Feb.

Thank you for your sweet reassurance which makes me most eager for a meeting. Mr. G. was no saint, the contrary, but his aim was saintly; a man of all human moods, the best was foremost. The last chapter of Pierre Schaeffer best expresses what I felt for him. Do you ever travel this way?

Gratefully,

S. S.

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