Algis Uzdavinys **1962-2010**

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On July 25, 2010, Algis Uzdavinys died suddenly from heart problems. He was only 48. Algis was born in 1962 in Lithuania. He earned his M.A. from the Vilnius Academy of Fine Arts and Ph.D. from Vytautas Magnus University. His dissertation was on the *Hermeneutical Philosophy of Proclus*. After earning these degrees, he was a senior research fellow at the Lithuanian State Institute of Culture, Philosophy, and Arts and then an associate professor at the Vilnius Academy of Fine Arts. Most recently he was Associate Professor and Research Officer at La Trobe University in Bendigo, Australia.

Algis was a tireless researcher, specializing in Neoplatonism and its various connections to philosophies in other lands and cultures, especially Egypt and the Middle East. Early in his career (1997-1998) he won the CIES Fellowship of the French Government, Centre National de Recherche Scientifique (CNRS); in 1998 the FCO Fellowship of the British Academy, University of Liverpool. In 2005 he received the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation East-Central European Research Fellowship, and he traveled to the American Centre of Oriental Research in Amman, Jordan, where he studied the connections between Neoplatonism and ancient cultures in the area.

Algis' research led to several articles and books on Neoplatonism and its connections with Egypt and the Middle East, where he had traveled and studied. His works include:

Hermeneutical Philosophy and Mystagogy of Proclus (2002) (in Lithuanian)
The Egyptian Book of the Dead (2003) (in Lithuanian)

The Golden Chain. An Anthology of Pythagorean and Platonic Philosophy,
World Wisdom Books, 2004.

Philosophy and Theurgy in Late Antiquity, Sophia Perennis, 2010.

In the last months of his life, he was researching the *Egyptian Book of the Dead*
and its relationship to Neoplatonic philosophy.

His love of the ancient world and his passion for communicating it to others fueled his scholarship and teaching. His lectures were charged with the electricity provoked by the depth of his love for his subject. Algis not only studied ancient wisdom; he lived his life in accordance with it.

One week before his death, Algis posted a quotation from the poem “In Praise” by Kathleen Raine on his Facebook page:¹

If this were my last of days
I would praise all that is —
Oh sun’s bright rays
That wake my eyes
Once more upon this world...

In his last days, as in all his life, Algis would certainly have praised all that is. He lived the examined life and has left us a legacy and example.

I myself will always recall Algis not only as a scholar but also as a mountain of man with surpassing gentility and humanity. I remember his intensity and passion when I first met him at the Orono conference in 2002 and he delivered his paper “Divine Rites and Philosophy in Neoplatonism.” It was as if he was in an inspired trance. Later he helped lead a greeting of the morning sun amid the flowers of the campus of the University of Maine. It is the way I will always picture him—serene after sunrise in a garden.

Algis leaves behind a daughter, Ruta, and a legion of students and followers. He has left a void in our lives that will be hard to fill.

¹⁾ K. Raine, *Living with Mystery: Poems 1987-91* (Golgonooza Press 1992). I wish to thank David Fideler for this reference.