

N.N. WOULD HAVE BEEN DELIGHTED BY THE PERPETUATION OF HIS FATHER'S NAME

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This year, in 1999, the Russian Academy of Sciences and the Saint-Petersburg State University celebrate their 275th anniversary. The Saint-Petersburg Orthodox Seminary and Academy have celebrated this date in December 1996. In my speech greeting the Spiritual Schools on behalf of the University, I have mentioned that during my childhood and school years in Nizhny Novgorod I attended some divine services performed by Metropolitan Serghiy (Stragorodskiy), a graduate of the Saint-Petersburg Orthodox Academy and a future Patriarch of Moscow and All-Russia. I also said that it was Metropolitan Serghiy who led the funeral service for my father in Spas-Church in Nizhny Novgorod in 1934. In a break between sessions Most Eminent Nikolay, Metropolitan of Nizhny Novgorod and Arzamas, who was present at the celebrations asked me whether I was the son of Very Reverend Nikolay M. Bogoliubov. On hearing a positive reply he told me that a restored parish of Spas-Church in Nizhny Novgorod — the Church of Our Most Merciful Saviour, makes arrangements for the installation of a marble plaque in the memory of Father Nikolay, the former archpriest of the church. This was so much of a surprise to me that even now, a year after the plaque was consecrated, I still view its construction as a miracle.

The Bogoliubov family was always a family of priests. Mikhail A. Bogoliubov (1838–1900) finished his life as a priest of a village Gordeevka close to Nizhegorodsky Fair. By origin he was from Ardatovsky district of Nizhny Novgorod's province, where his ancestors served as priests. The last priest in the family was Nikolay M. Bogoliubov (1872–1934). He first studied at Lyskovo's Orthodox Primary School (graduated in 1886), then at the Seminary of Nizhny Novgorod (graduated in 1892) and finally became a student of Moscow Spiritual Academy (1896). He achieved the degrees of Master (1900) and Doctor of Theology (1917). He was the author of a number of books including «Theism and Pantheism» that won the Award of Makariy, the Metropolitan of Moscow, and «Philosophy of Religion», which was published twice, in 1915 and 1918. He also wrote some brochures and articles concerned with philosophical and psychological issues. In 1918 N.M. Bogoliubov was forced to abandon the chair

of theology at Kiev St.Vladimir University and the superiority of the University Church, and being true to the sacred priestly dignity became a parish priest and remained as such for the rest of his life. He served in Ukraine — in a village called Velikie Kruchi in Poltava province, in Priorka near Kiev and finally in Russia — in Nizhny Novgorod.

Children, grandchildren, grandgrandchildren and all the relatives of Nikolay M. Bogoliubov feel deep gratitude towards all those who kept the memory of him over the years. These were the years when no services were held at Spas-Church. Nowadays this majestic church is given back to the people of the parish and has regained its former sacred order with the help of Father Archpriest Igor Ponomarev, its present superior. We must also say sincere thanks to Vera N. Andrianova, a pupil of our mother Olga N. Bogoliubova (1881–1965), for her active participation in the installation of the plaque. Olga N. Bogoliubova was busy supporting the family giving music lessons for thirty years after Father Nikolay's death.

It was on the 6th of September 1998, right after the Liturgy that His Eminence Nikolay, Metropolitan of Nizhny Novgorod and Arzamas, together with the priests and surrounded by the people of the parish consecrated a marble plaque in the memory of N.M. Bogoliubov, a learned pastor, renowned preacher and a wise teacher. So now there are two inscriptions dedicated to the members of Bogoliubov family in Nizhny Novgorod. The one installed on the wall of Spas-Church is dedicated to the father and the other, on the major street of the city, near the University, is in honour of the son.

The father and the son looked different when working. Daily Nikolay M. could be seen sitting at the table either reading or writing. Sometimes he would get up and walk around the room. Young Nikolay N.'s manner was different. He settled himself by the table leaning both on his hands and knees and sometimes even a box of matches would be enough to scribble his formulas. I often heard my father quoting the New Testament in Greek or Latin. Nikolay N. also had a habit of using phrases from the Bible in his speech. I asked him once about our brother: «Where is Aleksey?» and he answered: *Am* I my brother's keeper? (Gen. 4, 9).

The consecration of the marble plaque took place on the sixth year after Nikolai's death and thus seems to stand outside the limits of his personal biography. But it would be wrong to think that way. It was Nikolay N. who prepared the way for this happy event with his first bright scientific achievements, that took place in the end of the 1920s and became known to the public of Nizhny Novgorod at the same time.

The parish I am speaking of was situated at the outskirts of Nizhny Novgorod, close to the famous Ostrog (a prison in far-off days). This was a place of pebbled streets and one or two floor wooden houses. The locals who lived there were modest, sober and hardworking people of decent conduct, who could recognize

different steamboats on the Volga river by the sound of their sirens and eagerly ran to watch every fire, but at the same time they valued other things apart from everyday manual and professional labour. One day someone from among these nice people came across an article in a local newspaper saying that a young mathematician Nikolay Bogoliubov had won a prize of the Bologne Academy of Sciences. And then they realized that it was the son of father Nikolay the article was about. By that time Father Nikolay being a man of high social and scientific authority was already in the prison of Nizhny Novgorod. Later it became known that Nikolay Bogoliubov had received a Doctor's degree in the field of pure mathematics from All-Ukranian Academy of Sciences. Thus the concept of scientists Bogoliubovs, the father and the son, came to life and is maintained till this day in the parish of Spas-Church. A bronze bust of Nikolay N. that was installed in the main street of Nizhny Novgorod has reinforced this notion. The inscription on it says that he was awarded a title of the hero of socialist labour twice. This monument is situated in a garden near one of the buildings of the University. It was originally constructed for the Natural Gymnasium and in 1920s–1930s it housed a secondary school from which Bogoliubov brothers graduated: Aleksey in 1928 and Mikhail in 1935. The marble plaque installed on the wall of the church and crowned with the Cross says:

**In the memory of long-lasting service (1925–1934)
in the Church of Our Most Merciful Saviour of Archipriest
Nikolay Bogoliubov who brought up three sons —
Academicians for the Russian land**

In the end of this inscription which is really touching one may see that the parish has stayed true to its memory going back to the 20s–30s. The modest people belonging to Orthodox faith and at that time distant from the scientific realms, has sensed joy of participation in the great scientific achievements of those years by means of knowing the young scientist, the son of their spiritual pastor and a man of learning himself.

Translated by Olga N. Bogoliubova