The heart of one of the greatest contemporary scientists Andrei Nikolaevich Kolmogorov stopped beating on October 20, 1987.

A.N.Kolmogorov was born in 1903. Although his mother died at his birth and his father did not take part in his upbringing, the boy was not deprived of attention, love and tenderness. He was taken care of by his mother's sister and his early childhood was spent in her father's (the boy's grandfather's) manor-house. The boy was encouraged in his inquisitiveness and his interest in books and nature. "I learnt early the joy of a mathematical "discovery". At the age of 5 or 6 I noticed the regularity $1 = 1^2$, $1 + 3 = 2^2$, $1 + 3 + 5 = 3^2$, $1 + 3 + 5 + 7 = 4^2$ and so on". At home his relations organized a small school based on the latest pedagogical innovations. They even started a journal "Spring Swallows" in which the 5-year old boy "headed" a mathematical section. The journal published his "discovery".

When the boy turned 6, his aunt took him to Moscow. He was enlisted in then one of the most progressive Moscow high schools organized by a circle of radical intellectuals. It differed from the majority of high schools in that it educated both girls and boys and carried out a lot of interesting pedagogical experiments. At school the boy revealed a wide range of interests. He studied deeply biology and physics; at 14 with the help of the encyclopaedia he mastered higher mathematics; he showed interest in chess and in social problems (in particular, he composed the constitution of a Utopian insular state, a commune, in which the principles of a higher justice would have been realized); he participated in the elections to the Constituent Assembly in 1917 and did some research in history. Later he recalled: "My first scientific report made at Moscow University at the age of 17 at the seminar of professor S.V.Bakhrushin was devoted to Novgo-
rod landownership". A.N.Kolmogorov even made a discovery acknowledged by S.V.Bakhrushin, an outstanding Russian historian of that time. A.N.Kolmogorov asked the professor whether it was possible to publish his result. The answer was as follows: "Oh, no, young man. You suggested only one proof. For a historian it is not enough. You need 5 proofs at least". The disappointment felt by A.N.Kolmogorov at that moment must have influenced his choice. He turned to mathematics in which one proof is quite sufficient.

However, A.N.Kolmogorov did not immediately devote his life to mathematics. In 1920, parallel with his studies at Moscow University, he entered the metallurgical department of the Institute of Chemical Technology since he wanted to take up a useful engineering work but soon it was the department of physics and mathematics that remained and since then all his life became closely connected with the university.

A.N.Kolmogorov fitted in with the creative atmosphere of Moscow University. He frequented lectures by the outstanding scientist Nikolai Nikolaevich Luzin who was to become his teacher; he made lively scientific contacts with Luzin's students Pavel Sergeevich Alexandrov and Pavel Samuilovich Uryson who played a great role in the development of topology.

Once, in 1920, at Luzin's lecture a 18-year old Kolmogorov refuted the lecturer's hypothetical statement. He then reported upon this matter at the meeting of a mathematical circle and for the first time drew some attention to himself. P.S.Uryson invited him to become his disciple. But the young man was carried away by the problems suggested by Luzin. He started the construction of a general theory of operations with sets thus going farther than P.S.Alexandrov and M.Ya.Suslin. He wrote a large paper on this subject dated February 1922. He took part in V.V.Stepanov's seminar on trigonometric series where he solved one of the problems posed by Luzin. After that N.N. Luzin asked him "solemnly" (as A.N.Kolmogorov wrote afterwards) to become his student.

In the summer of 1922 (the paper was dated June 2, 1922) A.N.Kolmogorov obtained an outstanding result: he constructed a nowhere convergent Fourier series which immediately brought him a world-wide fame. Thus started his unprecedented creative work.

In 1925 A.N.Kolmogorov graduated from Moscow University and became N.N.Luzin's post-graduate student. In the same year he started his work on probability theory. In 1929 A.N.Kolmogorov and P.S.Alexandrov made their first long boat journey by Volga which marked the