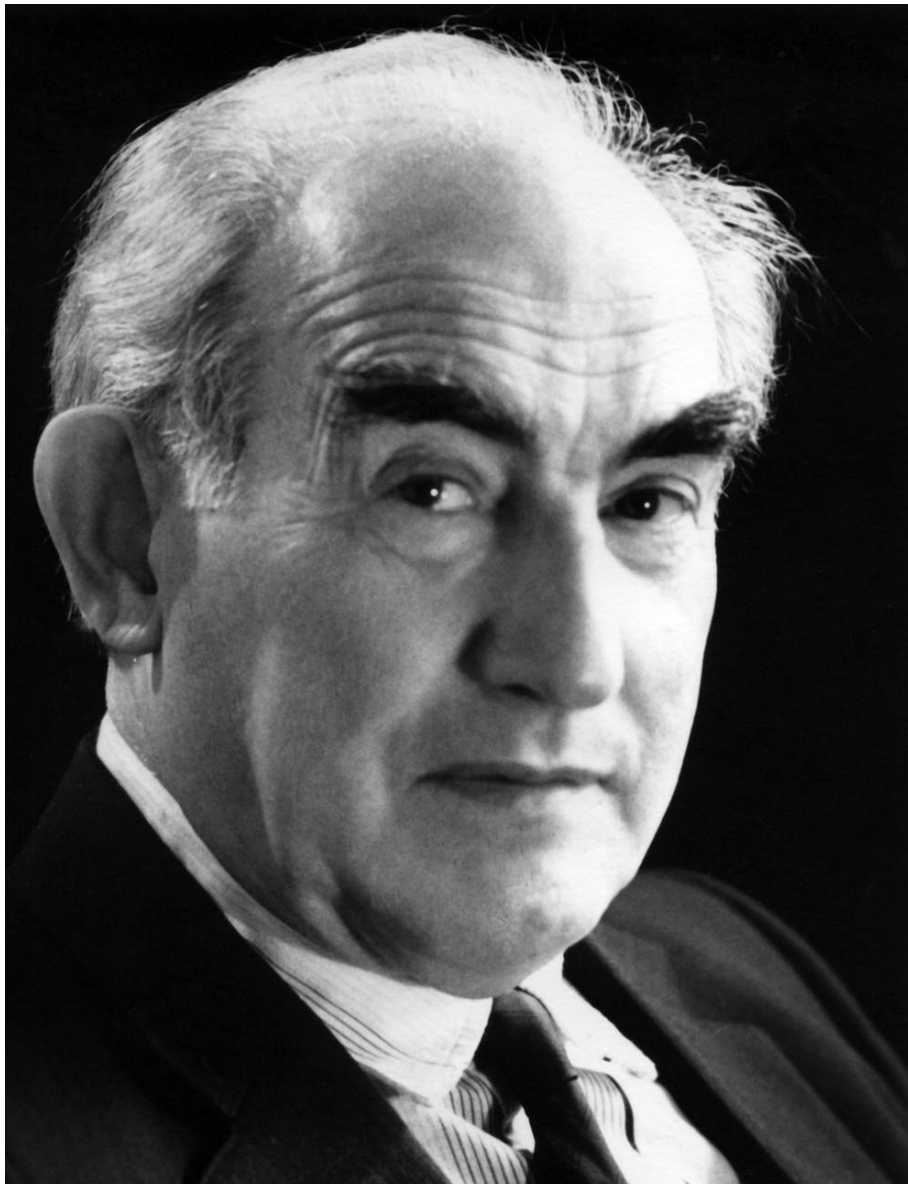


VITALY LAZAREVICH GINZBURG

(4 October 1916 — 8 November 2009)



The Editorial Board of the journal “Uspekhi Fizicheskikh Nauk” [“Physics–Uspekhi”] deeply regrets to announce that **VITALY LAZAREVICH GINZBURG**, a hugely important scientist and outstanding Russian citizen, a teacher and educator, Editor-in-Chief of our journal, passed away on 8 November 2009.

Vitaly Lazarevich Ginzburg lived a long and illustrious life. There was place in it for great science and great love, for faithful service to the fatherland and staunch opposition to obscurantism, for uncompromising defense of an atheistic world view, and for an unflagging belief in the unlimited power of human intellect.

V.L. Ginzburg's contribution to science and to the life of society as a whole in the 20th and 21st centuries was extremely large. It merited highly prestigious international prizes (including the Nobel Prize for Physics in 2003) and state awards (in 2006 he received the highest Russian distinction: the "Order of Service to the Fatherland" I Class).

V.L. Ginzburg's interests as a scientist covered many fields of physics. He published fundamental papers on the theory of superconductivity, superfluidity, ferroelectricity, Vavilov–Cherenkov radiation and transition radiation, radioastronomy, and the origin of cosmic rays, and conducted important application-oriented studies. It was the opinion of V.L. Ginzburg himself that in these very fields he "achieved rather a lot." The scientific heritage left by V.L. Ginzburg will remain for many generations of grateful inheritors. The Editorial Board of "Uspekhi Fizicheskikh Nauk" (UFN) ["Physics–Uspekhi"] journal is now planning a Festschrift issue devoted to V.L. Ginzburg's scientific legacy.

"Uspekhi Fizicheskikh Nauk" has every right to be proud that, as an author, Vitaly Lazarevich chose UFN to publish more than a hundred of his scientific papers (beginning in 1940 when UFN printed his first notes). Every ten years, beginning in 1956, successive stages of his research achievements were highlighted in articles placed in the Personalia section of UFN. The last, the 5th article, was published in October 2006 and was devoted to Vitaly Lazarevich's 90th birthday.

V.L. Ginzburg became a member of the Editorial Board of UFN in 1964. It was owing to the "stellar" composition of the Editorial Board that UFN reached the level of one of the best science journals in the world in the 1960s–1980s (in fact, it has had the 4th highest impact factor among journals of general physics with a multidisciplinary orientation).

In August 1998 V.L. Ginzburg became Editor-in-Chief of UFN journal and performed this job most vigorously until virtually the last days of his life. Vitaly Lazarevich signed off on the November issue of 2009 to send it to the printing presses at 6 p.m. on 6 November 2009 — that is, a day before his last breath.

Even though V.L. Ginzburg often called himself an "old-fashioned fellow," as Editor-in-Chief of UFN he introduced a number of interesting innovations. Thus, it was his initiative, already in 1996, that each issue carry a section "Physics News on the Internet"; then he suggested a section "Physics–Uspekhi Tribune" for the online version of the journal, www.ufn.ru. V.L. Ginzburg's articles on history, philosophy, and current social issues, often written for other publishers but which he wished to make immediately available to his readers, were regularly placed on this site. Many aspects of our complicated life caused profound anxiety for Vitaly Lazarevich, and he felt, as Leo Tolstoy had many years before, the imperative to follow the same principle: "I cannot and will not be silent."

In his last interview, given to the magazine "Physics World", V.L. Ginzburg formulated his credo: "I am convinced that the bright future of mankind is connected with the progress of science." Vitaly Lazarevich's attitude, his expression of this conviction, were contagious to everyone who happened to attend his unique seminars, or those who were among his students and colleagues, or readers of his articles and books, or those present at his speeches. Thousands of people will have warm memories of meeting him, each one cherishing their very personal experience of having known V.L. Ginzburg.

We ask everyone who wishes to share with us their memories of V.L. Ginzburg to send their reminiscences to UFN for the web page "In memory of Vitaly Lazarevich Ginzburg" on the UFN website (www.ufn.ru).