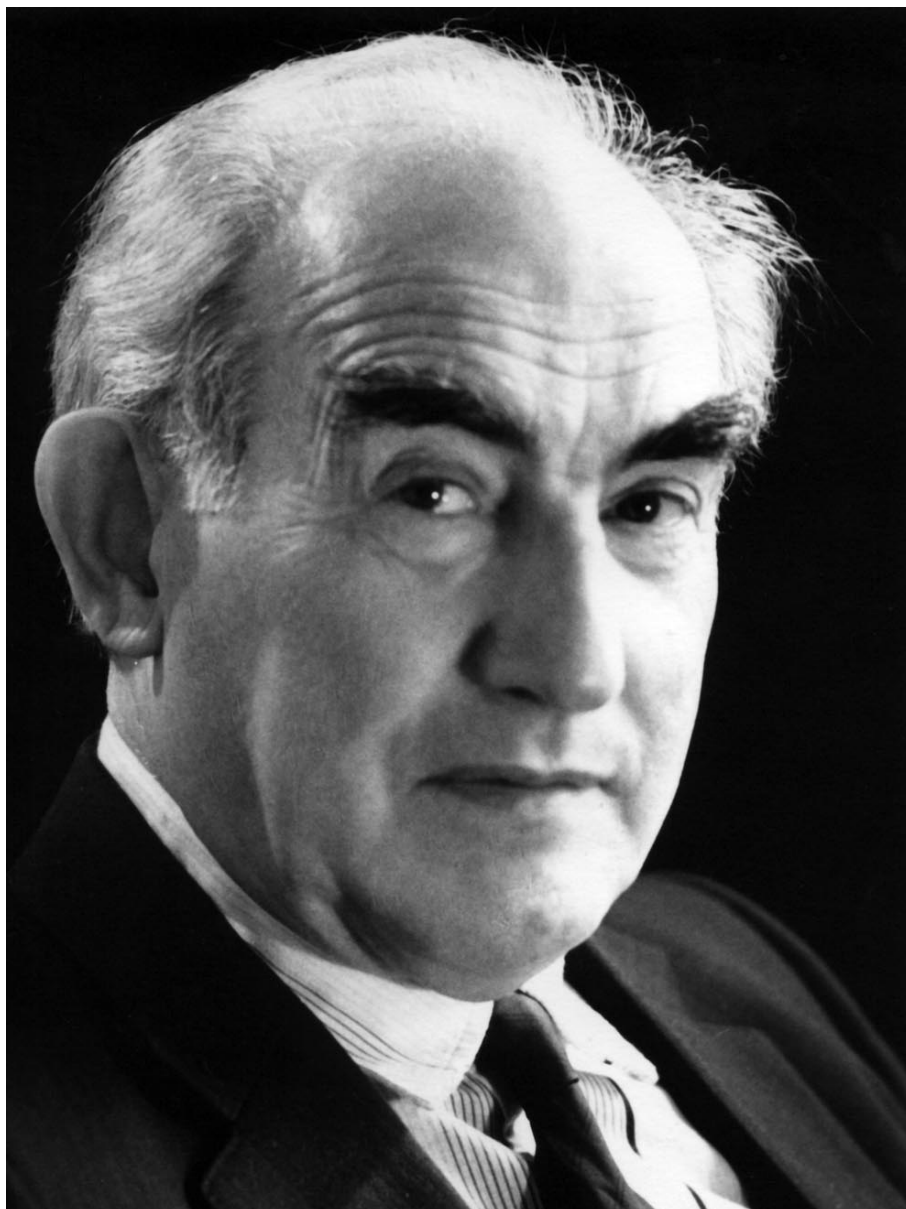


**VITALY LAZAREVICH GINZBURG**  
**(100th anniversary of the birth)**



**(04.10.1916 – 08.11.2009)**

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be 'V. Ginzburg', written in a cursive style. The signature is underlined with a single horizontal stroke.

## October 4, 2016 marks the 100th anniversary of the birth of Vitaly Lazarevich Ginzburg

*The papers in this and the next two issues of Uspekhi Fizicheskikh Nauk [Physics–Uspekhi] journal examine the present-day development of the scientific legacy of Vitaly Lazarevich Ginzburg (1916–2009), the outstanding physicist whose honors, in addition to membership in the Soviet (now Russian) Academy of Sciences, include membership in the National Academy of Sciences of the USA and in a number of other national academies; fellowship in the Royal Society of London, and honorary doctorates from many leading universities. He is also the Nobel Laureate in Physics 2003 and the winner of the M V Lomonosov Grand Golden Medal of the Russian Academy of Sciences (RAS) and of Russia’s highest award, the First Degree Order of Merit to the Fatherland.*

*V L Ginzburg’s long and brilliant life was one of great science and great love, one which featured service to the nation and an uncompromised fight against obscurantism and for the atheist worldview, and one which was guided by a firm belief in the unlimited power of the human mind. V L Ginzburg contributed immensely to both science and public life in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. V L Ginzburg’s research interests spanned many areas of physics. He published fundamental works on superconductivity, superfluidity, ferroelectricity, the Vavilov–Cherenkov effect, transition radiation, radio astronomy, and the origin of cosmic rays and carried out important applied research, including his valuable contribution to the Soviet Atomic Project. It is in these areas of physics that, in V L Ginzburg’s view, he ‘did quite a lot’ (in his own words). Many following generations of scientists will certainly gratefully benefit from V L Ginzburg’s legacy.*

*Uspekhi Fizicheskikh Nauk [Physics–Uspekhi] journal (UFN) had a seventy (!) year history of relations with Vitaly Lazarevich, from his first UFN article (1940) to literally the last day of his life, in 2009, when he, as Editor-in-Chief, signed what turned out to be his last ‘into print’ approval for the next UFN issue. We are justifiably proud that V L Ginzburg published over a hundred of his papers in our journal. From 1964, he served on the Uspekhi Fizicheskikh Nauk [Physics–Uspekhi] journal Editorial Board, and in August 1998 he became the Editor-in-Chief of UFN, leading the journal in a creative and active way until literally the last days of his life. The “UFN Tribune” section of the UFN [Physics–Uspekhi] site [www.ufn.ru](http://www.ufn.ru) was used by V L Ginzburg as an outlet for papers on history, philosophy, religion, and social life, papers that were intended for elsewhere but which he was eager to make available outright. Deeply worried about many aspects of what was happening in the country, he was a strong believer in Leo Tolstoy’s “can’t keep silent” principle.*

*In a 2009 interview for the journal “Physics World”, which proved to be his last, V L Ginzburg gives this as his credo: “My firm belief is that it is progress in science which will lead mankind to a brighter future!” This was an infectious belief indeed for all those who were lucky to enjoy his unique seminar sessions and to be among his students and colleagues, as well as for his readers and his listeners. Thousands of people will keep an appreciative memory of him, and for each one of them encounters with V L Ginzburg are a unique, never-to-forget experience.*

*As if giving a helping hand to his future biographers and to science historians, V L Ginzburg wrote a number of books where he takes a detailed look at his own scientific career, gives biographical information, and describes his public position on many then (and still now) topical issues. The following books give an idea of V L Ginzburg’s work and personality:*

*Ginzburg V L O Fizike i Astrofizike (On Physics and Astrophysics), 3rd edition revised and amended (Moscow: Byuro Kvantum, 1995) (in Russian); the English translation: *The Physics of a Lifetime. Reflections on the problems and Personalities of 20th Century Physics* (Berlin, Heidelberg, New York: Springer, 2001)*

*Ginzburg V L O Nauke, o Sebe i o Drugikh (On Science, Myself and Others), 3rd edition revised and amended (Moscow: Fizmatlit, 2004) (in Russian); the English translation: *About Science, Myself and Others* (Bristol: IOP Publishing, 2005)*

*Ginzburg V L O Sverkhprovodimosti i Sverkhtekuchesti. Avtobiografiya (On Superconductivity and Superfluidity. Autobiography) (Moscow: Izd. Fiz.-Mat. Lit., 2006) (in Russian); the English translation: *On Superconductivity and Superfluidity. A Scientific Autobiography* (Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer, 2009)*