It is a testimony to the caliber of the scholarship of the late A. Ia. Gurevich that he almost single-handedly sustained social psychology and mentalité as vibrant, if fine, filaments within Soviet historical scholarship, which not only survived the draconian Soviet academic environment of the Brezhnev years but re-emerged as driving forces of post-Soviet historiography, particularly in the guise of historical anthropology. Gurevich’s research and writing on medieval Europe during the late-Khrushchev and early-Brezhnev periods was a crucial conduit both for long-standing Russian traditions in cultural history and for transmitting international historiographical developments, particularly the French Annales school. The resurgence and strength of the cultural orientation of much contemporary Russian historical writing has its roots in the fields of historical-psychology and mentalité for which, from the mid-1960s onwards, the renowned medievalist Aron Gurevich so eloquently articulated and argued.

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The demise of the Soviet Union and with it Marxism-Leninism as the officially endorsed paradigm for the social sciences in general and historical research and writing in particular left a yawning theoretical and methodological gap facing post-Soviet historians in Russia and elsewhere. Nevertheless, despite the material and intellectual obstacles to historical careers and scholarship during the 1990s, some younger historians began to fill this paradigmatic gap with new approaches at a time when there were unprecedented opportunities for archival research, particularly on the Stalin era. While many historians of the Stalin period quickly embraced the “totalitarian” model largely derived from Western political science, others turned to researching Soviet cultural history, viz., popular perspectives, attitudes and behavior under Stalinism. Such research has proceeded

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under a number of rubrics: “everyday life,” “historical psychology,” “mentality” and, increasingly, “historical anthropology.” Among the foremost practitioners of this genre of cultural historiography are Elena Zubkova, author of *Russia After the War*, and Elena Seniavskaia, author of *The Front Generation*. Research of this cultural genre is not quite as new as it might seem. In the late Khrushchev and early Brezhnev years there was increasing and innovative thinking among some Soviet historians about social subjectivities that, although thwarted and marginalized, prefigured and undoubtedly has influenced much current historical thinking and research. A. Ia. Gurevich was foremost among these historians. This chapter looks at his place in the origins and development of Soviet historiography in the fields of historical psychology and *mentalités* in the late 1960s and early 1970s and the degree to which these fields and Gurevich’s work in particular, laid the groundwork for contemporary historical anthropology.

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Marxist cultural analysis, as it emerged in post-war Western and Eastern Europe, was a reaction to the tendency within Soviet-style Marxism to treat culture as a mere secondary epiphenomenon of economic relations, of classes and of modes of production. Western European Marxists led the way. The humanist Marxism of the New Left, which first emerged in the late 1950s, increasingly engaged with anthropological conceptions of culture that emphasized human agency: language, communication, experience and consciousness. By the 1960s and 1970s Western cultural Marxism was engaged in a

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