THE EIGHTH EUROPEAN PSYCHOANALYTIC FILM FESTIVAL

Turning Points in Psychoanalysis

Laura Mulvey
Piccadilly (EA Dupont; UK 1929)
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Unlike Mike's and Daniel's presentations, mine is focused on a fiction and my turning point is one that changes the direction of the narrative, taking it away from the status quo into a new situation out of which the story will develop.   I will show the relevant five-minute sequence but would like to begin with a few background points.   Narrative structure, that is, in conventional stories rather than avant-garde or experimental ones, tends to be organised around an initial situation, a status quo which could happily continue were it not for an interference, a disruption that abruptly shifts events and characters into a new, unexpected, direction. However, more psychologically complex narratives might be triggered, as Peter Brookes has argued, by the eruption of desire which performs the function of an 'engine' sparking off and driving forward ensuing events characterised more by emotion and the erotic than adventure. In this sense, narrative structure is essentially axed around an initial turning point from which the drive of the story is derived. *Piccadilly* begins with an established and apparently stable situation. The suave and successful Valentine Wilmot

runs the Piccadilly Club, offering dancing, dinner and drinks as well as a special act performed by professional dancers 'Victor and Mabel' – Mabel is Valentine's devoted girlfriend.   It is the implicit disruption of this status quo that my sequence depicts.

I am interested in the cinematic rendering of this narrative turning point. While its participants are not aware of its ultimate significance, the action is extended across time and space in such a way that its audience cannot but be aware that this is point at which the drama begins.   And something else confirms this audience awareness: the turning point sequence also introduces the film's star, Anna May Wong.   Cinematically and aesthetically there is a build up to the moment at which she first appears on screen.

Anna May Wong plays Sho-sho, a young Chinese woman from Limehouse who works in the scullery of the Piccadilly Club and who 'ultimately' will become the new star of the Piccadilly Club and emotionally (and professionally) involved with Valentine.   Again, before showing the sequence: a couple of points about Anna May Wong and how her connotations and status manage to carry off this seemingly unlikely romance and easy rise to stardom.   How is the turning point narratively possible?

I would suggest that the film can only be understood through the contemporary, 1920s, culture of the modern, and the specific resonance of the young modern woman and also through Anna May Wong's star persona.   Wong had left Hollywood as the problem of 'miscegenation' rendered her unable to form part of the central romantic couple essential for Hollywood stardom. She was unable to break out of minor, supporting roles in a Hollywood ruled by the Hayes Code. She went to Berlin in 1928, and although 'exoticized', films were constructed specifically for her, her image was celebrated and her access to leading roles and stardom was

assured. Furthermore, her press build-ups and publicity throughout her European career all emphasized Anna May Wong's own personal, off-screen modernity, her stylishness, her sophistication and her engagement with contemporary culture; above all, that she was an American star, a Hollywood star. Wong's success in her Ufa films led to a contract with British International Pictures.

The film, and thus its very particular narrative turning point, also needs to be understood within the wider context of the British film industry's attempt around this time to construct a turning point of its own, to ward off Hollywood domination, to build a substantial industry that would attract international talent and international distribution.   Andrew Higson has argued that the British film industry needed to move away from depicting traditional and thus 'stuffy' 'Englishness', in order to appeal to a transnational audience and to find a way of moving beyond its own stereotypes, its relegation of the lower-classes to crude caricature, and its characteristic inhibitions with regard to sex. As Higson says: 'The films this period produced might unsettle traditional national identities – with English reserve displaced by a "continental" approach to romance, desire and the representation of the body, for instance'.

It was into this context that Anna May Wong arrived, directed in *Piccadilly* by WA Dupont a supreme stylist of German cinema supported by some of the most skilled technicians of contemporary Europe. *Piccadilly* was a big budget production for BIP; Arnold Bennett was brought in to write a script, specifically to show case its star.

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Some comments: to begin with, the sequence constructs two binary oppositions. First: between the restaurant and the scullery, as the specifics of *place* mutate into the more abstract *space* of class hierarchy and the

high as opposed to the low. And secondly, between Mabel and Sho-sho: Mabel's stylistic fussiness, or rather her lack of a modern, streamlined silhouette contrasts with Sho-sho's instinctive, if downtrodden, version of flapper fashion. Mabel acquires these connotations, in keeping with the principles of structuralism, in relation to Sho-sho, as meaning emerges from the opposition of two terms. Valentine's journey, however, works to open up a space in between the binary opposites, and the presence of the kitchen (between the restaurant and scullery) suggests a metonymical figure: links in the chain of the spaces needed to produce entertainment as commodity, and the spaces themselves linked by stylised repetition. Valentine's journey, from high to low, echoes the opposition between London's East End and West End, socially between rich (bourgeois/aristocratic) and poor (working-class), ethnically between Piccadilly and Limehouse, that will mark his future relationship with Sho-sho.

But before Valentine embarks on his journey, the drunken diner (Charles Laughton) has already personified 'disruption' of a status quo: his behaviour and the mark on the plate condense into a single intrusion of the inappropriate into the polite or, perhaps, the id into the terrain of the super-ego. Thus while the disruption initiates the first step of a narrative turning point it also draws attention to its (perhaps anachronistically, perhaps due to this gathering) psychoanalytic implications, at least on a metaphorical level. Valentine's journey evokes the topography of the psyche, in which the conscious mind (the restaurant) shores up its defences against its own 'lower depths' (the scullery). But if the mark on the plate has functioned initially as a sign of the abject and of transgression, it mutates into a signifier of Sho-sho herself. The sequence moves from inappropriate behaviour in the restaurant to inappropriate behaviour in the scullery.   The stain on the plate suggests a symptom, a sign that 'something is wrong'. In a kind of carnivalesque reversal, Sho-sho has transformed the site of degraded labour into a mirror of the heterotopic space 'in front'. And then

the oppression of the scullery workers intrudes as a return of the repressed in the site of high bourgeois entertainment.

The love story as a genre tends to address a female audience, to revolve around desire, leading to questions about the relative freedoms and constraints associated with women's sexual autonomy. Love stories touch certain social nerves and leave behind, even at their most clichéd, questions about the kinds of barriers and taboos that their fictional couples can or cannot transcend. Sentiment, the 'soppiness' of the love story, may thus also be intensely social – as feminist theorists of the melodrama have been pointing out for some time. Following the Women's Liberation Movement's slogan 'the personal is political', the analysis of love, sentiment, sexuality, emotion and so on, in film and literature, have been crucial in illuminating the 'poetics' of women's emotional discourses, translating 'feeling' into historical and social context, and underlining, if by a knight's move, Freud's insistence on the central place occupied by sexuality and its complications in human life.

To my mind, or rather in my imagination, there is something fascinating about these dreams of modernity and internationalism that characterised so much of cinema in the late 1920s. That is, the modernity of *Piccadilly*, of its Chinese-American female protagonist, its use of London and its topography, that emerge materially and symptomatically out of an economic and, perhaps, political substructure. Thinking about my chosen sequence, I found it impossible not to add a historical, ideological dimension, especially in the context of British Cinema. But two coincidental, and near simultaneous developments, turning points in the narrative of the wider world, took the cinema along a different path, away from the modern and towards the national:

Piccadilly was made in 1929, one of THE turning points in the history of cinema and, of course, highly significant in modern history.   To sketch briefly:

1. Wall Street Crash on 24th October led to the great depression and (apologies for such a condensation of history) brought to an end the glittering decade of the 1920s, epitomised by the figure of the modern girl or flapper.

2. By early 1929, the Hollywood Studios' conversion to synchronised sound had been completed and brought to an end the easy international movement of stars as well, of course, as modes of narrative visualisation and figuration characteristic of non-synchronised cinema.

These two factors changed the context of film production and the cultural, economic context in which films were produced and exhibited.

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Turning Points in Psychoanalysis

Michael Brearley
October 2015

In psychoanalysis as elsewhere, there are turning points in the direction of growth, development and the facing of reality; there are also moments where someone, as in organisations and groups, turns towards regression, evasion, madness, perversion or defensiveness.

One patient who had been sexually abused by her father, heard powerful persuasive voices inside her head. She would work well with her analyst for a while, opening things up. Such turning towards growth would be followed by a reaction. Thus she wrote two letters to an organisation that part-funded her analysis saying how it was crucial in enabling her to live her life, and then a third telling the funder to disregard the first two. The other voice, extremely suspicious of anyone who was apparently kind to her, had spoken. This is an example of a negative therapeutic reaction.

We make U-turns in contradictory directions, as well as partial turns in varied directions.

Some psychic changes *are* on the side of growth. These are often occasions where an interpretation has a powerful effect. We are inclined to the idea that causality is a matter of something coming in from outside, like an immigrant or a germ or an interpretation. We need to remember that for someone to change as a result of an interpretation various things have to be already in place.

I will suggest four pre-requisites for an interpretation to have traction.

First there has to be some sense of self-dissatisfaction in the patient; or at least a sense of how things could be better. Indeed a good deal of the work of analytic therapy consists in increasing patients' awareness of their own need. We analysts problematize what may have been dismissed by the

patient as ordinary, or good enough. Our job may be seen as not only 'comforting the troubled', but also as 'troubling the comfortable'.

Second there needs to be, in the patient, openness to the new, some willingness to countenance the shock of the new. An interpretation may carry conviction because the patient was already on the brink of reaching this point himself. In fact the most therapeutic approach by the analyst at such times is to allow the idea to come from the patient. These are situations described by William James, in *Varieties of Religious Experience,* as 'unconscious incubation'.

He tells a story of two brothers on an expedition. When one in his routine way gets on his knees and murmurs a prayer before going to sleep, the other says quietly, 'you don't still go in for this, do you?' At once the scales fall from the eyes of the apparently devout man. He realises that his words and thoughts no longer carry conviction for him. He is going through the motions merely. Thirty years later he is still happily agnostic. The turning point with his brother had been a kind of reverse Road to Damascus experience. James compares it to the snowflake that 'causes' a wall to collapse. The straw that broke the camel's back. The wall was already wobbly, the camel's spine on its last legs.

At other times the analyst may need, for a long time, to make analyst-centred interpretations. We say something like this: 'when I talk about your feelings towards me, you feel that I am out to humiliate you and make myself important'. We don't hammer away at a closed door by saying, for example: 'you put yourself on a pedestal and treat me like an inferior being'. If take this latter approach, then we are likely to be bluntly and furiously rejected, and the relationship risks being reduced to a mutual tennis match of insults.

I mentioned readiness to embrace the shock of the new. There is a book called: *Radical Hope*, by Jonathan Lear. It's about the Crow Indians, living on the plains of America, whose whole way of life was threatened in the second half of the nineteenth century. Lear tells the story of the dream of young Plenty Coups, later to become a Chief.

 The dream begins with images of the catastrophe to come, in the form of the *replacement of buffalo with strange spotted cows and bulls*. It continues: *the dreamer was told that the Four Winds were going to cause a terrible storm in the forest, and only one tree would be left standing, the tree of the Chickadee-person. He sees an image of an old man sitting under that lone tree and is told, in the dream, that that person is himself. Finally, he is told to follow the example of the chickadee.*

The dream, then, offered a clue to survival and to the rebuilding of morale in the form of the chickadee, a bird (a small tit) noted for its wily ways and its capacity to learn from others. Lear suggests that this be understood as an

indication of a new ego ideal, a chickadee ideal - of canny openness to an unknown life. This new ideal would be necessary in their radically different context, in which the traditional values, their traditional forms of courage – courage in battle and in hunting, and all the rituals that contributed to this form of life – would no longer have a lived place. The chickadee's qualities would, at least at this point in time, have to be open-ended, unspecific. The Crow tribe already valued dreams and what they could tell them. Thus imagination was given an enhanced value for the tribe as a result of taking this dream seriously.

Lear links the Crow situation to that of the patient who is offered an interpretation by an analyst at a time when he is not yet able to know what form his new personality structure that is beginning to emerge will take.

The third thing that has to be in place for an interpretation to have traction is that there needs to be some therapeutic alliance, such that a part of the patient trusts the analyst enough to give house-room to his or her suggestions or interpretations. Such alliances can't be taken for granted; nor are they to be induced by seduction. Assuming the patient is not someone inclined to be trustful until shown that this is foolish, an alliance can be earned only by truthfulness, empathy and tact on the side of the analyst. The trusting relationship has to become strong enough to accommodate and allow mistrust and other forms of hostility. The possibilities of beneficial change will often hinge on the relative strengths of the two forces – the alliance on one side, and the touchiness on the other, a touchiness in favour of keeping things covered up.

Fourth, there needs to be the stamina and energy to follow through (what Freud called ' to work through'). The impact needs to go deep enough to outweigh the inevitable tendencies to revert or let it all drop.

Psychoanalytic theory predicts all these features. If, as we believe, the unconscious is largely constituted by what we've repressed, or disowned, there will have been persuasive reasons for the initial repression or disowning, so there is bound to be hostility and resistance to the uncovering and undoing of our unconscious ideas, emotions, orientations and dispositions.

So much (for the moment) for the patient.

What about the analyst? Again, psychoanalytic theory makes plausible what has to be in place on the side of the analyst. It holds that intellectual understanding is by itself not enough, and this leads us to expect that the analyst too has to be prepared for shocks and difficulties.

James Strachey 1934 argues that it is often the case that what we should interpret is that which we find most difficult to say. This does not mean that

we don't have to work hard to find ways of saying it that might be relatively palatable to the patient. But Strachey is right, the analyst as well as the patient needs courage, and also tolerance of uncertainty. We analysts are tempted to keep clear of saying things that will produce the greatest resistance.

Related to this is what **Neville Symington** (1983) called the analyst's 'act of freedom'. He had a patient whom he had nicknamed (to himself) 'Little Mary'. He had come to see that he, like other significant people in her life, had been pulled into being a magnanimous, grand figure who treated her with kid gloves, as if she were a child, unable to take a full part in the adult world. It took an act of freedom for him to realize what was going on, to detach himself from this imbroglio, and enable the patient to stand up for herself and begin to live up to her potential. One element in this process was his coming to think about the exceptionally low fee he was charging her. He saw that the setting of this fee was itself a move in the game played (and unknowingly orchestrated) by Little Mary, along with her fellow game-player, himself. When he increased her fee, with (we assume) appropriate comments, she was able (after her initial outrage) to accept it. She began to assert herself in her work-life, finding a more responsible job commensurate with her skills and experience. She also ditched her unsuitable boyfriend (but not, I think, her analyst).

As a result of coming to see how he had been lassoed by the patient into a particular form of relationship, the analyst was able to make a shift in his own mind, moving into a third position. This move became the occasion for the turning point - and perhaps the sine qua non for it - in the patient.

I mentioned the **analyst's uncertainty**. Often we can't be sure how such an interpretation and change in stance will affect the patient. Both our courage and our tact may well be further tested in ensuing sessions.

A patient is depressed. He walks up and down the street outside the analyst's consulting room at and after the beginning of his session time. He knows the analyst will look out and see him there. He leaves it to the analyst to do something about this. Thus he puts the analyst in a cleft stick. If the latter goes out and invites the patient in, he has broken his own rules of abstinence, and of not interfering in the life of the patient. On the other hand if he does nothing is he not being heartless towards a suffering patient?

The alternatives are usually not as stark as this makes it sound. He could leave the patient for a while, and then, if he stayed outside, invite him in. Whichever course the analyst chooses, he is likely to be able to take the whole scenario up with the patient in due course. But there is an important question: how much was the patient really unable to come in? Alternatively, or in parallel, how much was he provoking the analyst, testing him out, forcing him to make a mistake one way or another?

Acting may be a risk for the analyst. But so may the action of not-acting. My point here is that the analyst may not know in advance what the impact of either course will be. The patient may be able to take in an interpretation about his manipulation (especially if the analyst does not ignore his suffering), or he may not. He may break off treatment. It may be more important for the patient to make the analyst suffer in this way, to make the analyst feel abandoned, rather than face his own need to project his pain and be in control. Such situations can be difficult and troubling for the analyst. It may take courage to take up with the patient the range of emotions and motives involved, without any guarantee that the outcome will be a good one.

In summary
'Turning points' are closely related to the psychoanalytic notion of psychic change. They happen on large and small scales. They may be in the direction of growth, or in the direction of regression or pathological reaction. For them to happen, there needs to be a readiness in the patient, and also in the analyst. I refer to the analyst's act of freedom (Symington), and to the need at times to find ways of interpreting that which we are most reluctant to take up (Strachey). Sometimes the analyst can find in himself a third position from which he can see the situation he is in with the patient and find ways of addressing it. But even then the outcomes of his decisions to interpret in this way or that, or not to interpret, cannot be guaranteed.

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Turning Points in History

Daniel Pick
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'Turning points' are of course a perennial concern of historians. They are in the business of looking at change, as well as stagnation in the past: thus revolutions as well as possible 'false dawns' and failed developments: was the Arab Spring, for instance, a real break with the past or not, and if there was a decisive rupture in that heady time of possibility, of what kind? How does one moment of historical possibility, or of human disaster, compare with another? Was 9/11 best seen as the unprecedented epoch changing moment in global history that it was often considered to be at the time? As a tragedy for thousands and as an atrocious set of acts, leading to mass murder, there can be no doubt, but as 'turning point, there might be several kinds of argument. If it did usher in a new world this was as much to do with the policy decisions taken in its aftermath as the event itself; some argue that events were 'hijacked' by neo-Con ideologues who were already committed to certain far-reaching geo-political policy changes well in advance.

Historians look for how events turn worlds, and how particular interests, and discourses, may fashion or seize upon such contingent occurrences. Thus turning points, real and imagined, require scrutiny, just as communities 'on the ground' and as

envisioned in language and image, require close analysis. The real and the virtual often bleed into one another; 'communities' are indeed always at some level imagined. And intellectual, political, cultural, social or economic transitions and transformations in nations or continents are indeed often hard to disentangle. And of course it is s not only guns and tanks on the streets that may produce material effects in the 'real world', but also words and images.

 Some historians now also search for the turning point when human beings actually had the capacity materially to affect the very conditions of viability for human life on the planet – the term 'anthropocene', coined in the 1960s, is now used to describe the stage in human history in which human activity has affected the climate and geology of the world we live in.   The *Annales school* in France, in and after the 1930s, perhaps set the scene for such a notion – as they sought the deeper and slower moving material transformations in our environments over centuries or millennia, and the consequences of those settings for social organisation itself. This was an attempt to eschew the 'kings and queens' style of history. A characteristic move was to show how particular regions of the world – for instance, the Mediterranean –shape the contours of life, far more than the dynastic question of who governs which bit of the territory. Turning points might be for instance a matter of the erosion of the soil, rather than the decapitation of a monarch.

Other schools of history have focussed quite differently, for instance writing in miniature, using 'micro-history', particular lives or moments, or themes (the history of cod, the history of a single criminal case, or the role of 'cheese and the worms' in the life of a particular baker from Friuli) to see how a world of experience and belief might be turning. Here miniature stories are an optic on a larger world.

What I want to get at here is also how the word 'turn', or the phrase 'turning point' can characterise both history, and historiographical understanding, the nature of worlds in the past, and the nature of the way history has been thought about and written, how the past is construed; and I would like to open up

for discussion, the question as to whether the same could be said of film and of psychoanalysis.

Historians use the word 'turn' to convey movement in the 'writing' and conceptualisation of history, as well as to characterise redirections of human effort, feeling, or material practice in the past. That suggests two meanings, but in fact, here I want briefly to elaborate upon that, and to structure these remarks around *three perspectives* on what 'turning points' in history might mean, and then to return to the idea that the lines between them can blur, or at least that they may all interact and overlap in complex ways.

Ther*e are, as already noted, the turning points that historians seek to identify in the material conditions of life in the past.* For instance, we can explore transformations in land, and its use, in political arrangements, social conditions, or the means of production *in the* past. There are obviously questions about who holds power, and who is dispossessed and disempowered. Such focus on the 'turning points' in the structure of entire societies is the most obvious sense in which the phrase exists. As when historians might write about how the Russian Revolution was an epoch-changing moment in world history.

Next consider *the ways historians seek to identify the mood or beliefs of past societies about its own changeability*, and its capacity to turn. For instance, historians might track alterations in the vocabularies, or, to use Foucault's term, the 'discourses' that past societies have available for understanding their own capacity to transform themselves. This history of perceptions of turning points is at least to some degree a distinct matter, from actual material changes: a volcano exploding and burying a town with larva is not the same thing as metaphors of the volcanic in political rhetoric; apocalyptic language can occur even in times of social stagnation. Needless to say there can be a gap between the historian's interpretation of what was happening in the past, and that period's own self-understanding, as it were, of what was happening at the time, or if its import.

Third, we can talk of 'turning points' in the way historical inquiry itself is conducted; so historians talk about the 'gender turn', the cultural turn', the 'linguistic turn', 'the emotional turn' and so on

in historical approaches to the past. As my 'Annales' or 'micro-history' examples suggest, historians, at particular moments in *history* have opened up new questions and methods. There are turning points in what historians are excited by; there are new 'ways of seeing' the past, not just debates about the turning points that have occurred *in* the past.

The historian might be interested, for example, in why many people in Victorian England thought the bourgeoisie had triumphed, and how they insisted that the middle classes were the ascendant power. The historian may or may not agree that this was so, or at least might qualify the exuberant terms in which the claim was previously made, either by champions of capitalism, or by its opponents. Some after all have sought to challenge that verdict – the assumption that a full bourgeois revolution had really occurred, say in Britain - or at least that it had swept all before it in the manner that many once claimed. A case in point, the book by Arno Mayer, entitled *The Persistence of the Old Regime*, which argued that the aristocracy in fact still, to a large degree, ruled the roost, circa 1900, or even 1914 in Britain.

The same goes for the Arab Spring – you could write a history of perceptions that an epochal shift occurred, and you might then write, later on, a different – perhaps more sober, or at least different – assessment of what actually changed in practice.

A famous example here of the disjunction between a past perception of 'turning point' and the later judgement is provided by the celebrated historian, the first of the 'TV" historians' to become a household name, A.J.P. Taylor. In *The Course of German History* (1945), Taylor observed that the revolution in Germany in 1848 (the year of European Revolutions at large) was a turning point where history failed to turn. He was referring here to the restoration of the old guard, soon after the revolutions; so he wanted to insist on the gap between the dreams of the time, and the actual results.

It's worth reading his quotation in full: '1848 was the decisive year of German, and so of European, history: it recapitulated Germany's past and inspired Germany's future...Never has there been a revolution so inspired by a limitless faith in the power of

ideas: never has a revolution so discredited the power of ideas in its result. The success of the revolution discredited conservative ideas; the failure of the revolution discredited liberal ideas. After it, nothing remained but the idea of Force, and this idea stood at the helm of German history from then on. For the first time since 1521, the German people stepped on to the centre of the German stage only to miss their cue once more. German history reached its turning-point and failed to turn. This was the fateful essence of 1848'

Sometimes these three levels I have just described – change in the past, perceptions of change in the past, and changes in the historians' stance towards the past - all operate together, so the historian does something new, even as he or she suggests a world in the past was 'turning', and also observes how people at the time recognised that 'turn' to be occurring – perhaps all of these were the case.

An example here would be the ground breaking post-war writings of historians such as Eric Hobsbawm and Edward Thompson who were part of what was known as the Communist Party Historians' Group. They sought to explore changing conditions of working-class life, labour and struggle, changing perceptions of that struggle (the emergence self-consciously in that class of a sense of itself as sharing an identity as a class) and, in the process, they pioneered a new way of writing history, and opening up quite new questions about history, influenced by various currents of thought in the human sciences of the time.

The CPHG marked a turning point by pioneering a new version of social history, in conscious rejection of the legal, diplomatic, high-political or ecclesiastical history that had previously dominated the field, and at the same time in rejection of overtly romanticised celebrations of 'the English people'. They also fostered a new, more complex understanding of the dynamic relationship between socio-economic and cultural forces.

In the process they challenged the view that it was possible mechanically to understand writing, still less feelings, attitudes or group identities by routinely attributing them to the subject's economic location. So they were Marxists who rejected an economistic version of Marxism, as well as rejecting traditional

historical focus near exclusively upon those who held 'power' on the land or in the factories, or in government, church, or the army. So it was a turning point in how Marxism was mobilised in, or critiqued by, historians. These writers were concerned with economic factors, of course, but their achievement was to demonstrate, again and again, the impossibility of making simple assumptions about the relationship of 'superstructure' and 'base' in understanding the subjective life of history's actors.

Another member of the CPHG, Christopher Hill reshaped the field of seventeenth-century studies when in in a famous book he showed how the Levellers, Diggers and other radical sects who emerged within a time of revolution in seventeenth -century England responded to change, and in turn reshaped their world. The title of his book, again rather pertinent to the present discussion, was 'The World Turned Upside Down'.

The historians who had emerged from the CPHG explored group phenomena and class phenomena in ways that provided, *inter alia*, a more illuminating collective portrait of previously ignored working people, especially 'labouring men'.

Perhaps, thinking as we are here at this conference of cinema, we could make links to the new forms of social realism that became popular after WW2, which opened new subjects to view, and in turn pioneered a new form of cinema. We could think of the world of 'The Bicycle Thieves' (1948), or later, make reference to films about the gritty, quotidian reality of working class life in the North of England. Thompson's great book, *The Making of the English Working Class* in the early 60s was a close contemporary of novels and films such as *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning.*

Another turning point came when a generation of feminist historians challenged such histories and historians. They now mapped the marginalisation, or even at times the way of rendering invisible the experience of agency of women in, say, 'labour history'. Works in this period had titles such as *Hidden From History* (to cite a book from that time by the historian Sheila Rowbotham). This 'turn' to women's history, and increasingly to the exploration of the categories and effect of 'gender' on both sexes, and upon the nature of the gendered

assumptions that may shape the historian's own world view, had implications both for the form and the content of historical writing.

I also want to invite for question how cinema and psychoanalysis might have affected the writing of history, and *vice versa*. There is much to say here, but suffice just now to raise the question how far, for instance, certain techniques or styles in cinema may have affected the way historians write, or how they think of time and space. It would be interesting to compare narrative techniques in historical writing with those of the cinema, and the different ways, in different phases of the century, that story tellers may conventionally choose to 'zoom in and out', offer 'close focus', make dramatic 'cuts' in the sequence, provide particular kinds of tracking shot', 'wide angle views', or stitch together different elements, perhaps to create an illusion of far greater coherence than really applies. How far, I wonder, inadvertently, or intentionally, might some successful best-selling historians now pace their narratives, in line with certain Hollywood movie conventions?

It is also worth considering here how far Freudian thought has been a 'turning point' in how historians have related to the historical past. Rather little, I'd say in British historiography, perhaps more so in America. Such turning points or sometimes such missed encounters - in history might in turn open up new historical questions: why was such and such a thinker the catalyst for so much historiographical change? Why did Marx or Foucault matter so much more to British historians in twentieth-century Britain than Freud, or any of the key followers, whose impact reached quite far into at least some other areas of the academy? And one might ask if that 'non encounter' between psychoanalysis and historiography is now starting to turn as well.

It is striking that there has been so much focus in recent years on the history of the emotions, including very notably on war, masculinity and mental breakdown. Some historians have written eloquently of the psychic life of soldiers and of civilians in the Great War, using personal letters as a key source. Certainly many historians now have become preoccupied with the

emotions, for example with looking for turning points in attitudes to love or grief, or rage, or laughter, seek to pinpoint the moment in time when for instance crying in public was or was not socially acceptable, especially for men. This is not to claim that this kind of terrain is mostly explored, or indeed that it necessarily would always be best explored, in psychoanalytic terms.

Perhaps the kind of distinction I am making here between at least three different senses we might use 'turning points' can also be said of psychoanalysis. For instance a case study may convey the patient's sense of a revolution or of a world turned upside down; second, the analyst may offer his or her own 'take' on what is really going on, noting times of equilibrium, or of radical change in the psychic life of the patient (even if the patient says nothing is changing, the analyst may detect a turning point – or vice versa). And third, the analyst may transform his or her own 'way of seeing' the past and the present, via some new development in theory and method itself, or perhaps thanks to the patient.

Were there more time, I'd have liked to look at other examples where tumultuous change occurred in the past, and in the way we understand the past – perhaps here one could talk more of the historiography of the Darwinian revolution, or the psychoanalytic 'revolution in mind', as George Makari calls it in his recent history of the origins and development of the movement during Freud's lifetime, but I will leave it there.

I would like to recall here, as an endnote, Freud's own penchant, sometimes in telegraphic form, at others in more extended remarks, for describing the decisive jolts that have occurred in history, not least the jolts that have disturbed human complacency and narcissism. One example must suffice, his famous reference to three revolutionary developments in thought that, between them, fundamentally dislocated our sense of time and space, our presumed centrality and specialness in the supposed, 'grand scheme of things', and even in our sense of self-control and self-knowledge. These were of course, according to him, the moment when Copernicus challenged the belief that the sun revolved around the earth; when Darwin showed that humans were part of the natural world, the product

of evolution' (his title, the 'Descent of Man' had a double sense for many of his contemporaries), and third, when Freud showed that even the ego is not master in its own house.