It was with great sadness that we received the news of Betty's death, which occurred peacefully in her home in London on Friday, April 5, 2013.

I first met Betty Joseph on a very hot summer afternoon, Christmas weekend in 1981 during a half-day case conference that we organized in the Child Department of the Buenos Aires Psychoanalytic Association. No child analyst missed. I recall meeting a petite woman, full of energy, with sparkling eyes and a sharp mind. It took no time for me to know that I had found someone who would change my analytic mind.

We met later at several of the International Psychoanalytical Congresses where I could again perceive Betty's brilliance. Her workshops were always packed. In the early 1990’s, my wife, Mirta, and I began traveling on a periodic basis from Buenos Aires to London to receive clinical supervision from her. Betty would always welcome us with a tray of treats and coffee and before we began—time was not an issue—she
would first gossip with us (a British sport) about all the people we knew in common. How’s Horacio (Etchegoyen) doing? How is your psychoanalytic society developing? What are you doing? And so on. Then to work.

In our supervisions we learned Betty’s hallmark approach of working in the “here and now”, of transference as a “total situation”, of “enactment”, and the challenges of “psychic equilibrium” in pursuit of psychic change. She would never relent in speaking truthfully about what she thought. Her courage and straightforwardness were a gift, which earned our total respect and also allowed us to love her incisiveness. Pussyfooting was not her thing. She was deeply empathic however. I recall a quasi-criminal young man whose hour I presented to her, where he told me about one of his horrible misdeeds. Betty suggested that I interpret to the relief he must feel from being able to share with someone the secret that must have burdened him for years.

Around this time, she sent me two of her unpublished papers: “Thinking about a Playroom” and “From Acting-Out to Enactment”, in which her direct and clear interpretive style was amply illustrated with clinical material. Her book *Psychic Equilibrium and Psychic Change* (1989) is another example of analytic virtuosity where the understanding of the unconscious conflicts and her technical approach come together. All of her papers were based on actual treatments and contained generous case notes. Later on, after she had stopped seeing patients, Betty commented to me that without clinical experiences she could not write.

A friend of mine, also a close acquaintance of Betty’s, recently reminded me: “You knew Betty was okay when she wagged her finger and said of another analyst, I am very worried about him (or her).” In 2000, she helped me found what has become the annual London Clinical Seminars, now in its fourteenth year. Each time she came to our seminar, she would hold me at the door for a minute and say about the materials,

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1 See Ms Joseph’s last publication on the matter: Here and now: My perspective, in *IJPA* Vol. 94, 1, Feb. 2013 pp 1-5. It is paired with a contribution by Ms O’Shaughnessy, pp.7-16 in the same issue, entitled Where is here? When is now?
which she had always read beforehand, “Robert, you should not have allowed this kind of material to be presented to me. It just makes no sense.” And then, we would get from her the most brilliant supervision. She knew about her character and laughed at herself for it. When I first introduced her with some formality, “And now we will have the pleasure to work with Ms Joseph,” she tapped me on the shoulder, and replied, “Wait a minute, you don’t know yet if it will be a pleasure!”

In the past years, Mirta and I used to dine with Betty and our colleague and friend, Jane Temperley, in Betty’s favorite restaurant, Bradley’s in Swiss Cottage. You could tell then how much she enjoyed good food and wine, and, of course, gossiping and good jokes. At the end of the dinner she would order an espresso, “Please, the real thing! None of that decaf.” She claimed that caffeine-induced sleeplessness was psychological.

Betty completed her social-work training at the London School of Economics. In her first employment, she helped in the starting up of a Child Guidance Clinic in Salford (near Manchester). At this time, she also began her own analysis with Michael Balint in 1940. After the war, she finished her psychoanalytic training in London and became a member of the British Psychoanalytical Society in 1949. When she first received the usual letter from the committee to inform her that she was now qualified, she said she knew she was not ready and asked the institute to take back her qualification. Six months later she still felt the same. In her words, “I did not believe that I had the stuff to be an analyst or ever would. However, the committee decided that I was now qualified, and this is how I became an analyst.” At this point, still unsatisfied with her work, she sought further analysis from Paula Heimann from 1951 to 1954. Although Betty never mentioned it, I imagine that her analysis with Heimann—who who had published her seminal paper on countertransference in 1950—must have influenced her ability to pay close attention to the interaction between patient and

analyst in the immediate here and now of the session, as well as her own emphasis on the analyst's countertransference (the analyst's tendency to take part in enactments of the patient's internal object relationships).

In my view, Betty was one of the most conspicuous clinicians and technical innovators of our times. Her workshop that started in 1962 and continued for forty-nine years provided a foundation for the emergence of the so-called Contemporary Kleinians of London. The book *In Pursuit of Psychic Change* (2004) is a celebration of Betty Joseph’s contributions and contains essays by some of the analysts who joined her group to discuss obstacles to psychic change in psychoanalytic treatment.

Edna O'Shaughnessy who wrote to me following Betty’s death said, “I think we have all a feeling of its being the end of an epoch, Hanka (Hanna Segal) having died, and now Betty too.” I concur with her sentiments and add another of my influential teachers, Donald Meltzer, to the list of those who now hold a special place in my memories.

Good-bye, Betty. I thought you would never die.

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