



Jean-Paul Sartre's No Exit in Relation To Power and Torment

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Abstract

No Exit upholds that mental torment is worse than physical torment. The very look of other individuals lessens a person to the state of a question. In Sartre's existentialism, the nearness of other individuals is exasperating to an individual in light of the fact that their look has the ability to lessen that person to a protest. Eyes, at that point, are weapons in this play, while looks and decisions are ammunition. The capacity to characterize others through looks and assessments turns into an approach to control and have. This paper implements Sartre's theories on the subject of look and eccentricity/individuality in the light of Foucault's insights about power relations and the concept of the look and order of the other effectively mesh people into the relations of intensity/power.

Keywords: Existentialism, Power and Torment, Being and Nothingness, Gaze

Introduction

Michel Foucault expounded on the look/gaze to represent a specific dynamic in power relations and disciplinary systems in his *Discipline and Punish*, for example, observation and the capacity of related disciplinary instruments and self-control in a jail/prison or school as a tool of power. The look isn't something one has or utilizes; rather, it is the relationship into which somebody enters. As Marita Sturken and Lisa Cartwright write in *Practices of Looking*, "The look is necessary to frameworks of power and thoughts regarding knowledge." Three principle ideas that Foucault presented are panopticism, control/learning, and biopower. These ideas all location self-control under frameworks of observation. This alludes to how individuals change their conduct under the conviction that they are always being observed regardless of whether they can't straightforwardly observe who or what is watching them. This conceivable observation, regardless of whether genuine or stunning, makes them manage effects. *No Exit* is a play about the "eating up/engulfing" look of the other and how it confines one's liberty, integrated into the play itself and happened in front of an audience through the look of the crowd individuals. The characters continually search for mirrors so as to maintain a strategic distance from the making a decision about the look of one another, while their disappointment is happened by the consistent gaze of the play's onlookers.

You remember all we were told about the torture
Chambers, the fire and brimstone, the "burning marl."
Old wives' tales! There's no need for red-hot pokers.
Hell is—other people!

Sartre's well-known line in *No Exit* "Hell is other people" (p. 45) remains as an immediate affirmation of the intensity of others. Truth be told, "our recognition inside the field of the other is hence dependably a fight with the Gaze: we battle with the constraints of the structure that is spread out for us" (Grootenboer, 2012. p.45). The play

was written and performed for the first time in 1944. The story of *No Exit* pivots three individuals caught in a room in Hell. Finding themselves situated in the endless life after death free of earthly boundaries, they are apparently given the ideal freedom to characterize who they might be. What makes "No Exit" so arresting is the manner in which these three individuals drop their associations with the living scene and face themselves. There are no mirrors in this room on the grounds that these three are impressions of one another's darkest privileged insights. What's more, since they see one another so unmistakably, their self-perpetrated torment is consistent. By filling in as mirrors for one another, they likewise fill in as unwavering torturers. However, as it happens they can't do as such as a result of the power of the others in the room. It gives a miniature picture of hell in the form a room where three people (all three of them are dead) are locked together for an eternity (and hence, the title "No Exit"). This "hell" differs from normally how people would picture hell to be like and through this Sartre demonstrates that it is not the physical torture but the mental torture which seems more hellish. The three characters torture each other in light of the fact that they can reflect each other superior to any mirror. That being stated, they likewise torment each other on the grounds that they are what they can't have. Inez needs Estelle, who needs Garcin, who sides more with Inez, in the wake of needing Estelle's affection/trust, which she is unequipped for giving. Incredible enormous glad un-love triangle. Be that as it may, there is substantially more to Sartre's peculiar and fun envisioning of damnation than only three individuals' torture. Sartre's truism something that is consistent with human instinct.

Power and torment are two concepts which run inseparably with one another. One who holds control/power also has the ability to torment and influence others to endure. A year prior to this play was written; Sartre published his famous work *Being and Nothingness* (1943). In this book, Sartre says that "the mere possible presence of another person causes one to look at oneself as an object and sees one's world as it appears to the other." This implies that the mere presence of another person makes one feel more like an object than a subject. There is opposition for subjectivity and so the presence of another person threatens one's own set of thoughts and convictions (in other words, one's own reality/world). This is exactly what happens among Garcin, Inez and Estelle in the play. Garcin did not feel any threat or feeling of rivalry when he first entered at "hell" since he was distant from everyone else. There is pressure when Inez arrives and it experiences a snowball impact when Estelle lands there. With the landing of Estelle the horrible round of intensity/power and torment begins. Garcin's comment, "How hot it is in here!"(13), marks the beginning of the hellish torture they will give up on each other. Shortly after, Inez observes vividly:

Inez: "... In short, there's someone absent here, the official torturer.... It's obvious what they're after- an economy of manpower- or devil-power.... I mean that each of us will act as torturer of the two others." (17)

This is in reality what occurs. Estelle and Inez torment Garcin by not giving him a moment of peace. Garcin tortures Estelle by not giving her the consideration she wants

from him and the very presence of Inez is torture to her. She has additionally said that she does “not make friends with women easily.”(21) At one point, Estelle even spits on Inez’s face and gets desperate to get rid of her. Estelle tortures Inez by not giving her the attention she desires from her and so Garcin has become the natural rival for Inez:

Inez: “... I feel you there, in every pore. Your silence clamors in my ears. You can nail up your mouth, cut your tongue out – but you can’t prevent your *being there*... you’re everywhere, and every sound comes to me soiled because you’ve intercepted it on its way.” (22)

One inexorably ends up torturing someone else through one’s presence and hence, one’s very own existence. Inez herself says that she cannot live without making people suffer. And as a response to Garcin’s question of whether or not she has realized that Estelle is going to be her torturer, she says that she has guessed it already. Each one gets tired of the other two; there’s the need and desire to exit from the claustrophobic walls of the small room:

Garcin: “... I can’t endure it any longer, I’m through with both of you.... Anything, anything would be better than this agony of mind, this creeping pain that gnaws and fumbles and caresses one and never hurts quite enough.” (41)

The torture against each other gets too much and unbearable. They are indeed caught in a vicious circle and “are chasing after each other, round and round.” (30) This cry made by Garcin is perhaps the most desperate cry in the play. And yet they are inseparable. When the door finally opens none of them are ready to leave. They choose to stay together, forever. The body that is subjugated to the look/gaze and judgment of different people, its still, small voice is tenaciously under their reconnaissance to shape its very own profound quality. The characters wind up subject to the look of the other. As they are aware of the nearness of another person, another cognizance, which is watching and examining them, their singularity is altered and played with what Sartre calls being-for-other people. As he asserts in *Being and Nothingness* “the other as a look”, authorizes the subjects to encounter their “inapprehensible being-for-others as ownership. . . . the Other's look styles [their] body in its exposure, make it be conceived, models it, produces it for what it's worth, considers it to be [they] will never observe it” (p. 364). INEZ's words offer credit to the Other's look that can bridle the subject's distinction in a volley of maltreatment: "And is there any valid reason why you shouldn't 'manageable' me?" (Sartre, 1989.p.55)

The greatest power one can have over the other is the power of the “gaze” for the other runs the risk of getting reduced to an object. People do not have any control over what or how someone else perceives or looks at them. This perception a person holds of another person plays an important role in our relationships; how a person makes us feel about ourselves form the basis of many of our relationships. This is the power each of the three characters enjoys in the play. Sartre has very cleverly put away glass and mirrors from his ‘hell’. The lack of mirrors/glass prevents the characters to be able to

look at themselves as objects. Each one is only left with the other two's impressions of him/her. Estelle has to depend on Inez's eyes to make herself up. Inez holds a new power and her eyes become a weapon. But this almost drives Estelle crazy: Estelle: "Oh, I don't know. You scare me rather. My reflection in the glass never did that.... I'm going to smile, and my smile will sink down into your pupils, and heaven knows what it will become." (20-21)

There are many references to the word gaze in the play. Shortly after Estelle says this, she enters into a mutual gaze with Inez. And Inez charges Garcin of stealing away her face since he has access to something she cannot access anymore. Out of the three, perhaps Inez makes the most of the power of the gaze – "you'll live in my gaze like a mote in a sunbeam" (34); "But don't forget I'm here and watching. I shan't take my eyes off you, Garcin..." (35); "You're a coward Garcin because I wish it...And yet just look at me...a gaze observing you, a formless thought that thinks you...and you're at my mercy." (44) – she becomes the glass for Estelle first and later she tries to manipulate Garcin using this power. She knows that Garcin seeks appreciation from the persons observing him. Garcin desperately needs someone to have faith in him, to form an opinion of him and say that he is not a coward. This is the reason why he asks Estelle to trust him and also to 'look' at him. But then again he does not allow himself to get carried away by Inez – "I'm at your mercy, but you're at mine as well." (44)

All the three characters are at the mercy of one another. They torture one another, they are at the mercy of one another and they are linked together in an inseparable bond because they are doomed to an afterlife of eternity in a locked room. Even if they may get out from the room they have made the conscious choice of staying together. From Marlowe's definition of hell – hell is where we are – Sartre takes it to a whole new level – "Hell is - other people". (45) And from this hell, there is absolutely no escape. Estelle takes the equivocalness to a pinnacle when she says: "When I can't see myself I start to think about whether I truly and really exist." When Inez offers herself as a "mirror," the issue of character in a world without reflection is solidified: if a man does not know what he resembles, how might he make sure he would someone say someone isn't else? It is our mental self view that isolates us from "the others." At the point when identity breaks down and one face turn out to be indistinct from another, "other" breaks down; hellfire is at that point, by need, oneself.

Conclusion

Sartre asserts that individuals identify with themselves and to each other through either looking or being taken a gander at. When they give bogus pictures of themselves, they expect to be close to the objects of their own turn or restrict themselves upward in their own subjectivity. The power that Looks applies to the body ends up obvious to the stripped eye through the specific order to which the body is uncovered and from this time forward slanted. By fitting a specific utilization of the body for a specific climate, the look throws its net of control over one's uniqueness, opportunity, and judgment to settle and characterize them on its impulse. The last restatement ties all the previously mentioned cases together. Likewise showing up as atomized and estranged people "demolishing each other through their Look" (Boileau, 2004); all these characters can't pursue morals of real presence loaning belief to the possibility of false correspondence.

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