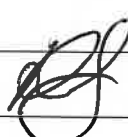




Undergraduate assignment feedback form
(to be completed by marker)

Student Name: Iona Mokandpuri	
Module Code: HPPH6023	Student number: 1700549
Module title: Phenomenology & Existentialism	
For completion by marker:	
Comments: This is an excellent piece of work which evinces a very close, critically engaged reading of original sources (No exit, B & A, for eg) & secondary sources. There is a degree of independence in terms of research, for you go beyond the issues discussed in the lecture (your use of No exit, & particular secondary reading) to present a well developed & exceptionally clear argument which focuses acutely on the task set. You make some perceptive & subtle claims, with close attention to ~~the~~ detail in terms of <u>how</u> you make those claims — this results in a well developed, robust analysis, and a very interesting essay. V. well done, indeed.	
Marker's signature: 	Date: 27/11/19.
Provisional mark: 80%	
NB. All marks are provisional until confirmed by the final examination board.	

* See comments in essay re: explanation + precision. There are very minor weaknesses.



Department of Economics
Faculty of Arts

Final Examination

June 1964

Course: Economics 101

Time: 2 hours

1. The demand curve for a good is downward sloping. This is because as the price of the good falls, the quantity demanded increases. This is a basic principle of economics.

2. The supply curve for a good is upward sloping. This is because as the price of the good rises, the quantity supplied increases. This is a basic principle of economics.

3. The equilibrium price of a good is the price at which the quantity demanded equals the quantity supplied. This is the point where the demand curve and the supply curve intersect.

4. The equilibrium quantity of a good is the quantity of the good that is demanded and supplied at the equilibrium price.

5. A shift in the demand curve for a good will change the equilibrium price and quantity. If the demand curve shifts to the right, the equilibrium price and quantity will increase. If the demand curve shifts to the left, the equilibrium price and quantity will decrease.

6. A shift in the supply curve for a good will change the equilibrium price and quantity. If the supply curve shifts to the right, the equilibrium price and quantity will decrease. If the supply curve shifts to the left, the equilibrium price and quantity will increase.

7. The price elasticity of demand measures the responsiveness of the quantity demanded to a change in the price of the good. It is calculated as the percentage change in quantity demanded divided by the percentage change in price.

8. The price elasticity of supply measures the responsiveness of the quantity supplied to a change in the price of the good. It is calculated as the percentage change in quantity supplied divided by the percentage change in price.

9. The price elasticity of demand is greater than the price elasticity of supply for a good when the demand curve is more elastic than the supply curve. This is the case for most goods.

10. The price elasticity of demand is less than the price elasticity of supply for a good when the demand curve is less elastic than the supply curve. This is the case for some goods.

Signature: _____
Date: _____

'For the Other, I am seated as this inkwell is on the table; for the Other, I am leaning over the keyhole as this tree is bent by the wind. Thus for the Other I have stripped myself of my transcendence' (Sartre, B and N, Tr. Hazel E. Barnes, London and New York: Routledge, 2003 [1943], p.286). Critically discuss.

Good Intro ✓
This extract relates to Sartre's focus of the gaze, and how this is relevant to his conception of relationships as necessarily antagonistic, and as other people as Hell. To fully discuss this, Sartre's distinction between beings-in-themselves, and beings-for-themselves will be clarified, and this will make clear how the individual, objectivity, and subjectivity, and freedom exist in a way that means relationships are antagonistic by nature according to his phenomenology. This will also require a brief overview of what he means by bad faith. Finally, it will be discussed as to how all these aspects link to a potential ethics. All these strands of Sartre's work will be critically examined through the extract in the question. It is necessary to discuss many aspects of Sartre's phenomenology in order to explore the parts that directly link the excerpt in order to give his work the context it requires to make sense. Once the extract has been explained with reference to his ideas surrounding the gaze of the other and what this means for human relationships. It will then be critiqued with reference to Simone De Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*¹ and work from Merleau-Ponty.

Sartre makes a distinction between two forms of being: a being-in-itself, and a being-for-itself. Beings-in-themselves are those which are made with their essence, so do not have to practice at realising their condition. A being-in-itself is simply its being. To illustrate this point, Sartre uses the example of an inkwell.² An inkwell is simply an inkwell. It does not form reflective judgements on its condition as an inkwell, or practice in order to become an inkwell; it is made with the purpose of being an object in which ink is kept. Following this, we can claim that the essence of the inkwell precedes its existence.³ On the other hand, a being-for-itself exists with absolute freedom, so the freedom to choose their own essence. In other words, they choose what they are.⁴ For example, when a person is born, they are not born as a waiter, as the inkwell is created as an inkwell.⁵ From this description of the two modes of being, it can be seen that beings-in-themselves are objects, whereas beings-for-themselves have a subjectivity. ✓

However, the responsibility that having absolute freedom brings ~~with it~~, causes feelings of anguish, because this responsibility means it is up to us what we do with our lives; there is no excuse we can use to explain our failures other than ourselves, and this is a burden.⁶ In an attempt to escape these feelings of existential angst or anguish, a person (a being-for-itself) desires to become a being-in-itself, so pretends that this is the case. For example, with the case of the waiter, though he is a person (so a being-for-itself) he pretends that he is entirely a waiter. He acts in such a way that suggests his entire essence is a waiter much like the essence of an inkwell is an inkwell. But he is not just a waiter, for his existence precedes his essence.⁷ Until he accepts that he is a person with absolute freedom and that a waiter is merely an aspect of this being, he is deceiving himself, therefore is in bad faith. Bad faith is one willingly deceiving themselves that they are a being-in-themselves, so that they exist in very much the same way that an inkwell exists, which is simpler, so avoids complex feelings of anguish. Unfortunately, those feelings of anguish still exist as one cannot escape the fact that they are a being-in-itself, no matter how much they pretend.⁸

¹ de Beauvoir, Simone, *The Second Sex* (London: Pan Books, 1988).

² Sartre, Jean-Paul, *Being and Nothingness* (Northampton: University Paperback, 1969) p. 59.

³ Sartre, Jean-Paul, *Existentialism is a Humanism* (Yale: Yale University Press, 2007) p. 21.

⁴ Ibid., pp.22-24.

⁵ Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, pp. 59-60.

⁶ Sartre, *Existentialism is a Humanism*, pp. 29-30.

⁷ Ibid., pp.21-22.

⁸ Sartre, *Being and nothingness*, p. 60.

clarity needed here.

Yes. Could you explicate a bit more - is 'self-deception' really possible

✓ well laid out.

At this point, work from Merleau-Ponty can be used as a strong critique to Sartre's conception of freedom. Merleau-Ponty agreed with Sartre that humans are free and thought him right to stand against determinism, as this is an evasion of responsibility.⁹ Despite agreeing with Sartre in some respects regarding freedom, Merleau-Ponty considered his analysis of freedom to be incomplete, as it only dealt with the freedom of man and not with the world in which freedom is exercised.¹⁰ Merleau-Ponty rightly acknowledges that though we do have responsibility for our actions, the world (our environment) shares some responsibility. He believed that human freedom is more intertwined with the physical world and our bodies than the Sartrean freedom accounts for.¹¹ In this sense, Merleau-Ponty did not believe in absolute freedom as Sartre did. Furthermore, Merleau-Ponty believed that Sartre's emphasis on responsibility and his expression that any form of determinism is an excuse¹² underplayed the extent that our consciousness and the situation are linked, thus not properly "distinguishing between our responsibility for our actions and our responsibility for our situation."¹³ Here, Merleau-Ponty demonstrates how one's situation can affect their actions, whilst still allowing for some freedom (but not an absolute freedom as Sartre expresses).

One could argue that Sartre allowed for external factors limiting freedom with his inclusion on facticity. Facticity refers to aspects of the world that are fixed beyond our control. It refers to the necessary connection between beings-for-themselves and beings-in-themselves. This connection between beings-for-themselves and beings-in-themselves is what allows the beings-for-themselves (us) to exist with the freedom Sartre believes we have.¹⁴ However, beings-for-themselves are also bound by facticity as contingent beings, and condemned by this facticity to be free, thus in a sense, to not free, as condemnation opposes freedom. This is a paradox of freedom that Sartre acknowledged¹⁵ though does not satisfactorily overcome, as Merleau-Ponty argued.¹⁶

well said.

This has explained how the individual attempts to see themselves, but Sartre was also interested in the gaze of others, and this is what the given extract relates to. Sartre believed the look of another to be a powerful force. When, he said, one is looked at by another, in their gaze they are fixed as an object. This is expressed in the first part of the quote: "For the Other, I am seated as this inkwell is on the table; for the Other, I am leaning over the keyhole as this tree is bent by the wind."¹⁷ showing that, in the other's gaze, I have no more subjectivity than an inkwell or a tree. Sartre solidifies his point with the second part of the quote: "Thus for the Other I have stripped myself of my transcendence."¹⁸ For Sartre, transcendence refers to beings-for-themselves. With this in mind, what Sartre is saying becomes clearer; for the other, the person who casts their gaze on me, I am just a being-in-itself, an object, and have no subjectivity.

A bit more precision needed.

This gaze can be returned on the other, making them an object from your perspective. Though both individuals in this case are subjects, therefore beings-for-themselves, they view each other as objects.¹⁹ The fact that the other's look has the power to objectify me while retaining their own subjectivity, and that if I return the gaze I also fix the other as an object from my perspective, means

⁹ Whitford, Margaret, *Merleau-Ponty's Critique of Sartre's Philosophy*, (Kentucky: French Forum, 1982) p. 61.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid., pp. 61-62.

¹² Sartre, *Existentialism is a Humanism*. pp. 48-49.

¹³ Whitford, *Merleau-Ponty's Critique*, p. 62.

¹⁴ Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 631.

¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 81-84.

¹⁶ Whitford, *Merleau-Ponty's Critique*, pp. 61-63.

¹⁷ Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 262.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Brosman, Catharine Savage, 'Seeing through the Other: Modes of Vision in Sartre.' *South Central Review*, vol. 4, no. 4, (1987), pp. 61-73 (pp. 64-66). <www.jstor.org/stable/3189028>. [Accessed: 13th Nov. 2019].

✓ good use of secondary resources.

that the look of another creates a strong power dynamic as each person fixes the other as an object and attempts to retain their subjectivity.²⁰ This explains why Sartre believed relationships to be necessarily antagonistic by nature.²¹ What adds to this struggle is not just that the observer fixes them as an object, but that they are now viewed as they were trying to view themselves. Although people try to see themselves as beings-in-themselves as an attempt to escape anguish, they can never completely see themselves like this, so when another fixes them in this way, it causes discomfort.²²

The quote²³ gives Sartre's reasons for why he considers other people to be hell.²⁴ As long as there are other people around, you will be fixed by their gaze, therefore be reduced to an object in the eyes of all those around you. While you have been fixed in this way, you no longer possess any of your own subjectivity. Furthermore, you are deprived of your freedom, as you have no control how the other fixes you.²⁵ Your essence has been given to you by someone else, much like how the maker of an inkwell gives an inkwell its essence. For Sartre (as we have already discussed), freedom is crucial, so the restriction of this through the objectifying gaze of other people warrants the conclusion that other people are hell.²⁶

Well
Said

After considering what Sartre has put forward, we must ask ourselves whether it true that the gaze of the other really does reduce one from a being-for-itself to a being-in-itself? Even if we accept that this is the case, this does not mean that the gaze necessarily has to view others as objects. Although Sartre has identified that we do objectify people, now we have realised that this is the case, is there an opportunity to rise above the antagonising relationships and try to see people as the beings-for-themselves that we know they really are?²⁷

Good Signposting

This is confronted to some extent by Simone de Beauvoir when she challenges the way in which men see women as other and as objects, so merely as beings-in-themselves.²⁸ This brings an ethical dimension to the critique, as a judgement has been passed that this objectifying of women is a negative thing and something to be challenged.²⁹ Based on this, de Beauvoir believed women should not be seen as the other by men, and that this was something that could happen,³⁰ it follows that this approach could be universalised (beyond not objectifying based on sex, but not objectifying anyone) so no one sees anyone else as purely a being-in-itself, but so everyone can be subject to the gaze of the other and retain their transcendence.

Indeed, this would be consistent with what Sartre says about ethics. His ethical claim is akin to the Kantianism maxim of universalisation. He says that, because existence precedes essence, that man is responsible for who he is. This refers not to man as the individual, but to man as responsible for all men. Thus, if you objectify someone, you are willing all others who you are not objectifying, including yourself, to be objectified by the gaze of the other.³¹ For does Sartre not describe this very

²⁰ Ibid., p. 65.

²¹ Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 262.

²² Brosman, 'Seeing through the Other: Modes of Vision in Sartre.' p. 64.

²³ Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 262.

²⁴ Sartre, *No Exit*. p. 26. <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/olli/class-materials/Jean-Paul_Sartre.pdf>. [Accessed: 14th Nov. 2019].

²⁵ Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 265.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Brosman, 'Seeing through the Other: Modes of Vision in Sartre.' p. 68.

²⁸ de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, pp. 16-18.

²⁹ Ibid., pp. 740-741.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Sartre, *Existentialism is a Humanism*. p. 23.

Excellent use
of the original
source
(ie B & N)

situation as hell?³² As Sartre said, it is our actions that define what we are, and Sartre's actions gave being fixed as an object a negative moral judgement rather than a neutral description of events. The fact that he asserts it to be bad could suggest that, to some extent, it should be challenged from a moral point of view. Even if it was not achieved, it would still serve as a moral ideal to be aspired to.

Excellent! Alas, Sartre would have objected to my proposed interpretation. For him, what I have just described could be considered to be hope. Hope is a form of self-deception, therefore, to hope is to lie to oneself and be in bad faith.³³ To put this into context, let us apply it to the extract: "For the Other, I am seated as this inkwell is on the table; for the Other, I am leaning over the keyhole as this tree is bent by the wind. Thus for the Other I have stripped myself of my transcendence."³⁴ Here, one may hope that when the other casts their gaze upon them, that they will retain their transcendence, but of course this is not the case. What is worse, it is that because they lived in hope that they would not be fixed as a being-in-itself, they were inactive in avoiding the gaze. Therefore, it was the very act of hoping, of living in bad faith, that led to them not taking action, which as we have discussed, is what gives us our meaning. However, as Sartre believes so staunchly in the power of an individual to act, it seems there is no good defensible position against choosing to view people as the beings-for-themselves they truly are.

A summary of Sartre's position as laid out though the section that has been discussed is that the gaze of another person fixes us as a being without subjectivity, while the viewer fully retains their own subjectivity. This power is in the gaze of anyone, so when the gaze is returned, it is done in an attempt not to be reduced to an object. By doing this however, one is necessarily trying to strip the subjectivity from the original gaze caster in order to be the subject. This amounts to a struggle to retain subjectivity in this moment. This happens whenever two people look at each other, meaning that for Sartre, all type relationships between all people are necessarily antagonistic.

I shall now summarise the critical analysis that has been conducted for this extract, in order to solidify the aim of this inquiry into Sartre and the gaze. As has been true throughout the whole essay, no one part of Sartre's work can be looked at in isolation, without the context of the other aspects of his theory. This makes an analysis of any part of his work a more long-winded affair than one might initially expect before attempting it. The critique took form as two main points of inquiry. The first point to the critique was directed at Sartre's conception of freedom, which links to the extract because, under the gaze of the other, as well as one's transcendence being stripped away, one's freedom is also removed.³⁵ The critique on Sartre's absolute freedom in relation to this was a successful one, delivered predominantly with arguments from Merleau-Ponty. The second point of critique was the possibility to cast a gaze upon someone without turning them into a being-in-themselves. It was asked whether, especially one became aware of how they were viewing people, one could actively change their perceptions and begin to see people as the beings-for-themselves they really are. Sartre would likely have not agreed that this was possible, as the way we view others is a defence against the way they view us. However, ultimately this position seems inconsistent with his assertions surrounding ethics. ✓

³² Sartre, *No Exit*, p. 26. ✓

³³ Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 49.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 262.

³⁵ Sartre, *Existentialism is a Humanism*, pp. 22-24.