

# ART THERAPY FOR HARMONIZING DESIRE AND LIFE IN KOREAN SOCIETY

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this study is to diagnose and find solutions through art, based on a psychoanalytic perspective, seeing the increasing misery of Koreans as a signal to the frustration of desire and social incongruity. However, mental disorders have a double effect. Especially, anxiety has its fair share of negative repercussions such as fear, powerlessness, and sadness; it also enables inner inspection and acts as a signal of existence that can re-establish desire. Through a case study, this paper argues that art therapy can not only help individuals to understand their existence, but also restore intersubjective relationships and go toward sustainable society. This is because art is ultimately an act of practice aiming at the gaze, an indicator of existence. In the end, the central goal of humanity and social development should be to make them coexist in an ethical horizon through the restoration of the “original life.”

**Keywords:** Anxiety, Art Therapy, Artistic Act, Intersubjectivity, Jouissance, Mental Disorders, Original Life, Self-Desire

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## 1. Introduction

Mental distress of Koreans is severe. According to The Survey of Mental Disorders in Korea in 2016, the lifetime prevalence of 17 mental disorders is as high as 25.4%. The suicide rate in Korea is also the highest among OECD countries, and the lifetime suicide thought rate is 15.4%. (Ministry of Health and Welfare 12). One cause of such steady increase in mental disorders might be that the increase in the proportion of single-person households from 15.5% to 27.2% in 2002 and 2015, respectively, might have increased the prevalence of individualism and the lack of material and emotional support from families. The unemployed rate actually reached 5.7% in January 2021, the highest number since the 1997 IMF financial crisis (Statistics Korea). In addition, the current pandemic situation caused by COVID-19 has resulted in a decrease in trust in the safety of life and uncertainty about the future. The social pressure to adapt and survive in a rapidly changing social environment can also increase anxiety.

However, anxiety is neither a direct reaction to a situation nor a mental disorder. It can serve to protect the subject when the environment threatens the being and the desire of a subject. What is noteworthy in Freud's famous article in 1926 (*Inhibition, Symptom and Anxiety*) was that he considered anxiety to be a defensive response to threats and a signal to avoid excitement. Anxiety and anxiety neurosis occurs when the condition becomes severe physically and mentally (Laplanche and Pontalis 38-39). Therefore, mental stress and depression can be a warning that demands a subject to move away from the disharmony and alienation in life, which can be a dangerous situation.

Anxiety is an indicator of a crisis when existential life is suppressed and the underlying desire is stranded in a social structure dominated by the desire of the Other. Anxiety needs very powerful mediation because it is not easy to face it directly. In the parts that follow, we would like to focus on the healing function of art in understanding mental distress and discover the meaning of self-desire. Fulfilling the lack of being through objects or relying on the desire of the Other make mental pain chronic. Thus, it is necessary to properly establish the

relationship to the lack of being in order to restore the original life. This study analyzes how exploration of being appears, especially in artistic acts and appreciation, and how inducing the activation of desire can cure anxiety. The purpose of this work is to present the importance of desire and the possibility of realizing self-desire by relieving symptoms through artistic acts.

## **2. Anxiety, a Measure of Desire**

Anxiety is not a simple mental disorder, but an ontological demand beginning with existential conditions of human that is closely related to desire. Anxiety is associated with human duality (Søren Kierkegaard), the epiphany of being (Martin Heidegger), and the signal of desire (Jacques Marie Émile Lacan). Until psychiatry began in the 19th century, anxiety had long been recognized as a synonym for a mental disorder. Ancient medicine considered anxiety as a core element of melancholia that appeared along with symptoms such as fear, depression and suicidal urge (Simon 229).

Anxiety was a synonym for distress for ancients who did not clearly distinguish among physiological, mental, and emotional realities they experienced. Greek philosophy tried to treat anxiety as a core agenda and overcome it from a life perspective because they thought it broke the peace of mind. For example, they emphasized Epicurean school's ataraxia or Stoicism's apatheia, trying to dispel fear and seeking peace of mind. Epicurean school thought that anxiety was at the centre of human distress and that distress began with fear of a situation yet to be arrived. To ease melancholy, peace of mind, and contemplation of life are important. For a long time, anxiety has been used with multiple meanings, ranging from fear of nature or uncertain being, pain, guilt, and delusions with uncertain causes to moral vice. Only in the 19th century was anxiety defined by Freud as a phenomenon associated with mental disorder, especially neurosis.

Although psychiatry has touched upon psychological aspects of mental disorder, it mainly emphasizes its physiological aspects. The term neurasthenia coined by Beard is a good

example of this perspective. Neurasthenia is a type of actual neurosis that shows symptoms such as hypersensitivity to stimulation, fatigue, insomnia, dizziness, hand tremor, and hypomnesia (Kim, *Counseling Dictionary* 2, 1093). Beard's perspective that "A nervous state is a physical symptom, not a mental symptom and comes from a neurological abnormality, not from an excess of emotion or an abnormality in the organs" (*American Nervousness*, 17) emphasizes physiological and genetic factors. It has been passed down as a significant concept of anxiety in modern psychiatry. However, neurotic anxiety occurs when mental "balance of power" is threatened (Corey 67).

It is necessary to understand anxiety in connection with psychological aspects rather than physiological ones. In particular, social and psychological insecurity that prevails in adolescents and the elderly in our society is related to frustration due to difficulty in establishing their own desires and identities. Social situation itself should not be considered the cause of anxiety because anxiety itself is not an automatic mental reaction to the situation, but a reaction of a subject to the situation. Anxiety and depression, associated with anxiety, can be seen as indicators of the crisis of desire due to de facto disharmony in life and identity threat that it has caused. Anxiety is related to the unique being of humans who have duality as an attribute. It is an encounter with the inner self that is buried and suppressed in daily life.

Kierkegaard sees anxiety as a peculiar to humans and an opportunity to have freedom in the future. He says that anxiety should be learned correctly because it shows one's ability to synthesize as a human. "If humans were beasts or angels, they would not be anxious. Because humans are synthetic, they can be anxious. The more anxious they are, the greater they are." (Kierkegaard 155) Why is that so? Being is understood as a "relationship related to oneself." This relationship opens up the possibility that humans should seek a synthesis of the past and the future, the inevitability and the possibility, and the finiteness and the infinity. Anxiety is not related to fear, but to human duality or the fear and expectation that we feel when we try to

combine both. Kierkegaard calls it "sympathetic antipathy and antipathetic sympathy (*eine sympathetische Antipathie und eine antipathetische Sympathie*)" (40). Distress or anxiety that humans feel as men-in-the-middle is a signal that something is wrong with the synthesis. It is a sin that this synthesis is being conducted in a distorted way while synthesis is biased toward either side. Theist Kierkegaard understands humans in the presence of undecided freedom in the middle of the possibility of moving forward both sin and transcendence. Anxiety is not an emotion, but a signal of a wilful being and a milestone of freedom. Kierkegaard connects anxiety to nothingness (Kierkegaard 277). Nothingness is not defined; thereby it can give anxiety and dizziness. "Anxiety can be likened to dizziness. ... As anxiety is dizziness of freedom, when this phenomenon occurs, the mind wants to establish a synthesis, freedom looks down on its own possibility and holds on to its finiteness to sustain itself" (Kierkegaard 198).

Kierkegaard's focus on human duality and emphasis on the association between anxiety and nothingness is quite similar to Lacan's focus. Lacan also emphasizes that the divided subject is an affect connecting being with invincible attribute. According to Lacan, *manque* is essential for a subject to have his desire (Lacan, *Seminar 10*, 53-54).

Heidegger has connected anxiety to the possibility of human being. According to Heidegger, humans experience epiphany (*Erschlossenheit*) of being in their fundamental attunement as beings in the world originally. However, as humans forget about nature, anxiety begins. Thus, dissatisfaction is felt when the present being is settled in daily life. This is the feeling one feels when the world of being familiar to a subject loses meaning and slips indefinitely into obscurity. Heidegger calls a person in a way that lives according to tradition and social things as "the they" (Heidegger 119). It is anxiety that rings a warning bell in a secular life. This state of anxiety seems to threaten us. However, it is also experienced with joy as it opens up the possibility of being forgotten and restores us as 'essential humans' (*der wesentliche Mensch*).

We called the phenomenon of Angst a fundamental attunement. It brings *Da-sein* before its own most thrownness and reveals the uncanniness of everyday, familiar being-in-the-world. Just like fear, Angst is formally determined by something in the face of which one is anxious and something about which one is anxious (Heidegger 315).

Lacan thinks that anxiety can be an opportunity for subjectivation. Psychoanalyst Lacan has analyzed complementary relationships between desire and anxiety in *Seminar 10*. According to him, humans have no choice but to learn their own desires through the desire of the Other. Desire begins in the gap created by desire and demand (Lacan, *Écrits*, 689). The Other is an instance of the language in which a subject is born. Humans learn their desires through the desire of the Other. The Other guarantees linguistic structures and signifies desire. However, a subject cannot structurally know the desire due to linguistic limitations and he has no choice but to ask the question "*Che Vuoi?* (What do you desire)" repeatedly. The desire of the Other remains a mystery. Thus, anxiety is felt. "Anxiety resides in the subject's fundamental relationship with what thus far I've been calling the desire of the Other" (Lacan, *Seminar 10*, 279).

When a subject does not know desires of the Other and when there is no universal satisfaction in the place of the Other, the subject feels anxiety (Lacan, *Écrits*, 689). If so, can anxiety be relieved if the subject imagines oneself as the object of the desire of the Other, owns what has been pointed out, or suppresses desire? Lacan argues, similarly to Heidegger, that people must feel anxious when they live in pursuit of the needs of the society and the desires of Others. As for the human duality and the oblivion of being that philosophers spoke of, Lacan explains through the divided status of the subject, which is constructed by language and disappears due to alienation from it. Lacan links the lack of being of a subject that is lost by the signifier to the function of desire (Lacan, *Seminar 11*, 29). Anxiety is the affect when facing the nature of nothingness of being. According to Lacan, anxiety is related to 'no object'. This is a special object

that indicates an empty space, which is actually the place of being in fantasy. Lacan calls it 'objet a (object a)', which is both the cause of desire and the object in the place of absence. Anxiety occurs when an empirical object tries to satisfy the position of 'objet a' (Lacan *Seminar 10*, 42). This is because the position of absence is a breathing space that guarantees desire and subjectivation.

We will demonstrate that an aspect of the most existential practice exposed towards this 'objet a' is indeed an artistic act. Originally, desire is the state of a subject related to the lack of being. However, since the subject cannot bear the lack itself, the subject tries to satisfy it by converting the desire of the Other into a demand. The subject tries to pursue satisfaction while making the desire an imaginary object. Such a state is a deceptive desire. Anxiety is the affect that the subject feels in such a situation due to alienation of desire. Anxiety is a signal when the subjectivity is disturbed and when the desire is not working properly. It is a voice that demands recovery of true desire. Lacan says that anxiety is the only affect that does not deceive (Lacan, *Seminar 10*, 76). In the midst of anxiety, a subject is most intimately associated with itself and distances itself from the desire of the Other (Lacan, *Seminar 10*, 173). However, anxiety also causes distress to the subject. To properly utilize the proper function of anxiety, it should be combined with pure desire to restore being.

By associating Lacan's theory of anxiety and desire with the situation of Koreans, it is possible to seek a solution for harmony in life while understanding the duality of Korean anxiety. Korean society is especially obsessed with the desire of the Others and the desire to be acknowledged. Despite Koreans have material affluence, their psychological distress is increasing. Psychological pressure is frequently mentioned in Korean society, especially in connection with anxiety, dissatisfaction, and distrust (KIHS 7). Obsession with the desire of the Others is due to the phenomenon of ostentatious consumption and enthusiasm for luxury goods to be acknowledged by others (Hwang et al., 99). This can be a distorted manifestation of the

desire to be acknowledged and the desire to restore identity rather than the desire for consumption itself. Anxiety evinces that their desires are not working properly, being alienated by desire of the Others and losing their way.

In such a place where the desire of the Others is equal to the desire of a consumer society, the pure desire of being disappears. When the object is consumed or when the imaginary desire of the Other is placed in the position of 'objet *a*', the subject feels alienation. Frustration of desire causes disharmony in life. Anxiety and depression associated with anxiety can indicate a state of disharmony. Satisfying the lack of being through an object or relying on the desire of the Others makes anxiety chronic. Hence, the subject needs to properly establish a relationship of anxiety with the lack of harmony in life.

### **3. Healing Function of Artistic Acts and Appreciation**

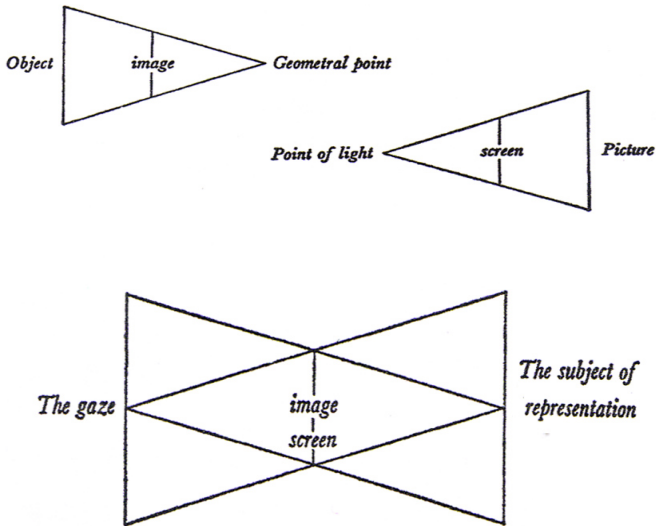
What is the function of art for a human activity that expresses beauty in modern society? In a book, *Art as Therapy*, Alain de Botton says that art has seven functions: memory, hope, sadness, restoration of balance, self-understanding, growth and appreciation. That is, art helps self-understanding and communication and encourages appreciation, thereby commemorating human life, giving hope, empathizing with pain and restoring equilibrium in life (Botton, *Art as Therapy*, 76). In his book, he emphasizes healing aspects of art based on its functions. Art is more than just the fruit of an artist's erratic imagination. It becomes an important mediation that brings about self-understanding and equilibrium of human life, leading to growth into a better life.

The concept that enables this kind of art therapy is sublimation, a psychological process assumed by Sigmund Freud. It is a human activity driven by the strength of libido. Artistic acts and intellectual exploration are representative examples. Freud explains that objects and goals of sexual drives change and emerge as a result of certain activities and achievements with higher social or ethical value (Freud, *New Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis*, 97). In comparison,



Lacan focuses on the change in the position of a subject in fantasy related to the desire, not on changes in the drive's object in sublimation. Lacan emphasizes *changes in the subject itself* in sublimation (Lacan, *Seminar 7*, 293) by explaining activities that fantastically satisfy the emptiness of a subject by adjusting the position of a subject relative to an object (Kim, *Invitation to the unconsciousness*, 170).

Lacan's psychoanalytic art therapy consists of the art as 'objet a' as well as its analytical subjects and analysts (Lee, *An Introduction to the Psychoanalytic Art Therapy from Freud to Lacan*, 333). 'Objet a' is the object and the cause of the desire that leads to separation from alienation of a subject. 'Objet a' is essentially a blank which is an object of fantasy, an object of loss and an object of lack (Lacan, *Seminar 11*, 209). In psychoanalytic art therapy, the art makes a subject to explore the desire by functioning in the meaning of 'objet a', which is the object-cause of desire. The meaning of art as 'objet a' is explained in detail in Lacan's *Seminar 11*. Lacan presents the following diagram, explaining *Of the Gaze as Objet Petit a*.



What Is a Picture? (Lacan, *Seminar 11*, 91, 106)

Lacan presents a diagram with two triangles on the top in "The Line and Light" and two triangles layered below in "What Is a Picture?" From two triangles on the top, the left shows the

perspective structure and the right shows the reverse perspective structure. The perspective structure is that the subject sees the object as an image and the reverse perspective structure is that the subject in front of the screen makes its own picture (Lacan, *Seminar 11*, 105). The two triangles overlap each other in the realm of reality. The image and screen become one and the subject of representation is to be gazed. In Lacan's art theory, this dialectical explanation of gaze and the subject of representation are explained. Lacan describes in picture what makes an artist understand himself as a subject, saying *the objet a in the field of the visible is the gaze* (Lacan, *Seminar 11*, 105).

In art therapy based on Lacan's theory, the art as *objet a* specifically has two aspects of healing function. It enables the subject to explore desire through the artistic act and the appreciation of art works (Lee 344-345). In connection with artistic act, Lacan explains that painting is the first act in the laying down of the gaze (Lacan, *Seminar 11*, 114). The artistic act is the sovereignty act of the subject. Because the act comes from outside the subject and becomes materialized, it is something that will render obsolete, exclude and inoperant all things to face the result with the sovereignty. Another way to appreciate art works in Lacan's art theory is discussed earlier: '*objet a*' in the field of visibility is linked to the proposition of the gaze (Lacan, *Seminar 11*, 105). This means that a subject sees the painting in the realm of reality and becomes visible from the painting at the same time. Lacan explains this as *dompte-regard* (Lacan, *Seminar 11*, 111). In other words, the painting not only becomes an object that can be seen by the subject, but also functions as '*objet a*' by giving words to the subject by gaze. A painting with the meaning of '*objet a*' not only gives the subject a comfort of desire, but also incites the abandonment to the subject beyond the painting, which is a screen. This allows the subject to go beyond the fantasy by exploring its own desire that the painting is giving messages through appreciation of the painting (the subject must go on to *traverse the fundamental fantasy*).

How can these artistic acts and appreciation of art works heal our anxiety? Lacan explains that anxiety is associated with the

desire of a subject, which is an affect that occurs when the subject cannot know desires of the Other. He explains that *the object of anxiety is essentially the real* and that it is a signal of desire associated with the emergence of the subject. In his book *Seminar 10*, Lacan explains that the real and irreducible pattern of being presents itself in experience as anxiety. He places anxiety between *jouissance* and desire, referring them to three stages of the emergence of a subject: *jouissance, anxiety, and desire* (Lacan, *Seminar 10*, 173-174). He explains that the object of anxiety is real and that anxiety is a precursor to the occurrence of unsatisfactory desires of a subject.

Based on Lacan's discussion, the anxiety of Koreans can be seen as an overdetermination that originates from the relationship with the Other, more broadly from social pathology, not as an individual symptom of the subject. Therefore, to truly understand and analyze the mental state of Koreans and to have restoration of being, it is necessary to diagnose and analyze alienated desires of individuals in Korean society in detail. This study analyzes a graduate student (X) as an example who has experienced self-healing through the painting of expressing plant image. She has expressed anxiety in a burnout state to be acknowledged by the desire of the Other in a ceaselessly competitive Korean society.

X is a female graduate student of Oriental Painting Department who is experiencing anxiety due to a burnout in social life. She experienced self-healing by doing art works on anxiety through *A Study on the Image Expression of Plant Based on the Buddhism Anguish and the Kierkegaard Anxiety Concept: Focused on My Work*. The following three are representative works that show the process of psychological change in early, middle, and late stages of a total of twelve works she has worked on. A text analysis through the record of X's work and art works is as follows.

Before starting artistic works of self-healing, X experienced burnout syndrome as a result of being over immersed in a variety of things to be acknowledged in social life and showed anxiety. X recorded her psychological state at that time as

follows: “Most people want to live a valuable life. This is what causes anxiety due to their desires. If you are sprinting all the time to be acknowledged due to excessive desire, you begin to ignore signals your mind sends and then a burnout symptom appears before you realize it” (Han 16).

X's symptom was due to social and psychological causes such as self-respect, the possibility of achieving life goals, the possibility of upward social mobility, a sense of belonging to home, school, workplace and society and the level of happiness (KIHS 31). X's anxiety originates from the desire to live a life acknowledged member of Korean society in which threats and pressures on survival are grave and critical. By assimilating this anxiety with the desire of the Other, it can be diagnosed as an alienated desire deprived of her existence; that is, it occurs in a disharmonious life.



*Flow*, Han, 2018

80.3x100.0cm

Mixed ingredients

*Blooming*, Han, 2018

116.8x72.7cm

Mixed ingredients

*There*, Han, 2018

80.3x100.0cm

Mixed ingredients

After becoming aware of anxiety, X studied Buddhism's worldly desires and Kierkegaard's concept of anxiety. Instead of avoiding her own symptom, she did art works while facing her anxiety. X, who began her art works to resolve her inner emotions while observing plants as materials, recorded *Flow*, as her first work at her early psychological state, as follows:

To express the subjective gaze by projecting anxiety and

helplessness on plants, I began to incorporate them into my work with an interest in my inner self. ... *Flow* is a work that expresses emotions as natural objects during chaotic times. By expressing emotions and spirits through lines, it means the natural encounter of the inner side that I currently have. The movement on the screen is an instant and my energy overlaps with it to form a single shape (Han 19).

*Flow* shows X's anxiety in its whole form. The contrasting expression with orange expressing self-esteem and ambition, cyan trying to adjust the painful flow of memories (Fincher 101) and excessive detail of leaves, is an effort for her to create for herself, to her furthest extent, an orderly and structured world as she feels the world around her is uncertain and dangerous. Despite the work expressing anxiety in the midst of confusion, X's artistic act becomes the first act in the laying down of the gaze. The artistic act comes from an external object called a plant. It becomes materialized because X will render it obsolete, exclude it, and make it inoperant. Based on Lacan's theory of art, X's brushstroke is an action that completes something, because it allows her to meet with the motive that produces the inherent stimulation that inspires one against time. Lacan explains the painter's stroke in the gaze by connecting it with the proposition that human desire is the desire of the Other (Lacan, *Seminar 11*, 115). Therefore, X's artistic act is an opportunity for her to realize her own alienated desire that originates from the desire of the Other in the process of recognizing, facing, and letting go of her own anxiety.

Following her first work, X developed a new relationship with herself by continuing her artistic act. *Blooming* is a work in which X gradually enlarges the depiction of leaves after *Flow*, draws a large sunflower and then creates a space as a margin in addition to the coloring of lines and planes in the following drawing paper. About *Blooming*, the ninth work, X wrote: "The image of a plant recognized by me breaks me away from the experience of inner despair and anxiety, thereby expressing my deep inner sensibility facing the imperfect ego. By exposing my inner image, I established a relationship with myself" (Han 30).

The magenta-colored flowers shown in *Blooming* symbolize the rework of loss of relationships and reaching productive time to make creative preparations in life (Fincher 111). Therefore, this work reflects reaching a time when X renews her attitude toward her desire through continuous artistic work, thereby establishing not only a relationship with the Other, but also a relationship with herself. In *Blooming*, X constitutes a blank space in addition to lines and planes which can be analyzed as separating her desire from the desire of the Other and metaphorizing the object of loss; that is, the blank space through artistic language. In this way, X, who renewed her relationship with herself by doing art works that confronted anxiety itself, reached self-healing through her last work. The following is what A writes about *There*:

In *There*, the circle refers to the 'framework' of present life. The space of margins between leaves blocked within a complex inner framework gives inner comfort and stability and the shape of leaves surrounding margins represents healing, stability and recovery by using curved shapes and greenish colors. Simple shapes, organic structures and layouts worked effectively for the healing of anxiety, which was the purpose of my work (Han 35).

The large green leaves in the space shown in *There* reflects the psychological state in which X's anxiety and excessive self-inhibition have been resolved, furthering the creation, healing, changing power anew with harmony in her life (Fincher 96). As can be seen in X's records, this work means that she has been cured, stabilized, and recovered by defining the current framework of her life with a circle.

As can be found in the case of X, anxiety is an opportunity to enable a true exploration for desire. By doing art works in the wake of symptom, X seeks out her own desire and becomes closer to the subjectivation. The artistic act leads to the exploration of desire while releasing desire itself at the same time in the process of materializing and facing one's own pain. The appreciation of art works that is a gaze, where X's painting is 'objet a,' plays a role in enlightening her to realize her true

position and appearance in the dialectic of desire with the Other by giving words.

This case of X illustrates that anxiety in Korean society is not caused by individual symptoms, but by sociopathology. This case shows that anxiety is a signal of birth of a subject originating from an alienated desire that depends on the desire of the Other. It shows the process of passion of existence appearing and healing through an artistic act and appreciation on one's own psychological problems. The process of X's self-healing in a broad sense is associated with healing functions of art: memory, hope, sadness, restoration of balance, self-understanding, growth and appreciation. Ultimately, X's healing processes reveals the meaning and process of human's existential life and the ethics of psychoanalysis from a Lacan's point of view towards to sustainable societies.

#### **4. Conclusion**

In this paper, we emphasize two main points. First, anxiety, which has recently gained attention in psychiatry for mental disorder, should be recognized as an affect that the being in a relationship with a social reality feels about itself rather than a mental disorder. Anxiety is a sympathetic signal that needs to open up the possibility of subjectivation based on the lack of Being. Second, the essence of art is not an aesthetic pleasure, but an effective means of diagnosing one's current state and healing anxiety in particular. Art therapy greatly contributes to restoration of being and harmonization of original life through desire.

We should emphasize the existential meaning of anxiety with being and that it should be developed into a sustainable society in coexistence with others. The strategy for sustainability in social life is to link to the recovery of pure desire. Therefore, instead of trying to unconditionally eliminate symptoms through drugs and psychotherapy, we should confront the symptoms. Otherwise, we might be consumed by anxiety and get lost in it. We can pass through the fantasy when we embrace anxiety head-on without trying to avoid anxiety and achieve

pursue happiness by becoming the subject of desire. The analysis of X's case in this study is an example.

According to Botton, art can provide a solution to anxiety with a healing function (Botton, *Status Anxiety*, 163). Through paintings and records drawn by X, the anxiety came from her existence alienated from the desire of the Other due to her existence's inability to properly establish her desire. X was not buried in a 'burnout' state. She was able to find a solution while looking into art works and diagnosing it. This is very important because treating social and psychological problems should ultimately be based on self-healing, and art therapy is very effective for this.

What makes art possible for self-reflection and healing is the desire for gaze, which is an indicator of its existence. Lacan sees art as a sublimation that enables creation from nothingness (*ex nihilo*), that targets an object of desire 'objet a' (Lacan, *Seminar 7*, 121-123). This is because art is an act that is open toward being that has anxiety as an attribute. Through the process, it is a substantial implementation of subjectivation that ultimately expresses desire. Being is discovered in desire and the indicator of being is just the gaze at art.

Through our discussion, we are able to emphasize that harmony in life is not about seeking out of filling or eliminating anxiety, but about restoring "intrinsic life" in relation to being as Heidegger said. It is not an alienated desire pursuing an object, but rather a subject that is faithful to the logic of being, not of possession. If desire is not working properly, we cannot act like Hamlet and become pathological (Lacan, *Seminar 10*, 334-336). In the end, we have to pursue harmony in life by sublimating anxiety while staying true to its relationship with lack.

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