

The Artistic Expression Of Subconscious Processes In Nicole Krauss's Stories

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Received: 02 December 2025; **Accepted:** 24 December 2025; **Published:** 29 January 2026

Abstract: This study investigates the subconscious process artistic representation in the prose of modern American writer Nicole Krauss. The narrative techniques, stylistic devices, and compositional strategies of the author in portraying the characters' inner psyche are the focus of the analysis. The study uncovers that Krauss uses such techniques as stream of consciousness, non-linear time structures, and polyphonic narration in order to develop the complex portrayals of human mind, where the conscious and the unconscious parts are in constant interaction.

Keywords: Nicole Krauss, subconscious processes, contemporary American literature, narrative techniques, psychological realism, memory representation, postmodern fiction, literary psychology, narrative fragmentation.

Introduction: The subconscious process depicted artistically has become one of the most important issues in modern literary studies, this being the use of narrative techniques that have changed during the first half of the 20th century, and still, the opening up of new narrative forms in the 21st century continues to be very much alive. Nicole Krauss, a contemporary American novelist, is really good at discovering and manifesting the different layers of human consciousness by means of innovative narration and the going through various stylistic practices. Nicole Krauss is a postmodern American novelist who was born in 1974, and her voice is already very distinct in the American literary scene with her works that include, among others, "The History of Love" (2005), "Great House" (2010), and "Forest Dark"(2017) which are all narrative interrelations of memory, loss, identity, and the past coming and going [1]. Her works include the conscious mind revealed by the author as an area of hidden psychological depth, which represents a wider range of psychologically inclined

fiction that spans from modernism to contemporary works through the narrative innovations.

Krauss's unique talent is found in her capacity to fuse the investigation of subconscious phenomena with captivating storytelling, thus producing narratives which are at the same time enthralling plots and in-depth psychologic studies. The portrayal of subconscious processes through her artistic fiction involves many aspects, such as the depiction of traumatic memory, the malleability of time perception, the splitting of self, and the indistinct barriers between reality and dream. All of these features are not only topics of concern but are also deeply rooted in the form and diction of her stories, and hence, the form itself is a means for psychological investigation [2].

METHODOLOGY

The study applies an extensive analytical method that merges close reading with theoretical frameworks from literary psychology, narratology, and poststructuralist criticism. The methodological setting relies on narratological ideas formulated by the likes of Gerard

Genette concerning plotting and focal character, plus psychoanalytic perspectives on literature that delve into how texts depict mind workings [3]. The research design does not embrace empirical observations, interviews, or experimental elements but rather concentrates on textual analysis and the critical scrutiny of secondary sources that discuss Krauss's work and perplexing theoretical concerns. The survey of literature discloses that although Krauss's fiction has attracted a lot of critical attention, the systematic investigation of her depiction of subconscious processes is still quite limited with most of the already existing scholarship centering around the issues of memory, Jewish identity, and intertextuality rather than the specific technical mechanisms through which psychological depth is created [4].

Krauss has been placed by the critics of present-day American literature in a line of navel-gazing fiction that is concentrating on the interior self and not so much on the outside world, and her closeness to Virginia Woolf, W.G. Sebald, and others who tell psychologically intricate stories has been pointed out [5]. In this context, the application of Freud and post-Freud's views of the unconscious to literature, especially their critique and adaptation in literary theory, the cognitive thinking of narrative as simulating mental processes and bringing into play the reader's psychological faculties, are some of the theoretical frameworks that have been applied in the present analysis. Moreover, the studies on trauma representation in contemporary fiction provide some additional background for understanding how Krauss shows the enduring impact of psychological wounds and how traumatic memory functions differently from normal memory [6]. Besides, the studies of the modernist stream of consciousness technique provide historical precedents for the narrative tactics employed by Krauss; however, her work shows that she has gone a long way beyond early twentieth-century models by the use of postmodern fragmentation and metafictional awareness.

The scholarly literature on memory in fiction, especially the distinction made between voluntary and involuntary memory following Proust's influential formulation, significantly elucidates the way Krauss presents the past coming into present consciousness through sensory triggers and associative chains [7]. Narrative theorists have focused on the representation

of the non-linear nature of psychological experience through the manipulation of time, e.g. analepsis and prolepsis, and thus provided about the interpretation of Krauss's intricate temporal structures. The intersection of Jewish literary tradition and psychological exploration is yet another important area of scholarship that is indirectly related to this study, as Krauss's networking with Jewish cultural memory and intergenerational trauma shows a reflection of a wider pattern in the contemporary Jewish-American fiction [8].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As the analysis clearly shows, Nicole Krauss is a master of the artistic techniques to represent subconscious processes, and the main technique she used is the stream of consciousness narration which is a perfect representation of the fluidity and association quality of the inner mental life. Krauss has been using this technique in her major works, especially in "The History of Love" and "Forest Dark," where she employed interior monologues of various lengths that mirror the wandering and non-linear movement of thought as it traverses through the different time frames and feelings without the unifying force of logic. These long passages have syntax that is akin to the way the mind works, for example: sentence fragments that indicate a thought is interrupted or not finished, paratactic constructions that present different things together with no overt connection made, and sudden changes of time reference that show how the mind moves easily from past to present [9].

Memory is one major point in Krauss's work that is continuous with the exploration of subconscious processes, and the writer shows complete understanding of the nature of memory as a process that does not merely recall the past but rather recreates it based on the present, emotions, and the loss of time that is the same as distortion. The author seeks the past through the senses—a certain light, a piece of music, a feeling—that without intention bring the characters to the past with full vividness, which, on the one hand, is a technique that clearly derives from Proustian concepts but, on the other hand, reflects the modern psychological understanding of memory's constructive character. Krauss frequently employs metaleptic narrative structures that blur boundaries between different temporal levels and ontological

frames, creating textual spaces where past and present, memory and imagination, lived experience and fictional construction exist in ambiguous relationship, thereby representing the permeable quality of consciousness and the difficulty of maintaining clear distinctions between different mental registers.

The fragmentation of narrative voice and perspective has been utilized as a major technique for depicting subconscious complexity, wherein the use of different narrators and changing focalization results in the production of polyphonic texts that do not support a singular unified consciousness but rather provide a distributed multiple subjectivities that intersect and diverge. This structural fragmentation coincides with psychological theories of the self as being multiple and fluid rather than unitary and stable, to the extent that it is implied that subconscious processes involve the interaction of various mental agencies rather than emanating from a single source [10]. Krauss's psychological wounds are treated with a skilled hand since the treatment reveals an understanding of how past and present psychological wounds exist simultaneously, traumatic events that may have taken place even centuries ago are still coexisting in the characters present experience, which is done through intrusive memories, dissociative episodes and symbolic repetitions that characters may not be aware of but are the reasons for their actions.

The texture of language in Krauss's writing plays a crucial role in the portrayal of the unconscious mind, as the writer uses a lyrical, highly metaphorical style that through suggestion and indirection rather than clear statement evokes emotional and psychological states and thus creates what could be called a poetics of the unconscious that works through the image, rhythm, and association. In Krauss's fiction, dreams and altered states of consciousness are not only implicitly present but also explicitly depicted; the writer not only shows the dream content but also the dream consciousness with its peculiar logic—its fluid changes, condensations, symbolic substitutions, and emotional intensification—as a way of reaching the deeper psychological realities of the characters. The presentation of the obsessive thoughts and mental patterns that are repeated often occurs in the writings of Krauss where she shows characters who feel the

need to go back to certain memories, issues, or imaginations very much like the technique that portrays both the non-voluntary aspect of mental life and the influence of the psychological fixations on how one perceives and experiences things.

The intertextuality and metafictional elements employed by Krauss not only deepen but also diversify her treatment of subconscious processes, where characters, who are either writers or are involved in some sort of creative work, illustrate the very process of how the unconscious is tapped during artistic creation; thus, the distinction between character and author, real life and fiction, becomes intentionally unclear. The structural setup of Krauss' stories oftentimes makes use of building metaphors—houses, rooms, doors, concealed spaces—that serve as objective correlatives for mental states, with the actual places illustrating various areas of the mind and the transitions from one place to another representing the shifts in one's psychological state. The portrayal of the characters' relationships in Krauss's novels brings forward the hidden factors of the connection between people, showing how human beings, without being aware, take in the features of the others' psychological spheres, repeat the patterns created in the first relationships, and converse through the hidden means that are beyond the reach of consciousness.

CONCLUSION

The analysis has shown that Nicole Krauss has artistically mastered and technically employed various ways to convey subconscious processes in her works, thus making her a major contemporary author of psychologically complex narratives. The main methods recognized are the use of a stream of consciousness narrative that allows the reader to perceive the flowing and associating thoughts of the character, the use of complex time structures that show the non-linear operation of memory, the use of narrative disintegration that reflects the psychological multiplicity, the use of poetic language that through indirectness invites the reader to the emotional depths, and the use of metafictional means to investigate the connection between unconscious sources and artistic production. All these tools combined make it possible to create literary texts that do not only represent the subconscious processes but also simulate them and, thus, involve the readers' own psychological faculties,

immersing them in the fluid and multilayered nature of consciousness. In this respect, Krauss is a strong synthesizer of the modernist psychological representation with the postmodern narrative construction's artificiality awareness, thus producing a fiction that is at once deeply concerned with authentic psychological exploration and conscious of the constructed nature of all textual representation.

Krauss's technique is not just a matter of individual artistic merit; it reveals the trend in the modern literature of giving importance to introspection, complexity and psychological subtleties, as well as employing narrative strategies that blur the line between consciousness and the unconscious, past and present, self and others. The study shows that to depict the subconscious processes artistically, not just thematic but engaging with psychological content through innovation at the narrative structure, temporal, linguistic, and reader engagement levels is required. Subsequent studies might consider comparing Krauss's methods with others of the same period if not the same genre, look into the connection between her artistic approaches and developments in consciousness studies and cognitive science, or employ reader's responses to gauge the level of psychological engagement and understanding achieved through these techniques.

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