**Feminist literature and postmoderism**

*Feminist writing*: political category, traditional or experimental exploring female roles, patriarchal myths, experimenting with new roles etc.

*Female writing* (e.g. New Woman writers, Margaret Forster, Anna Kavan, Ann Quin, Jenny Diski, Jane Rogers, Sara Maitland, Jeanette Winterson) male writers: Thomas Hardy, G.B.Shaw, James Matthew Barrie, H.G.Wells, John Galsworthy, John Fowles, Ian McEwan, Alasdair Gray, Michel Faber

**1890s: New Woman writing; ‘marriage problem novel’**


Deconstructing the myth of motherhood and self-sacrifice (Mona Caird: *The Daughters of Danaus*, 1894)

Female Künstlerroman (Caird, Egerton, Mary Cholmondeley, Ella Hepworth Dixon)

Feminist utopias (Charlotte Perkins Gilman. *Herland*; Lady Florence Dixie: *Gloriana*)

George Egerton: *Keynotes* (1894), Charlotte Mew, Gertrude Colmore’s *Suffragette Sally* + many male writers: Hardy, Shaw, George Gissing, Arnold Bennett)

**1920s: First wave feminism** – linked to modernism:

Woolf, Dorothy Richardson, K. Mansfield, Winifred Holtby, Mary Butts, Sylvia Townsend Warner, Radclyffe Hall, Rose Macaulay, Vera Brittain, Jean Rhys, Naomi Mitchison

**1950s: retrenchment**

**1960s: Second wave feminism**

Margaret Drabble, Margaret Forster, Lynne Reid Banks, Nell Dunn + experimental writers: Ann Quin, Eva Figes, Christine Brooke-Rose

1970s: practical achievements; emancipation ‘completed’; Women’s Studies institutionalised

**1980s and after: postmodern feminism**

Angela Carter, Jeanette Winterson, Sara Maitland, Fay Weldon, Jenny Diski, Patricia Duncker, Marina Warner, Emma Tennant, Michèle Roberts, Jane Rogers, Margaret Atwood, Timberlake Wertenbaker, Liz Lochhead, Buchi Emecheta, Bernardine Evaristo, Zadie Smith, Ravinder Randhawa etc

‘postfeminism’ – *chick lit*

*Genealogy of feminist literature*: Woolf – Doris Lessing – Angela Carter

**Dilemmas of feminist fiction**

*I. Realism or Experiment?*

A female way to write?

a. „tampering with the expected sentence” (Woolf)

b. sexuality and textuality; „writing of the female body” „the psychological sentence of the feminine gender” (Woolf)

Doris Lessing (1919-2013): *The Golden Notebook* (1962); Anna Wulf

**II. feminism and/or postmodernism?**

female identity, subjectivity:

(1) self-alienation, disempowerment, problems of embodiment


(2) alternative, transgressive, monstrous, chthonic subjectivities of empowerment (the Dog Woman in Winterson’s *Sexing the Cherry*; the vampire figure in Emma Tennant’s *The Bad Sister*)

Fay Weldon: *The Life and Loves of a She Devil* (1983) Ruth Patchett and Bobbo; Mary Fisher „I don’t think you’re a woman at all. I think what you are is a she devil”

(3) subjectivity as masquerade, performance

Fevers in Angela Carter’s *Nights at the Circus*

Graham Rawle: *Woman’s World* (graphic novel, 2005)

**Kinds of feminist fiction**

*Exploration of contemporary issues*: Margaret Drabble, Margaret Forster, Zoe Fairbairns

*History, historiographic metafiction* (e.g. Victorian pastiche)


A. S. Byatt: *Possession, Morpho Eugenia* (1992)

Sarah Waters: *Affinity* (1999) (Margaret Prior, Selina Dawes)
Jane Rogers: *Mr. Wroe’s Virgins* (1991)
Michel Faber: *The Crimson Petal and the White* (2004) Sugar
Kate Atkinson: *Behind the Scenes at the Museum* (1995) (Ruby Lennox)

Revisions, rewritings


Non-realism, popular plots

Feminist utopia:
Margaret Cavendish: *The Blazing World* (1666)
Gilman: *Herland* (1915)
Katherine Burdekin: *Proud Man* (1934); *The End of This Day’s Business*; Joanna Russ: *The Female Man*; Naomi Alderman: *The Power* (2016)

Feminist dystopia:
Katharine Burdekin: *Swastika Night* (1937); Susan Ertz: Anna Kavan: *Ice* (1967)

‘medical romance’: Lucy Ellmann: *Doctors and Nurses* (2006) (Jen the nurse)
feminist crime fiction (Sara Paretsky, Gillian Slovo, Joan Smith’s Loretta Lawson series)

Feminist sf: Ursula Le Guin, Gwyneth Jones

female gothic (Susan Hill: *The Woman in Black; Iris Murdoch: The Unicorn*; Emma Tennant; Angela Carter; Margaret Atwood, Alasdair Gray’s *Poor Things*


Fairy tales
Angela Carter: *The Bloody Chamber* (1979), *Night at the Circus, The Magic Toyshop*
A.S. Byatt: *The Djinn in the Nightingale’s Eyes Possession; Sara Maitland: The Book of Spells; Marina Warner: The Mermaids in the Basement; Winterson: Sexing the Cherry; Alice Thomas Ellis: *Fairy Tale* poetry by Liz Lochhead (*Dreaming Frankenstein*), Carol Ann Duffy, Anne Sexton (*Transformations*)


* Nights at the Circus* (1984; Fevvers, Jack Walser)

*Wise Children* (1991; Nora and Dora Chance, Melchior Hazard)