

Ursula le Guin "The artist deals with what cannot be said in words. The artist whose medium is fiction does this in words. The novelist says in words what cannot be said in words. (...) All fiction is metaphor. Science fiction is metaphor. What sets it apart from older forms of fiction seems to be its use of new metaphors, drawn from certain great dominants of our contemporary life –science, all the sciences, and technology, and the relativistic and the historical outlook, among them. Space travel is one of these metaphors; so is an alternative society, an alternative biology; the future is another. The future, in function, is a metaphor. A metaphor for what? If I could have said it non-metaphorically, I would not have written all these words, this novel; and Genly Ai would never have sat down at my desk and used up my ink and typewriter ribbon in informing me, and you, rather solemnly, that the truth is a matter of the imagination. (Introduction, *The Left Hand of Darkness*, 1969/2018)

