Myth-Remaking in the Shadow of Vergil: The Captive(-ated) Voice of Ursula K. Le Guin’s *Lavina*

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**Abstract**

Reading of Ursula K. Le Guin’s not-exactly-historical novel *Lavinia*, which combines her thematic interest in the feminine voice and experience with postmodern and existential concerns about authorship, textuality, and the collaboration between author and reader (and author and character)—resulting, as always with Le Guin, in something rich, deep, and difficult to classify. Explores how Le Guin adapted the original sources to create a novel from the female character’s point of view.

**Recommended Citation**


Ursula K. Le Guin went on to become known as one of the early feminist voices in fantasy and science fiction. She was one of the very few writers that has been able to break through the academic disdain for “low art” (a term used to describe genre work). One of Ursula Le Guin’s most well-known series, the Hainish series, was the setting for two of her earliest novels. These two novels were awarded the Hugo and Nebula award, an unprecedented double honor. Le Guin preferred the Tolkien comparison: Tolkien’s open-ended mythology is much more to her taste than Lewis’s religious works (Le Guin prefers to let allegory alone). Ursula K. Le Guin won more Locus awards than any other writer, 20 in total. "In Voices, Ursula Le Guin does something I wouldn’t have thought possible: she takes nearly every trope of the fantasy genre and deliberately sets them aside. Vows are broken, what seems magic becomes mundane, the mundane reveals itself as magical..." [continued]. — Lisa Goldstein Strange Horizons. Mystical, magical worlds worth visiting again and again. The stakes of the plot are high, but Le Guin keeps her prose calm and free of melodrama. Magic plays a part in the resolution of the narrative's central conflict, but the true theme of the book is the art of diplomacy, how the correctly chosen words can bring understanding in the midst of strife. Le Guin delivers this timely message with a sure hand.” [complete review]. — Michael Berry San Francisco Chronicle.