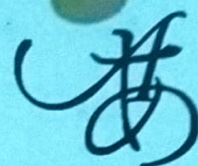




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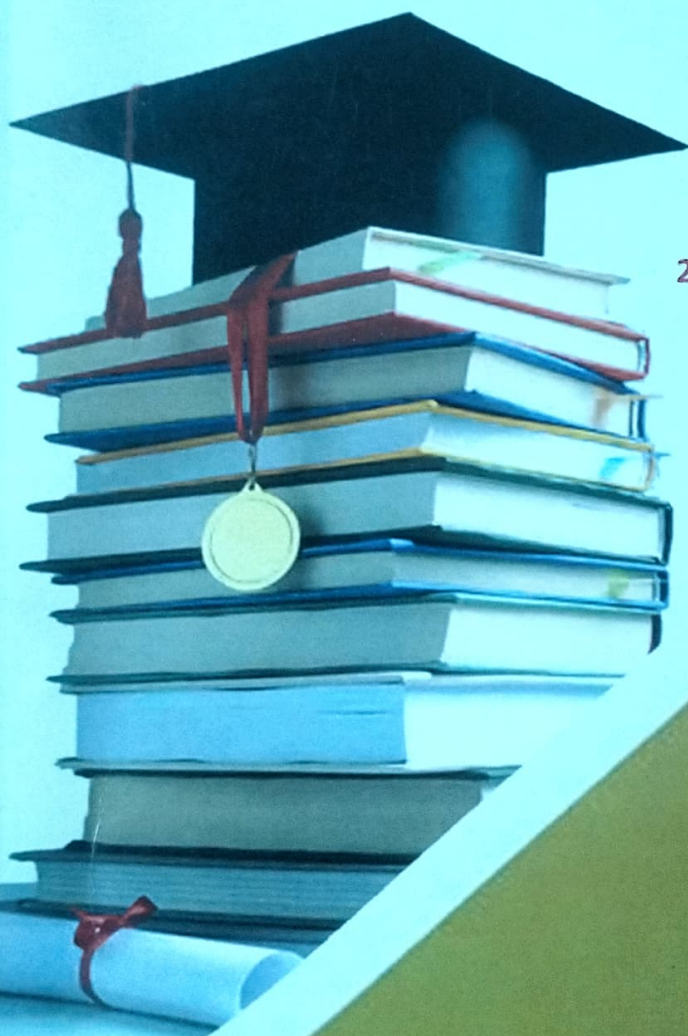
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1. Identity Crisis, Power Dynamics and in A Song of Ice and Fire

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Introduction

The phenomenon of identity crisis in literature paves the way for character development. Characters in fiction undergoes transformation as the plot develops. The experience in the narrative shapes the identity of the characters. They could bring forth their hidden qualities or they could be affected by the changed circumstances and use their agency to manipulate the situation to their advantage. The discussion of various definitions of identity crisis makes the matter our investigation clearer.

During an identity crisis, a person "tries on" different identities and ways of being. They may question their family's values and cultural norms, and begin developing their own system of values and unique personality, separate from their family.

According to oxford dictionary identity crisis means a period of uncertainty and confusion in which a person's sense of identity becomes insecure, typically due to a change in their expected aims or role in society.

An identity crisis happens at a time when some change makes you re-evaluate who you are.

A Song of Ice and Fire is the series of fantasy novels written by American writer George R.R. Martin. The main topics he has dealt with in his series are politics, power dynamics and political intrigue. The series portrays fictional continents of Westeros and Essos. He has also painted the wild picture of the wild world of forest where wild tribes live in proximity with nature.

Identity crisis and character development

Most of the characters in the series A Song of Ice and Fire face the dilemma of identity crisis. George R.R. Martin has introduced an aura of multi-dimensional characters. There are heroes who acts like villains and there are villains who show the tender feelings like sympathy and kindness. The utterly dishonest men show the streaks of honor. The world of the fantasy series A

Song of Ice and Fire is full of people with their unique strength and weakness, with their own features. The meek ladies as well as female knights. There are honest fools and utterly dishonest people like Jaime Lannister and Cersei Lannister. The world introduced is medieval in setting. There are seven kingdoms in the realm called Westeros and the seven families rule the different kingdoms. The North is ruled by the honest men Stark, the series portrays them as the descendants of the first men of the realm. Casterly Rock is ruled by the powerful and rich lord Tywin Lannister. The Lannisters are powerful but extremely ambitious and treacherous. The Lannisters are Tywin, Jaime, Cersei and Tyrion. There are Martells of Dorne, the Martells are poisonous in nature. They are brooding over the vengeance of the murder of Princess Elia who was wife to the prince Rheagar Targaryen. Rheagar Targaryen was murdered in the battle of Trident. The Greyjoys rule the Iron Island, these people want to assert their own identity. They are not in alliance with any house of the realm. The Tullys rule the river lands. Catelyn Tully is married to Eddard of house Stark. The Baratheons rule from Dragonstone, they are three brothers Robert king of the realm Stannis and Renly. The Targaryen family presently include Viserys and Daenerys rest of the members of the Targaryen family are killed in the Baratheon Rebellion. The Targaryens are the descendants of dragon. They are from the old Valeria which is destroyed in the fire.

The characters in the story change their personalities according to the development of the story. Martin has emphasized to portray morally grey characters not entirely heroes nor villains. Martin's characters are real life figure. They suffer as men and women suffer in the real life. They respond to their emotions as normal human being. There is less fantasy and more reality in Martin's novels.

The above picture shows that the realm is ruled by various families each aspiring for the power and want to rule the kingdom under one banner. The seat that represent the whole realm is iron throne at King's Landing. The rivalry among the lords of the realm disrupt the realm and chaos follows.

The follies committed by mad king Aerys II are grievous. King Aerys II in his fit of madness banished Tywin Lannister from the position of King's Hand. In order to diminish his power in the realm he appointed Jaime Lannister as the member of the king's guard. This made Tywin Lannister heirless. The king Aerys II refused Rheagar's marriage with Tywin's daughter Cersei. Prince Rheagar on the other hand chose Lyanna Stark as the queen of love and beauty. The battle that followed destroyed the realm beyond count. Robert Baratheon who was betrothed to Lyanna

Cersei's character development. If the things had gone as expected we would have seen different aspects of Cersei's nature but the changed situation changed her disposition and we got one of the rare female protagonist who dominated the war narrative of the series *A Song of Ice and fire*. Cersei is the force that played the game of throne she manipulated things in such a way that everything in the power game revolves around her. Her relationship with her husband, with her brothers and even with the members of king's guard reveal her political prudence. She represents the Machiavellian principles in the series. Cersei's every move is toward accumulation of power. She altered her plan according to the situation. She used Jaime Lannister to her own end. She manipulated the appointments in king's court to serve her ends. She even played the game with the faith, she appointed the septons who serve her end and replaced people who were hurdle in her way. When her twin brother Jaime Lannister is captured by Robb Stark and her father is away from Kings Landing to fight the war she establishes relationship with Lancel Lannister then with Osmund and Osfryd Kettleback to her end. Throughout the series she plays various political game with the various character of the series. She offers Eddard Stark her own self until Jaime returns to kings Landing.

Her game reverts when her trusted people betray her and confess the crime she compelled them to commit. Her fortune turn against her when her well-orchestrated plan fail. She herself becomes victims of her own plan. Her brother Jaime Lannister is captive of the Starks, he loses his sword hand while returning to kings landing. Her son Joffrey is murdered on his wedding night. Her father died at the hand of his own child Tyrion. She suffers tremendously. She is made to walk the walk of atonement all naked before the common people of the kings landing. She is humiliated beyond limit. People curse her, they call her whore and pelt rotten vegetable at her. When Jaime learns about her relationship with other people of the court he abandons her to her faith. He did not return to save his twin sister.

Eddard Stark is honorable man who follows the simple life and straight traditions of the North. He is unaware of the courtly politics of the southern court. He is dear friend of the king Robert. He helped him win the iron throne and avenge the murder of his sister Lyanna Stark. Jon Arryn's death compels Eddard to walk south and accept the position of king's Hand the lord is so honorable that he does not make any changes in his behavior according to the customs of the southern courtly politics. He follows the simple rule of differentiating the truth from the false. He accuses Cersei of her incest, he questions Joffrey's legitimacy as Robert's heir. And extend his

support to Stannis Baratheon as the proper heir to the iron throne. He suffers a lot just for the sake of his honesty. Many people tell him to change his disposition and change his pursuit of the Joffrey's legitimacy. Eddard Stark continues his investigation and brings about his down fall. The death of Robert Baratheon changed the situation for him changed situation changed the result.

Arya Stark is daughter of Eddard Stark, she is small wilful child of nearly six to seven years old. George R. R. martin has portrayed her as tomboy from her early childhood she is indomitable. She rejects the gender role allotted to her, she enjoys being boy and doing the work of boy. She tends horses and learns sword fight. As a girl she never shows interest in girly things like sewing and dancing. Her father's death changes her entire universe she hides her identity and disguises herself as boy, she frequently changes her name. In search of her lost home she hurtles from one place to another place. In the end of the series she joins the faith of R'hllor and chooses to become faceless assassin.

Sansa Stark is daughter to Eddard Stark and Catelyn Stark she is comely girl who is waiting her flowering to finalize her marriage with Joffrey Baratheon. Sansa is a dreamy girl who is much interested in the knightly tales and romantic love stories. She is betrothed to Joffrey Baratheon the heir to iron throne. She is completely naïve player in the game of thrones. She learns her harsh lesson after her father's execution. She had pleaded for the mercy for her father but Joffrey didn't listen her. She is ill-treated at kings landing after her father's death. She is used as catspaw to advance their agenda. In reality Sansa was hostage at kings landing. Peter Baelish tells her that life is not a song and she would learn it one day. Sansa Stark is married to the dwarf of Tywin Lannister Tyrion.

Daenerys Targaryen is another one more important character in the fantasy series A Song of Ice and Fire. She was borne in tumultuous time when the Targaryen dynasty came to end. She and her brother Viserys are the last surviving members of the dragon family. In the beginning she suffers hardship. She is sold to the war lord Khal Drogo at the age of thirteen, after enjoying her marital bliss she loses her husband and even her son her supporters. She undergoes hardship and carve out her own kingdom. Her subjects call her *mhysa* or mother in the free cities of Meeren, Astapor Yi Ti she sets free the slaves and becomes their mother. She also hatches three dragon eggs and gives them life to make them formidable force in the game of thrones and herself a formidable player.

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