

# Archetypes in Female Characters of Game of Thrones

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Sveučilište u Zadru

Odjel za anglistiku

Preddiplomski sveučilišni studij engleskog jezika i književnosti (dvpredmetni)

**Gloria Makjanić**

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Završni rad

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Zadar, 2018.



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Zadar, 13. rujna 2018.

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## 1. Introduction

Perhaps the most popular fantasy series of all time and certainly a cult favorite - *Game of Thrones* – is a TV show which started airing in 2011 and has since broken all records both in viewership as well as established genre tropes. The series, set in the fictional kingdom of Westeros, introduced us to a broad spectrum of characters of all races, professions and social standings. This is exactly why it is highly suitable for the examination of female archetypes, as well as the importance of embracing masculine traits in a male dominated world. This thesis aims to analyze some of the most prominent female characters in the show according to Margaret Mark and Carol Pearson's theory of archetypes, Joseph Campbell's theory of a hero's journey, and their tendency to accept traits commonly assigned to men. The four characters chosen for the analysis are Cersei Lannister, Daenerys Targaryen, and the Stark sisters, Sansa and Arya.

Following the introduction, the paper will start with a short word explaining the world of *Game of Thrones* and how Campbell's hero theory applies to it. The third chapter will introduce readers with the concept of archetypes and explain the model which was used in this paper to analyze the chosen characters. The subsequent chapters will analyze the characters of Daenerys Targaryen, Cersei Lannister, Sansa Stark and Arya Stark according to their archetypes, as well as test how well they fit Campbell's definition of a hero. The fourth chapter will explain the importance of traits traditionally given to men and women and in detail analyze how each of

the characters deals with these traits. Finally, the conclusion will include a summary of what was said in the paper and some thoughts on the future of female representation in television.

## 2. Game of Thrones

Set in the fictional kingdom of Westeros, *Game of Thrones* is a fantasy TV series revolving around several noble families as they fight for the throne. In an interview given to Time magazine, the writer of the books the show is based on, George R.R. Martin, claims that the events presented both in the books and in the show are loosely based on the historic War of the Roses (D'Addario). This of course means the show contains plenty of conflict, intrigue and adventures. This paper will heavily rely on Joseph Campbell's seminal work *The Hero With a Thousand Faces*. In it, Campbell claims that "it will be always the one, shape-shifting yet marvelously constant story that we find, together with a challengingly persistent suggestion of more remaining to be experienced than will ever be known or told" (97). Campbell analyzed various stories appearing in all of human history, and he found that most of them contained the same basic formula of a hero embarking on a journey into the unknown. This can certainly be applied to *Game of Thrones* in multiple aspects. However, one thing must be made clear in regards to *Game of Thrones*. Perhaps the main pull of the series and certainly one of its defining aspects is the fact that the show does not have a clearly defined hero figure in the sense of a main character. While we may get a sense of who may take the lead in the fight against evil as the show draws closer to its end, the show also constantly teases us with the idea that the character we consider as **the** hero may be gone any second. The best example for this is probably the character of the late Ned Stark, who most viewers felt would be the lead character before he was unexpectedly beheaded in the first season finale. So, while we will try to apply Campbell's

idea to the character's journey, we must emphasize the fact that none of the characters are clear protagonists and that they are instead each a hero of their own story.

### 3. Archetypes

Carl Jung defined archetypes as “essentially an unconscious content that is altered by becoming conscious and by being perceived, and it takes its color from the individual consciousness in which it happens to appear.” (*Collected works of C. G. Jung : The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious* 5). What Jung believed was that the mind is not a blank slate as John Locke had previously claimed, but that it instead works on the idea of “the collective unconscious [...] it has contents and modes of behavior that are more or less the same everywhere and in all individuals.” (3)

What Jung means by this is that there are some ideas, or in his words, “primordial images” (57), which are engrained in every person's deep unconscious. This is why in the same types of characters occur over and over again in literature, from Greek myths to modern TV shows. 85 years after Carl Jung first defined archetypes in his 1916 essay, “The Structure of the Unconscious”, Margaret Mark and Carol Pearson wrote a book titled *The Hero and the Outlaw: Building Extraordinary Brands Through the Power of Archetypes* in which they presented their vision of the 12 archetypes most commonly seen in media. They claim that archetypes have such power that “Your knowledge of archetypes will enable you to see the patterns in these expressions of timeless themes.” (374). This paper will try and fulfill Mark and Pearson's promise by using their definitions concerning archetypes to analyze the female characters of Game of Thrones. The four archetypes chosen will be the Hero, the Ruler, the Regular Gal and the Explorer.



### 3.1 The Hero – Daenerys Targaryen

For the character of Daenerys Targaryen, the aim of this paper will be first to analyze her appearance in the show according to Mark and Pearson's archetype, and then try to trace her path according to Campbell's definition of the hero monomyth. Mark and Pearson define the hero as the figure whose main desire is to "prove one's worth through courageous and difficult action" (106). This is true for Daenerys, who continuously tries to prove herself as a kind and just ruler. Her main tactic in winning the hearts of her people is mercy, which she exhibits early on in the first season, when she tries to protect the women occupying a village her Khalasar was trying to sack. She again follows this pattern when she frees the Unsullied army in Astapor and then proceeds to free all the cities in Slaver's bay. What Daenerys strives to achieve is basically to form a democratic country, even though the term 'democracy' does not exist as such in Westeros. Her idealistic worldview means she wants a country where all men are equal and where she is not considered anyone's master. In her own words during her speech to the Unsullied in the season 3 finale:

"You do not owe me your freedom. I cannot give it to you. Your freedom is not mine to give. It belongs to you and you alone. If you want it back, you must take it for yourselves."  
(00:58:23)

But as Mark and Pearson warn, the hero tends to fall in a trap of "arrogance, developing a need for there always to be an enemy" (106), which can again be applied to Daenerys. While she truly is merciful and kind to those who serve her, is wary and untrusting of her peers, and often outright cruel to the nobles she sees as a threat. Be it crucifying the former slavers in her own version of justice or burning the Westerosi nobles who attack her, Daenerys has no mercy left for those who defy her. There is good reason for this, as her late father, justly dubbed The Mad King, was betrayed by his own nobles once they felt he was no longer fit to rule. As the show goes on, Daenerys becomes more and more ruthless and by the time she finally paves her way

back to Westeros is ready to face her enemies. As Cersei eloquently sums it up in the season 7 episode titled “Stormborn”:

“the Mad King's daughter has ferried an army of savages to our shores, mindless Unsullied soldiers who will destroy your castles and your holdfasts, Dothraki heathens who will burn your villages to the ground, rape and enslave your women, and butcher your children without a second thought. [...] In Essos, her brutality is already legendary. She crucified hundreds of noble men in Slaver's Bay, and when she grew bored of that, she fed them to her dragons.” (00:13:26)

So, it is understandable that the Westerosi nobles may be a bit apprehensive about an exiled queen coming to rule over them, considering the reputation that preceded her. However, as Mark and Pearson say, Daenerys' strategy is to “become as strong, competent, and powerful as you are capable of being” (106), and she will achieve this with her gifts of “competence and courage” (106). Daenerys' greatest strength is listening to her advisors, from her oldest confidant Jorah Mormont to her newest romantic interest, Jon Snow. She is aware of her father's mistakes, and she hopes to avoid them by surrounding herself with good people who have her best interest, as well as the best interest of her people in their hearts. She is wise and unforgiving at the same time, evident by the warning she gives to Varys in “Stormborn”: “If you ever think I'm failing the people, you won't conspire behind my back. You'll look me in the eye as you have done today, and you'll tell me how I'm failing them. [...] And I swear this: if you ever betray me, I'll burn you alive.” (00:07:47)

We have established that Daenerys fits Mark and Pearson's archetype of The Hero, what about Joseph Campbell? Let's go over his steps in a hero's journey and how Daenerys' story relates. According to Campbell, the first step in a hero's journey is the call to adventure. In Daenerys' case, this happens after she gets Khal Drogo to kill her incompetent cruel brother, making her the next in line to the throne of Westeros. This is followed by the departure, starting with

“the call to adventure [...] it marks what has been termed "the awakening of the self." [...] a mystery of transfiguration—a rite, or moment, of spiritual passage, which, when complete, amounts to a dying and a birth. The familiar life horizon has been outgrown; the old concepts, ideals, and emotional patterns no longer fit; the time for the passing of a threshold is at hand.” (47).

For Daenerys, this is the moment after she emerges from her husband’s funeral pyre unscathed. She has been reborn as the mother of dragons, a Khaleesi ready to guide her people to the unknown – Westeros. What follows is the initiation: “Once having traversed the threshold, the hero moves in a dream landscape of curiously fluid, ambiguous forms, where he must survive a succession of trials.” (89). This is the period of Daenerys’ journey through Essos in which she confronts the Masters of Slaver’s bay and gathers her army. In her journey, Daenerys also receives assistance from several people who fit the figure of what Campbell called “the Wise Old Man [...] whose words assist the hero through the trials and terrors of the weird adventure.” (8). Although Jorah Mormont is the one who best fits this description, it could also be applied to Ser Barristan Selmy and Varys. The viewers are yet to see the end of Daenerys’ journey, which if coincided with Campbell’s ideas will end with a return to the status quo. She has not yet faced the final parts of the hero’s journey: facing her greatest enemy and living (or dying) through a crisis. The viewers will have to wait for the end of the final season to see for themselves whether Daenerys completes the hero’s journey.

### 3.2 The Ruler – Cersei Lannister

According to Mark and Pearson, the Ruler’s motto is ““Power isn’t everything. It’s the only thing.”” (244). This well as may be Cersei Lannister’s official personal motto. Cersei only gains total power at the end of season 6, but throughout the series she still tries her best to rule from the shadows, but only for her own and her family's benefit. Mark and Pearson say the Ruler desires control and that their goal is to “create a prosperous, successful family, company, or

community” (245). This could not be any truer in Cersei's case, as she gladly follows her father Tywin’s leadership in doing the best for the family's interest. While her father Tywin, whose main priority in life is to uphold the Lannister name, only uses Cersei as an object to marry off, he bequests her brothers with important titles and tasks. This is obviously a mistake, seeing as neither Jaime nor Tyrion share his desire for power, and it is rather Cersei who displays the most similarities to her father. She says so herself when discussing the matter of rescuing Jaime from the Starks with Tywin:

“Did it ever occur to you that I might be the one who deserves your confidence and your trust, not your sons? Not Jaime or Tyrion, but me. Years and years of lectures on family and legacy [...] did it ever occur to you that your daughter might be the only one listening to them? Living by them? That she might have the most to contribute to your legacy that you love so much more than your actual children?” (“And Now His Watch Is Ended”).

The ruler’s strategy is to “exert leadership” through their gift of “responsibility and leadership” (245). Although Cersei’s potential is mostly overlooked by the men in her life, she is shown to be very good at pulling the strings behind the scenes and manipulating things to go her way. While the kings and nobles she is surrounded with, from her late husband Robert to her father Tywin and sons Joffrey and Tommen often display serious lack of political tact, she often seems more capable than they are. In the third episode of season 1, when Joffrey is going on a tirade about seizing the North, she tells him that “A good king knows when to save his strength and when to destroy his enemies.” (00:10:32). However, as she descends into madness after the events of the first six seasons, during which she loses her father and all three of her children, is betrayed by her younger brother and humiliated by a religious fanatic called the High Sparrow, Cersei becomes more and more erratic in her actions. Tyrion tells her in the opening episode of season two that she does love her children, which is her “one redeeming quality” (00:09:32). This fact saved Cersei from going full blown tyrant earlier on in the show, but after realizing

she quite literally has nothing left, she decides to deal with her enemies by any means necessary. If Cersei were the Hero, her walk of shame would be equal to Daenerys emerging victorious from her funeral pyre and would signify the beginning of her Departure. Her initiation would be dealing with her enemies, starting with blowing up the sept of Baelor at the end of season 6, and then consequently killing Olenna Tyrell, Ellaria Sand and her daughters, and capturing Yara Greyjoy, all in season 7. At the end of this journey, she is back where she started, together with Jaime and with no enemies in sight due to her truce with Daenerys. Yet nothing is the same, Cersei is a different person and Jaime no longer sees her in the same way he saw her before the events of the series. Cersei however is by no means the hero, and it is likely her newfound power and overconfidence in her brash and sometimes outright foolish choices will be the end of her. To compare the two queens: when Daenerys chooses to earn the throne by making the people love her, Cersei takes it by force, showing no mercy to the innocent. Where Daenerys chooses to listen to her advisors who stop her from making reckless decisions, Cersei alienates or kills those who advised her, at the end of season 7 losing even Jaime's support. When Daenerys loses everything, time and time again, it only makes her stronger and more determined. For Cersei, losing everything meant a quick descend into insanity. While at the start of the show she showed great promise despite being obviously marked the villain, towards the later seasons she has lost the traits which made her human and allowed the humans to sympathize with her to an extent, finally becoming a caricature of the Evil Queen.

### 3.3 The Regular Gal – Sansa Stark

As it becomes clearer and clearer as the show goes on, Sansa may be the only one of the surviving Stark children without any obvious special talent. Jon is a beloved leader and an experienced warrior, Arya is a skillful assassin and Bran has become the all-knowing Three-Eyed Raven. Meanwhile, despite all of the struggles she has been put through, Sansa's main strength is survival, not through combat and manipulation, but through her ability to blend in. As

Tyrion puts it in episode 3 of season 7, “she's much smarter than she lets on.” (00:06:13). Sansa probably would not be dubbed the Regular Gal at the beginning of the show, when her main goal was to marry Joffrey, become his queen and bare him children, which sometimes clouds her perspective on the world around her. When Ned, sensing the looming threat on his life, tries to send his daughters back to Winterfell, she is desperate, claiming: “I can't go! I'm supposed to marry Prince Joffrey! I love him! And I'm meant to be his queen and have his babies!” (00:44:50). But as her circumstances grow more and more grim and perilous, Sansa makes the wise, albeit a cowardly decision by some to stand her ground, do as she is told by her captives and not make much fuss. Mark and Pearson say that the Regular Gal's goal is “to belong, fit in”, which she tries to achieve through the strategy of “develop[ing] ordinary solid virtues, the common touch, blend in”, and her fears are “standing out and being exiled or rejected as a result” (166). This is true for Sansa, although her motives are born out of fear rather than true desire to blend in. One cannot truly criticize Sansa for her actions (except for her sister), which are ultimately one of the wisest we have seen on the show. Sansa has seen what speaking up has brought upon her father and brother who were both killed by the Lannisters, not to mention countless other enemies she witnessed fail to overthrow them. At just 14 years old, she exhibits more common sense than most adults on the show, and her tactic obviously show fruitful, seeing how she has at this point survived a partnership with not one, but two tyrants and is finally safe home at Winterfell. When young lady Lyanna Mormont accuses her of often changing alliances, she responds by saying: “I did what I had to do to survive, my lady. But I am a Stark, I will always be a Stark.” (00:24:27). However, the trap the Regular Gal may find themselves in is to “give up self to blend in, in exchange for only a superficial connection“ (166). The reason for Sansa giving herself up to blend in is of course in exchange for her life, and not a superficial connection, but the same is happening to her regardless. Sansa is greatly influenced by those around her, from picking up on the cunning ways of Cersei and Littlefinger to confining and

imitating Margaery Tyrell when she reveals herself to be a friend. Even Jon accuses her in the opening of season 7 that she “almost sound[s] as if [she] admire[s] her” (00:19:20), to which she replies she “learned a great deal from her” (00:19:25). This is perhaps Sansa’s greatest strength: most of the other characters underestimate their enemies, but Sansa learned from them. How does Sansa fit the hero’s journey? She has certainly embarked on an adventure, leaving Winterfell for King’s Landing and then leaving King’s Landing for Winterfell, encountering numerous cruel and cunning enemies along her way. The Wise Old Man could in her case be Littlefinger, although he clearly does not always have Sansa’s best interest at heart. At the end of her journey, Sansa returns to the starting point, in Winterfell, where nothing is quite the same. But the reason I feel this has not been a hero’s journey for Sansa is that she has just started to become the Hero. With her newfound power and confidence, she may yet slaughter some figurative dragons of her own, especially considering her likely succession as the Queen of the North once Jon’s parentage is revealed.

### 3.4 The Explorer – Arya Stark

We have already compared the two rulers, Daenerys and Cersei, and who better to pair up Sansa with than her polar opposite younger sister Arya. From the very start of the show, Arya is true to the Explorer’s motto: “Don’t fence me in.” (Mark and Pearson 72). When we are introduced to Arya, we see her discard her thread and needle to join her brothers at the arching range. From this moment on, Arya constantly proves herself to be the exact opposite of her sister, fiercely devoted to her father and brothers and determined to learn skills such as swordplay. Unlike Sansa, who thrives in the role of the damsel in distress, in her own words to the Hound in the season 4 finale, Arya “[doesn’t] need saving.” (00:48:40). The Explorer’s core desire is to achieve “the freedom to find out who [they] are through exploring the world“ (172). This is exactly what Arya does, running around the grounds of Winterfell, chasing cats in the alleys of King’s Landing and setting out on a journey to Braavos. It can certainly be said that

Arya has already achieved her goal according to Mark and Pearson, which is “to experience a better, more authentic, more fulfilling life” (172). Of course, this may have been Arya’s goal when she was still a young innocent girl living with her big, close family in a castle in the North of Winterfell, but after losing her father, her main goal is currently revenge. As she crosses off names from her ominous kill list, Arya literally loses more and more of herself, finally becoming No One. During this journey, she almost falls in the trap of “aimless wondering, becoming a misfit” (172), but impulsively decides to return home once she hears Winterfell has been taken back by Jon. Despite claiming that she still is “Arya Stark of Winterfell” (“No One”), it is clear once she returns home that things are no longer how they used to be in the old days. This is perhaps the most revealing sign indicating that Arya is actually the only female character in the show to have gone through all of the stages of the Hero’s journey. Arya starts off in the ordinary world – Winterfell, where she is destined to follow the steps of every other noble woman. She then receives a call to adventure: her father brings her along on his journey to King’s Landing, marking her departure. From that moment on, she lives through a series of adventures, and much as in Daenerys’ case, receiving help from various people who could fit the Wise Old Man role (Syrio Forell, Jaqen H’ghar), but the most prominent one is the Hound. Although often clashing and even placing him on her list, the Hound is still her best protector and someone she has learned a lot from. Jaqen could also fit the role of a supernatural aid, seeing he possesses the power to change his appearance by taking on faces of people he killed. He teaches this skill to Arya, which could be seen as the Initiation phase of her journey. In Braavos, Arya faces another frequent motive: death and rebirth. She does not literally die, but after she is brutally attacked by the Waif, something shifts and she changes her narrative: she faces Jaqen, affirms her identity as Arya and uses her acquired skills to carry on her journey of revenge. After returning to Winterfell, Arya faces the challenge of the Return. She carried out and survived her journey and came back home, to the same place she started from, but nothing



is truly the same anymore. Her siblings have greatly changed, her parents are gone, and Arya herself is no longer the same girl from the beginning of the story. This may prove fatal for Arya, whose sole focus on revenge basically means that if she survives the events of the series, there will be nothing left for her. Unlike Sansa, Arya hasn't grown through her journey. Sansa has left behind her childhood ambitions and understands things have changed; Arya insists on carrying out her revenge and blames Sansa for her lack of action. It remains to be seen what will become of Arya, but it seems likely that without a drastic shift in her worldview, survival will not be in her cards.

#### 4. The emergence of masculine traits

We have so far established that all four of the women analyzed in this paper are strong, capable and willful and have possibly amounted more than their male counterparts. However, one thing remains true, although it is unclear whether this is a deliberate decision made by the writers as a critique of the society's perception of women or the exact display of these issues. The issue in question is the fact that three out of four women (Sansa to a lesser extent) named in this paper have only gained respect after they had to a lesser or greater extent denounced their feminine traits and exchanged them for masculine ones. First of all: is it sexist to classify traits as inherently 'male' and 'female'? This is probably true for our everyday world, but in the context of the show it is quite telling and thus necessary. Errika Lorraine Millam says in her essay titled "Making Males Aggressive and Females Coy: Gender across the Animal-Human Boundary" that in the past, men were "bestialized because of their association with aggressive, warlike behavior" and women were made to be "acting sexually coy and exercising their natural prerogative—female mate choice" (Signs 936). How does this relate to our characters? Let's go over each to deduce.

#### 4.1 Daenerys

At the beginning of her journey, Daenerys is completely helpless against the whims and wishes of her brother Viserys, and despite being a princess lives a life about as free as a common slave. Viserys not only takes control over her actions in deciding to marry her off to Khal Drogo, but also uses any opportunity to belittle and even physically abuse her. Daenerys accepts this as a way of life, realizing even when she is raped by her new husband on the night of their wedding that this is the way things are done in her world. Things start to change once Daenerys becomes more comfortable in her role of Khaleesi. As she grows closer and even starts to love Drogo, she becomes more and more insolent towards her brother, who is no longer her superior, at least not in the confines of the Khalasar. This reflects in changes in her physical appearance as well: princess Daenerys wore silk gowns and flowing hair, indicator of her wealth, status, beauty and innocence. Daenerys the Khaleesi throws on crocodile skin – a variation of the typical Dothraki horse skin costume indicating her connection to dragons. She also begins braiding her hair, a custom all Dothraki live by – letting them grow long and only cutting them after they lose in battle. Her change in appearance is only the physical manifestation of the mental shift she has gone through. She is no longer timid and quiet, instead taking control of Drogo and making him see her as an equal. She even manages to convince him to help her conquer Westeros, something Viserys had been unable to do. Drogo promises her: “I will take my khalasar west to where the world ends and ride wooden horses across the black salt sea as no khal has done before.” (You Win or You Die). As she learns Dothraki, she starts being more confident in commanding her people, as well as confronting Drogo’s warriors. She threatens one of them when he is reluctant to let go of a shepherd woman found in a conquered village: “Do as I command or Khal Drogo will know the reason why.” (The Pointy End). After she emerges from the funeral pyre, Daenerys becomes even more sure of herself as she becomes the Mother of Dragons. This may justly be considered quite feminine, but it is the opposite:

Daenerys believes she is now unable to bare children after miscarrying Drogo's son. Biologically, the ability to bare children is the main distinction between men and women and now that Daenerys has lost that, she has also avoided the traits associated with motherhood and femininity which would hinder her journey: softness and weakness regarding her children. As the series progresses and Daenerys leans more on her title of Queen than of the Khaleesi and moves more towards the West, she also changes her leather for more regal like gowns. In the final season, after her arrival to Westeros we see her clothes starting to emulate harsher styles associated with men's fashion – black in color and often embroidered with chains, remindful of a knight's armor. This is quite a change from the breezy, colorful gowns she previously wore – a clear indicator of her becoming ready for war. As she says in episode 5 of season 4. "I will do what Queens do. I will rule." (00:09:58)

#### 4.2 Cersei

The difference in how women and men are regarded in the series' universe can be perfectly showcased on Cersei's example, seeing she was always in her twin brother's shadow. As she says herself:

„When we were young, Jaime and I, we looked so much alike even our father couldn't tell us apart. I could never understand why they treated us differently. Jaime was taught to fight with sword and lance and mace, and I was taught to smile and sing and please. He was heir to Casterly Rock, and I was sold to some stranger like a horse to be ridden whenever he desired.“ (“Blackwater”).

Cersei's clothing choices reflect her mental devotion to her family. At the beginning, we most often see her dressed in variations of red and gold gowns, the same colors found on the Lannisters' family banner. As queen, Cersei is the trendsetter for the women in King's Landing, who all try to emulate her by imitating her elaborate hairstyles as well as her dresses made of

rich embroidered fabrics. Often donning revealing necklines, her gowns accentuate her femininity and inherently so her sexuality, which she often uses to get what she wants. As she advises Sansa: “Tears aren't a woman's only weapon. The best one's between your legs.” (“Blackwater”). Also important to notice is that Cersei loves adorning herself with gold, indicating her vanity and social standing. This is how Cersei was as a mother and a lover: while her children are safe and her relationship with Jaime loving, she expresses her femininity as an important part of her identity. A pivotal moment in her change of appearance is the walk of shame inflicted upon her by the High Sparrow. At the end of season 5, Cersei is made to walk naked through the streets of King’s Landing, throwing her to the will of the angry mobs of the city. Before taking that road, her hair is cut to short, leaving her completely bare. We have established that prior to this, Cersei used her clothes as a sort of armor: a mask showing the world the image of her she wanted to project. However, when stripped of her physical attributes, she becomes vulnerable and is forced to face her own fears. This obviously ignites a change in her, since after becoming queen, Cersei keeps her appearance androgynous, probably in order to gain more respect. This change in appearance is no coincidence; it shows Cersei’s transgression to power literally and figuratively: by losing the men in her life, she is finally ‘her own man’. She is no longer a mother, a trait we have already established as the epitome of femininity, but the real hit comes when Jaime also leaves her after she double crosses Daenerys. This could again be telling – Jaime and Cersei work best when Cersei is feminine, seductive, and motherly. Once she takes on more assertive, masculine traits, their relationship starts falling apart.

#### 4.3 Sansa

Sansa’s defining quality in the beginning of the series is her pure ecstatic girlhood: she dreams of marrying a prince, living in a castle, wearing pretty dresses and throwing elaborate parties. She shows great skill at sewing, a typical woman’s activity (which is quite important for her

fashion progression as we know she sows her gowns herself) and is extremely close and looks up to her mother. As things start going south for Sansa, there is a shift in her priorities: she is still very much a girl who takes care of her appearance, but she realizes it should no longer be her priority. To further use the allegory of image: she realizes the picture of the perfect life she once dreamed of is but a fairytale and does not exist in real life. This makes Sansa hardened and even a pessimist: she has extreme issues trusting the people in her life and always expects the worst to come out of the situation. When Shae tells her during the battle of Blackwater bay that some of the men fighting may never come back, she replies: “Joffrey will. The worst ones always live.” (“Blackwater”). During her childhood, Sansa had little to no relationship with Jon and certainly was not taken seriously by any of the male figures in her life, but as she becomes more apathic and real, by the end of season 7 she is shown running Winterfell and having influence over the Northern lords, despite them neglecting to consider her as Queen of the North and choosing her bastard brother Jon instead. Gone are the days of Sansa being used as a bargaining chip and traded from one marriage to the other: the new Sansa who denounced her girlhood wishes is the Lady of Winterfell and may well take Jon’s place as Queen of the North once his parentage is revealed and he inevitably takes the Iron Throne. Again, this comes to an expense of her feminine traits. The Sansa who loved dressing up and dreamed of princes would never gain the respect of the Northern Lords, while the Sansa who saved Jon with her military intervention and is handling the use of grain in the long winter is someone to be revered. As for Sansa’s fashion choices, it is widely known they reflect her alliances at any time. At the beginning, we see her dressed in typical Northern fashion, in muted tones and simple hairstyles without much jewelry. As she moves to King’s Landing and becomes betrothed to Joffrey, she switches to the southern style and starts emulating Cersei. In season 3, when Margaery takes on the role of the royal trendsetter, Sansa’s gowns and hair emulate her. Once on the run with Littlefinger, she dyes her natural red hair black, which is not a fashion choice, but a means of

disguise. What is a choice however, is Sansa dyeing it back to red after she and Jon retake Winterfell, signifying her finally being back home to her Stark roots. Following the hair change is again a change in the way she dresses. Following a pattern we have clearly established in earlier paragraphs, season 7 sees Sansa dress in heavy, armor like black gowns adorned with chains. But unlike Daenerys and Cersei, whose fashion choices are more of a practical nature, Sansa's reflect her previous alliances. Now that she is finally home, her dresses emulate her brothers' and father's cloaks, using heavy wolf fur and often embroidered with the Starks' family sigil – the direwolf. The Sansa currently running Winterfell is probably the best version of her – confident, wise, and a leader. In her own words: “I am Sansa Stark of Winterfell. This is my home. And you can't frighten me.” (“Unbowed, Unbent, Unbroken”).

#### 4.4 Arya

Clearly the most obvious character in displaying masculine traits, Arya denounces her femininity from the moment we first set our eyes on her. While her sister sows and dreams of a great love, Arya prefers roughhousing and idolizes her father. She dreams of being a knight and dreads the possibility of being married off to a prince someday. As she confesses to Sansa, “I was never going to be as good a lady as you. So I had to be something else. I never could have survived what you survived.” (“The Dragon and the Wolf”). In the show's setting, where women are not often heard or respected, Arya is lucky that her father allows her to express herself. As soon as she starts training her swordplay with Syrio Forel, Arya gives up dresses and courtly hairstyles, changing them for men's clothing and a more practical hairstyle. As said, Arya was never very feminine, but while on the run from King's Landing, she cuts her hair short and adapts the alter ego of a common boy named Arry. While she was still presenting herself as a girl, Arya was often misunderstood and laughed at – her desire to engage in typically male activities was considered an oddity and she was encouraged by her mother, sister and septas to act in a way more appropriate for girls. Once she starts identifying herself as a boy, it

seems Arya is more liberated. She is finally free to act the way she always wanted, dressing and acting according to her own choice. “I wanted to be a knight, to pick up a sword like father and off to battle.” (“Beyond the Wall”).

While Arya is a great example of a woman denouncing traditional gender roles, what I find problematic is the fact that she thinks this makes her above her sister and other women like her. Arya often scowls at Sansa’s femininity and considers her dumb and shallow for caring about her appearance. So, despite being against gender roles, she still considers the traditionally feminine traits negative. When berating Sansa in episode 5 of season 7, she tells her “You always liked nice things. They made you feel better than everyone.” (00:28:03), and then proceeds to accuse Sansa because the opinion of Northern Lords are important to her. This is quite problematic, and the main reason Arya is not the perfect role model for denouncing gender roles, despite of her androgynous ways.

## 5. Conclusion

*Game of Thrones* is a complex show, filled with real, compelling characters. The women in the show are no exception. However, they all do fall into certain archetypes, which is best seen in the example of the four characters of Daenerys Targaryen, Cersei Lannister, Sansa Stark and Arya stark. These women all correspond to the Mark and Pearson archetypes of the Hero, the Ruler, the Regular Gal and the Explorer respectively. The goal of this paper was to showcase how and why these characters can be sorted into these archetypes. This was achieved in chapters 3.1 – 3.4. Another goal of this paper was to examine how Joseph Campbell’s monomyth applied to some of the characters, and in cases of Daenerys Targaryen and Arya Stark, it was concluded that both characters could be considered the Hero. The stories of Cersei Lannister and Sansa Stark did not fully coincide with the hero’s journey, so neither of them could be named the hero, but some parts of their journey’s correlated to Campbell’s idea. In the fourth chapter of this

paper, our goal was to examine how denouncing typical female traits in exchange for typical male traits has helped the four analyzed characters advance in the show's world. It was concluded that each of the characters denounced their femininity in some extent, but that in each case this has helped them achieve their goals and become more respected. What all this shows us is that *Game of Thrones* is a show that does a great job showcasing various complex female characters, from villainous queens to rogue girl assassins. The world shown in the series is not always the kindest to women, but this does not stop them from trying and achieving their goals. If anything, we can learn from the women of *Game of Thrones*, who in the face of adversity and hardships always carry on and somehow manage to prevail, one way or the other.

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## 7. ARCHETYPES IN FEMALE CHARACTERS OF GAME OF THRONES: Summary and keywords

Ever since the ancient times, certain archetypes can be noticed in literature, ranging through the well known classics from Homer's *Illiad* to Tolkien's *The Lord of The Rings*. Recently, women's characters have begun to gain a greater depth and more often are starting to take on the hero role. What is still problematic is the tendency to take away these women's female attributes and give them those typically associated with men instead in an attempt to glorify them. This paper deals with the analysis of four female characters from *Game of Thrones*, and with the help of an archetype guidebook analyzes how much do these characters fit the described archetypes and how their male-to-female trait ratio effected their standing in the world of the show.

Keywords: Game of Thrones, female characters, archetypes, gender roles

## 8. ARHETIPI ŽENSKIH LIKOVA U SERIJI *GAME OF THRONES*: Sažetak i ključne riječi

Od antičkih vremena u djelima literature prisutni su određeni arhetipi koji se provlače kroz poznate klasike, od Homerove *Ilijade* do Tolkienova *Gospodara prstenova*. U novije doba, ženski likovi poprimaju sve šire obrise te sve češće na sebe uzimaju i ulogu heroja. Problematična je međutim tendencija da se ženskim likovima u pokušaju da ih se uzdigne oduzimaju ženski i pripisuju tipično muški atributi. Ovaj rad se bavi analizom četiri ženska lika iz serije *Game of Thrones*, te uz pomoć priručnika o arhetipima analizira poklapanje tih likova s opisanim arhetipima i kako je njihov odnos muško-ženskih osobina utjecao na njihovo stajalište u okviru serije.

Ključne riječi: Game of Thrones, ženski likovi, arhetipi, rodne uloge