

Law and the Game of Thrones?



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The highly popular television series Game of Thrones depicts a fictional world rife with power struggles, betrayals, and complex alliances. While often viewed through the lens of fantasy, the show also surprisingly reflects many principles central to modern commercial law.

Within Game of Thrones, one can see key aspects of law such as trust management, asset liability, contract formation and enforcement. The show also offers vivid analogies to explore fiduciary duties, strict liability, and commercial contractual challenges.

This article looks at how these fictional scenarios relate closely to Hong Kong's commercial and contract law framework, highlighting lessons for legal practice and risk management.

Contract Formation Issues: Duress and Fraud

Contracts require genuine consent, which excludes duress or fraudulent inducement. For example: If a party is pressured or deceived into agreement, lawyers could argue that the contract ought to be void or voidable:

- **Duress:** Edmure Tully's forced surrender at Riverrun is a textbook example. In Hong Kong, contracts signed under threat or intense pressure lack true consent, making enforceability questionable.
- **Fraudulent Inducement:** Littlefinger's empty promises to Ser Dontos parallel situations where false statements or deceit led to a contract. Hong Kong contract law requires truthfulness; any significant misrepresentation can invalidate the agreement.

For law firms, rigorous due diligence, and scrutiny of negotiations – especially in complex or high-stakes deals, are essential to safeguard clients from defective contracts due to duress or fraud.

Private Law: Trusts, Liability and Dragons

In modern legal systems including what we have in Hong Kong, trustees hold a fiduciary duty to manage the trust's assets responsibly and must only be removed with proper legal cause and procedural fairness. Eddard Stark's sudden dismissal as the royal protector (type of trustee role for the realm) reflects a breach of these foundational principles.

Such an abrupt removal without due process would be challenged as a wrongful removal. It undermines the stability and predictability essential to trust law, which is designed to protect assets and beneficiaries from arbitrary or politically motivated decisions.



Similarly, Daenerys Targaryen's ownership of dragons raises complex private law questions regarding liability for damage caused by pets. In many common law regimes (including Hong Kong), owners of animals classified as "dangerous" or "wild" may be held strictly liable for harm the animals cause, regardless of whether the owner was negligent.

Trade and Mercenary Contracts

Commercial agreements involving mercenaries, such as the Golden Company in Game of Thrones could be compared to service contracts or employment agreements under Hong Kong commercial law. Such contracts specify terms of engagement, scope of services payment and duration.

However, the unstable political environment in Westeros resembles challenges in cross-border contracts which could require legal advice.

Conclusion

In summary, Game of Thrones offers valuable parallels with Hong Kong commercial law that are relevant to legal practice. The series highlights important principles such as fiduciary duties in trusts, strict liability for dangerous property, and the need for genuine consent in contracts free from duress or fraud. These examples are genuine key legal concepts in trust management, liability, contract validity, and cross-border enforcement, which are prevalent in today's commercial world.

Please [reach out to us](#) if you have any questions.