

# COMPARISON OF PROPP'S SPHERES OF ACTIONS IN *DOCTOR STRANGE* SEQUEL MOVIES

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## ABSTRACT

*This research was conducted to prove that Vladimir Propp's Spheres of Action can be used in modern movies. It provides insight into whether the classical narrative structure identified by Propp is still relevant and applicable in the context of modern superhero movies. This research aimed to find the seven types of spheres of action from Doctor Strange (2016) and Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness movies and compare the data findings based on Vladimir Propp's theory. This research used a qualitative method. The results of the research showed that there were six out of seven types of spheres of action found in Doctor Strange (2016) and Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness. namely, Doctor Strange as a Hero, Kaecillius and Dormammu as Villains, The Ancient One as Dispatcher, Jonathan Pangborn, Wong, The Ancient One, and Christine Palmer as Donors, Wong and Karl Mordo as Helpers, and Kaecillius as a False Hero. Meanwhile in Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness movie, the results of the research are Doctor Strange as a Hero, and a Maximoff as a Villain, America Chavez as a Dispatcher, Wong, Christine Palmer, Charles Xavier, America Chavez and Doctor Strange as Donors, Wong and America Chavez as Helpers, and lastly Karl Mordo as a False Hero. The Villains in both movies are different characters. The Dispatcher also has different characters. 4 Donors in Doctor Strange (2016) movie, and 5 Donors in Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness movie. 3 Helpers in Doctor Strange (2016) and 2 Helpers in Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness movie. The Hero is the same, and the False Heroes in both movies are different characters.*

**Keyword:** Spheres of Action, Vladimir Propp, Qualitative, Comparison of movies

## INTRODUCTION

Human expression through spoken or written works based on concepts, convictions, and experiences is known as literature. These pieces may be based on a fact that is artistically wrapped in words, or they may be purely fictional or represent truth. Literary works come in a wide variety of types, including plays, novels, short stories, films, and poetry. Movies are one type of literary work that is often seen and appreciated by all audiences.

A movie is more than moving pictures. A movie has a social function to preserve and pass on social and cultural values from one generation to the next (McQuail, 1994, p.72). Movies

have various types of genres. One of the movie genres that is often found and can be enjoyed in all circles is the action genre. The storylines in action movies are often driven by physical conflicts and dramatic events that give the impression of riveting action. Some of the factors that influence a movie are that it must have a strong narrative, good character development, interesting cinematography, quality directing, and the use of supportive music and sound (Bassi, 2010, p. 58). In a movie, the character is one of the most important things.

Characters are the bridge that connects the audience to the story. Characters often act as the main drivers

of the story's plot with their actions and decisions. Each character brings their own unique perspective to the story, which helps in enriching the audience's experience and conveying the movie's theme. To analyse the character's action in a movie, this research used Vladimir Propp's theory, in his book entitled "*Morphology of the Folktale*" (1968), he identifies 7 spheres of action, which are narrative conventions that often appear: Hero, Villain, Donor, Helper, Princess, Dispatcher, and False Hero.

According to Propp (1968) in Aulia (2022), **A villain** is a character who opposes the hero and causes trouble in the plot. The villain emerges briefly before disappearing. His second appearance is as a person who has been sought after as a result of advice. **The Donor** is a character who will provide the hero to fight the enemy and solve the problem. This character will give the hero some stuff or even motivation to make the hero become more powerful. **The Helper** differs from the Donor. The helper will accompany a hero to combat the enemy and solve the problem. **The Princess and Her Father** were the characters who directly felt the villain's impact. Princess can be kidnapped, locked in cages, and so on. The father is a king who felt regret, sadness, and anger towards the villain. This character directs the hero to solve the problem and defeat the enemy. **The dispatcher** is a character who creates or sends the hero to complete a mission. **The Hero's** miraculous performance is a crucial narrative aspect. It is one of the hero's appearances, which is incorporated into the initial situation. A hero's birth is sometimes accompanied by a prophecy about their destiny. They possessed the qualities of a potential hero even before complications arose. **The False Hero** is not often listed among the dramatis personae in the beginning, and it is only subsequently revealed that he resides at the court or in the mansion. The false

hero may present a convincing character to deceive the reader or audience, while also employing devious tactics to deceive the hero. False hero is the character who claims to be the hero, often seeking and reacting like a real Hero but is always discovered and punished, appears to be good but is revealed, at the end, to have been bad.

In this research, some spheres of action were found in the sequel movie, namely *Doctor Strange (2016)* and *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness*. Therefore, these sequel movies are chosen as the sources of data for this research. The movies have a variety of characters, including heroes, villains, and other characters that can be included in Propp's spheres of action. This research uses Vladimir Propp's theory to find out the sphere of actions and compare the characters in the *Doctor Strange (2016)* and the *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness* movie. This research was conducted to prove that Vladimir Propp's theory of narrative function can be used in modern movies. It provides insight into whether the classical narrative structure identified by Propp is still relevant and applicable in the context of modern superhero movies. This topic offers a rich variety of viewpoints to analyse, ranging from character development to visual and narrative evolution. In addition, to date, no research has specifically compared the spheres of action between the *Doctor Strange (2016)* and the *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness* movie using Propp's theory.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research used qualitative research to find the types of spheres of action in the *Doctor Strange (2016)* movie and compare them to the *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness* movie. Qualitative research is a loosely

defined category of research design or models, all of which elicit verbal, visual, tactile, olfactory, and gustatory data in the form of descriptive narratives like field notes, recordings, or other transcriptions from audio and videotapes, and other written records and pictures or movie (Cresswell, 2014).

*Doctor Strange* is a 2016 American superhero movie based on Marvel Comics' character with the same name. Directed by Scott Derrickson and co-written with Jon Spaihts and C. Robert Cargill. Meanwhile, *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness* is a 2022 American superhero movie based on Marvel Comics featuring the character Doctor Strange. Produced by Marvel Studios and distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures. This movie is the sequel to *Doctor Strange* (2016) and the 28th film in the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU). This movie was directed by Sam Raimi and written by Michael Waldron. The data of this research were script dialogues taken from *Doctor Strange* (2016) and *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness* movie transcription that is published on the official website [www.Scripts.com](http://www.Scripts.com). These sequel movies are chosen because the data are relevant to the theory.

The first step to collect the data is watching the *Doctor Strange* (2016) and *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness* on Disney+ Hotstar repeatedly and pay attention to each character while identifying the spheres of action. And then, collecting the data by-taking the transcript of the dialogues of both movies from the [www.Scripts.com](http://www.Scripts.com) website. After that, taking notes of the dialogues that are related to the sphere of action based on Propp's theory. Then, identifying the dialogues that are related to the sphere of action based on Propp's theory. After the data were collected, the data were classified from both movies using spheres of action based on Propp's

theory. After the data were classified then they were analysed to identify the spheres of action between both movies and compare them. The last step is to draw a conclusion based on the analysis.

## RESULT OF THE RESEARCH

After analysing the data, the following are the Spheres of action found in the *Doctor Strange* (2016) and *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness* Movies.

Based on the results, researchers found 6 spheres of action in both movies. First is the *Doctor Strange* (2016) movie. The spheres of action in this movie are Doctor Strange as a Hero (1 datum), Kaecilius and Dormammu as Villains (2 data), The Ancient One as Dispatcher (1 datum), Jonathan Pangborn, Wong, The Ancient One, and Christine Palmer as Donors (4 data), Wong and Karl Mordo as Helpers (2 data), and Kaecilius as a False Hero (1 datum).

And the second one is from *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness* movie. The spheres of action in this movie are Doctor Strange as a Hero (1 datum), Wanda Maximoff as a Villain (1 datum), America Chavez as a Dispatcher (1 datum), Wong, Christine Palmer (from other universe), Charles Xavier, America Chavez and Doctor Strange as Donors (5 data), Wong and America Chavez as a Helpers (2 Data), and lastly Karl Mordo as a False Hero (1 Datum).

### Villain In *Doctor Strange* (2016)

In *Doctor Strange* (2016), the villains are Kaecilius and Dormammu. Kaecilius, once a loyal disciple of the Ancient One, becomes disillusioned after discovering she uses dark magic from the Dark Dimension to prolong her life. He ultimately betrays her, seeking to bring Dormammu, a powerful cosmic entity from the Dark Dimension, to Earth. Dormammu exists in an alternate

universe filled with chaotic energy, and Kaecilius believes merging Earth with the Dark Dimension would save humanity by freeing it from the constraints of time and death. In one intense scene (01:02:07 - 01:05:00), Kaecilius confronts Doctor Strange and reveals his philosophy:

Kaecilius: "The world is not what it ought to be. Humanity longs for the eternal, for a world beyond time, because time is what enslaves us. Time is an insult. Death is an insult. Doctor...We don't seek to rule this world. We seek to save it, to hand it over to Dormammu, who is the intent of all evolution, the Why of all existence." Kaecilius criticizes the Ancient One, accusing her of hoarding true magical power and keeping it for herself. He believes the ritual he performs will give him the strength to overthrow the Ancient One and open Earth to the Dark Dimension. According to Propp's theory, Kaecilius fits the role of the villain, opposing the protagonist, Doctor Strange, and creating the primary conflict in the story by seeking to merge Earth with the Dark Dimension.

### **Villain 2 (Dormammu)**

In *Doctor Strange* (2016), Dormammu is the ultimate villain, intending to destroy and dominate Earth. He comes from the Dark Dimension, a chaotic and destructive force. In a pivotal scene (01:36:45 - 01:36:55), Dormammu confronts Doctor Strange, declaring, "You've come to die. Your world is now my world, like all worlds." To which Doctor Strange bravely responds, "Dormammu! I've come to bargain." This dialogue illustrates Dormammu's goal to absorb and control Earth, creating a significant threat that Doctor Strange must overcome. Based on Propp's theory, Dormammu embodies the villain archetype, as his destructive plans place Earth in great

peril, creating the chaos that the hero must resolve.

In *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness*, Wanda Maximoff emerges as the villain. After losing her husband in the war, Wanda becomes consumed by grief. She studies the Darkhold, a cursed book of magic, believing it will allow her to traverse the multiverse and reunite with her children.

### **Wanda Maximoff**

In *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness*, Wanda Maximoff becomes a villain after being corrupted by the Darkhold, a powerful and dangerous book of magic. In a pivotal scene (00:22:17 - 00:23:27), Wanda explains to Doctor Strange, "The Darkhold only showed me the truth. Everything I lost... can be mine again." Doctor Strange warns her, saying, "I know it's the Book of the Damned. And that it corrupts everything and everyone that it touches. I wonder what it's done to you." Wanda's desire to be with her children, whom she believes she can reclaim in another reality, pushes her to challenge the natural order and destabilize the multiverse. She insists, "I'm going to leave this reality, and go to one where I can be with my children," even though Doctor Strange reminds her, "Your children aren't real. You created them using magic." Wanda's willingness to disrupt the multiverse for her own desires cements her role as the villain in the story.

### **Dispatcher in Doctor Strange (2016) movie.**

In *Doctor Strange* (2016), The Ancient One serves as the Dispatcher, a character who sets the protagonist, Doctor Strange, on his heroic journey. The Ancient One introduces Strange to the world of magic and reveals the existence of mystical threats that he must confront. Without her guidance, Strange would not have known about the

mystical arts or the importance of his role in protecting the world. In a key scene (01:14:06 - 01:14:55), The Ancient One tells Strange, “You defended the New York Sanctum from attack. With its Master gone, it needs another, Master Strange.” Strange, reluctant to embrace his new responsibility, responds, “No. It is Dr. Strange. Not Master Strange, not Mr. Strange, Doctor Strange. When I became a doctor, I swore an oath to do no harm. And I have just killed a man! I’m not doing that again. I became a doctor to save lives, not take them.” The Ancient One counters, “You become a doctor to save one life above all others: your own.” This exchange highlights how The Ancient One pushes Strange to accept his greater duty. Based on Propp’s theory, she fulfills the role of Dispatcher by sending Strange on his quest to protect the world from Kaecilius and Dormammu.

### **Dispatcher in *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness***

In the *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness* movie, the character who plays role of Dispatcher is America Chavez. America Chavez is a teenager who has the ability to open portals between universes, this ability makes her the main target for antagonistic characters who want to kill and then take her power.

### **America Chavez**

In *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness*, America Chavez plays the role of the Dispatcher, setting Doctor Strange and Wong on their heroic journey. America, a teenager with the ability to open portals between universes, becomes the target of dangerous forces seeking to exploit her powers. In a pivotal scene (00:13:35 - 00:14:15), Doctor Strange and Wong encounter America after she is chased by an evil creature. Wong asks, “Where are

your parents?” and Strange inquires, “What did that creature want with you?” Their questions reveal that America is somehow connected to the threat, and her powers make her a key figure. America then explains, “That wasn’t a dream. It was another universe. How much experience do you guys have with the Multiverse?” This revelation introduces Strange and Wong to the vastness of the multiverse and the dangers it harbors.

Through her dialogue, America triggers the awareness and urgency needed for Strange and Wong to act, setting them on their quest to deal with the multiversal threat. Based on Propp’s theory, America Chavez fulfills the Dispatcher role, providing the crucial information that drives the heroes to embark on their adventure to save the multiverse.

### **Donor in *Dr.Strange (2016) Movie***

In *Doctor Strange* (2016), Jonathan Pangborn fulfills the role of the Donor according to Vladimir Propp’s theory. Pangborn, who once struggled with a debilitating injury, shares his life-changing experience with Doctor Strange. In a key scene (00:19:24 – 00:21:30), Pangborn explains how he had given up on his body and focused on elevating his mind. He recounts, “I sat with gurus, and sacred women. Strangers carried me to mountain tops to see holy men. And finally, I found my teacher. And my mind was elevated. And my spirit deepened.” When Doctor Strange asks, “Your body healed?” Pangborn responds, “Yes,” and adds, “But there were deeper secrets to learn then, but I did not have the strength to receive them.” Pangborn then directs Strange to Kamar-Taj, a place where he can seek healing, but warns, “The cost is high,” not in money, but in sacrifice. Pangborn’s guidance is crucial for Strange, leading him to Kamar-Taj to begin his transformation. Pangborn, as

the Donor, provides essential information and sets Strange on the path to recovery and self-discovery, aiding in his journey toward becoming the Sorcerer Supreme.

### **Donor 2 (The Ancient One)**

In *Doctor Strange* (2016), The Ancient One plays the role of the Donor, providing Doctor Strange with essential knowledge and tools for his transformation. In a key scene (00:44:37 - 00:45:00), The Ancient One reminds Strange, “Once, in this room, you begged me to let you learn. Now I’m told you question every lesson, preferring to teach yourself.” Strange responds, “Once, in this room, you told me to open my eyes. Now I’m being told to blindly accept rules that make no sense.” The Ancient One, assessing Strange's progress, explains, “You’re advancing quickly with your sorcery skills. You need a safe space to practice your spells. You are now inside the Mirror Dimension... Ever present but undetected. The real world isn’t affected by what happens here.”

By introducing Strange to the Mirror Dimension, The Ancient One provides a safe space for him to practice and grow without causing harm to the real world. This act of guidance and the tests she administers, assessing his worthiness, align with Propp's theory. As the Donor, The Ancient One offers critical support, helping Strange hone his abilities and ensuring his safety as he advances in his magical journey.

### **Donor 3 (Wong)**

In *Doctor Strange* (2016), Wong fulfills the role of the Donor by providing Doctor Strange with crucial knowledge and resources to advance his mystical training. In a key scene (00:36:15 - 00:36:53), Wong notes, “The Book of the Invisible Sun, Astronomia Nova, Codex Imperium, Key of Solomon. You finished all of this?”

Strange proudly responds, “Yup.” Impressed by his dedication, Wong says, “Come with me,” and leads Strange to a restricted section of the Kamar-Taj library. Wong further tests Strange’s commitment, asking, “How is your Sanskrit?” to which Strange humorously replies, “I’m fluent in Google Translate.” Wong challenges him, “Read it. Classical Sanskrit.”

Wong’s actions demonstrate that Strange is ready for deeper mystical knowledge. By allowing him access to the Masters-only section of the library and lending him important texts, Wong helps Strange prepare for greater challenges. This act of guidance and the opportunity to explore more advanced material supports Strange’s growth as a hero. Based on Propp’s theory, Wong serves as a Donor, providing both the tools and the opportunity for Strange to advance in his mystical journey, ensuring his readiness to face future threats.

### **Donor 4 (Christine Palmer)**

In *Doctor Strange* (2016), Christine Palmer plays the role of the Donor by providing emotional support and inspiration to Doctor Strange. In a poignant moment (01:27:06 - 01:27:21), Strange recalls Christine’s words, “You said that losing my hands didn’t have to be the end, that it could be a beginning.” Christine responds, “Yeah. Because there are other ways to save lives.” Strange acknowledges, “A harder way.” Christine’s encouragement helps Strange see beyond his injury, allowing him to view it as an opportunity for growth rather than a setback. Her support offers a shift in perspective, showing him that there are other ways to help others, even if the path is more challenging. Based on Propp’s theory, Christine fulfills the role of Donor, providing both emotional guidance and the inspiration that pushes Strange to

pursue a new path, ultimately leading him to become the Sorcerer Supreme.

### **Donor in *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness*.**

#### **Donor 1 (Wong)**

In *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness*, Wong plays the role of the Donor by offering critical support and solutions to the heroes. In a key scene (00:17:25 - 00:17:50), Wong offers America Chavez protection, saying, "Miss Chavez, will you come with us to Kamar-Taj? You'll be safe there." America, understandably cautious, questions him: "How do I know you won't betray me like he did?"

Doctor Strange responds, "I guess you're just gonna have to trust me." Wong then asks, "What do we do with him? That's gotta violate an ordinance."

Wong's assistance is vital in ensuring America's safety as Scarlet Witch pursues her. His offer of sanctuary at Kamar-Taj is a key act of guidance, ensuring that Strange and America can continue their mission without further threat. Based on Propp's theory, Wong fulfills the role of the Donor by providing solutions and support to the heroes in a time of need, helping them face the challenges ahead.

**Table 1.**  
**Spheres of action found in the *Doctor Strange (2016)* Movie.**

No	Type of Sphere	Character	Amount
1	Villain	Kaecilius, Dormammu	2
2	Donor	Jonathan Pangborn, The Ancient One, Karl Mordo, Christine Palmer	4
3	Helper	Wong and Karl Mordo	2
4	Dispatcher	The Ancient One	1
5	Princess and the father	-	
6	Hero	Doctor Strange	1
7	False hero	Kaecillius	1
	Total	8	11

**Table 2.**  
**Spheres of action found in *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness* Movie.**

No	Type of Sphere	Character	Amount
1	Villain	Wanda Maximoff	1
2	Donor	Christine Palmer, America Chavez, Wong, Charles Xavier, Doctor Strange	5
3	Helper	America Chavez, Wong	2
4	Dispatcher	America Chavez	1
5	Princess and the father	-	-
6	Hero	Doctor Strange	1
7	False hero	Karl Mordo	1
	Total	7	11

### **Donor 2 (Christine Palmer (from other universe))**

In *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness*, Christine Palmer from another universe fulfills the role of the Donor by providing crucial assistance to Doctor Strange and America Chavez. In a pivotal moment (01:19:25 - 01:20:55), Christine says, "Give me your hand. Do not make me regret this." America responds, "Okay, can we go now?" Christine replies, "Follow me," guiding them to safety. When Doctor Strange asks, "Where does that tunnel go?" Christine explains, "Under the river."

Christine's role as a Donor is clear in this exchange. She provides important information about the tunnel that will serve as their escape route, ensuring their safety in a dangerous situation. Her willingness to assist and protect them in a time of crisis exemplifies her role as a Donor, offering both guidance and physical support. Based on Propp's theory, Christine Palmer plays a key role in aiding the heroes, helping them navigate the challenges they face on their journey.

### **Donor 3 (Charles Xavier)**

In *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness*, Charles Xavier plays the role of the Donor by offering critical guidance and information to Doctor Strange. In a key scene (01:10:23 - 01:10:50), Xavier tells Strange, "Stephen, should you manage to escape this chamber, you must guide America Chavez." When Doctor Strange asks, "What, you have the book here?" Xavier replies, "Yes. You built a waypoint." Xavier then encourages Strange, saying, "Just 'cause someone stumbles and loses their way, doesn't mean they're lost forever. We will see what kind of Doctor Strange you are."

Xavier's guidance is essential for Strange, as he reveals the path to the Book of Vishanti, a crucial tool in their

fight against the multiversal threat. By providing this information, Xavier helps Strange stay on course, ensuring he can face the challenges ahead. Based on Propp's theory, Xavier fulfills the Donor role, offering the wisdom and resources necessary for the protagonist to succeed in his journey.

### **Donor 4 (America Chavez)**

In *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness*, America Chavez plays the role of the Donor by providing crucial assistance through her ability to open portals between multiverses. In a key scene (00:38:07 – 00:39:07), Doctor Strange asks, "You okay?" to which America responds, "You saved me." When Strange expresses surprise at not feeling sick, America quips, "Surprised you didn't puke." Doctor Strange quickly proves her wrong when he runs to a nearby chimney and throws up, with America saying, "There it is."

Afterward, Strange asks America to help them return, saying, "You've gotta open a portal to get us back there right now," but she replies, "I don't know how." He points out, "You just did it." She responds, "Not on purpose." Despite her uncertainty about intentionally opening portals, her ability to do so is a vital asset for the heroes. Based on Propp's theory, America Chavez fulfills the Donor role, as her power is essential for the progression of the hero's journey, enabling them to continue their mission.

### **Donor 5 (Doctor Strange)**

In *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness*, Doctor Strange plays the role of the Donor by offering essential mental and emotional support to America Chavez. In a pivotal moment (01:44:18 – 01:45:03), Strange encourages America, saying, "No, America. I've come here to tell you to trust yourself, trust your power. That's how we stop her." America doubts



herself, replying, “I can’t control it...” Strange reassures her, “Yes, you can. You have been all along. Every time you opened a portal, you sent us exactly where we needed to go.” America then asks, “What about the first time?” and Strange responds, “Even that led you to this moment. You are gonna kick that witch’s ass.”

Doctor Strange’s belief in America’s ability to control her powers plays a crucial role in her development. His encouragement helps her realize her potential, enabling her to face the challenges ahead. Based on Propp’s theory, Doctor Strange fulfills the role of Donor, providing the emotional support necessary for America to succeed in her journey.

### **Helper in the *Doctor Strange* (2016) movie.**

The helpers are The Ancient One, Wong, and Mordo. The Ancient One is the leader of Kamar-Taj and the main teacher in the mystic arts. Wong is a librarian at Kamar-Taj and a mentor who helps Doctor Strange access and understand mystical knowledge. Then, Karl Mordo is one of the Masters at Kamar-Taj, also a friend and mentor to Strange.

### **Helper 1 (The Ancient One)**

In *Doctor Strange* (2016), The Ancient One, Wong, and Mordo serve as key Helpers to Doctor Strange in his journey. The Ancient One, as the leader of Kamar-Taj, provides critical guidance in the mystic arts. In one intense scene (01:20:57 - 01:22:25), The Ancient One confronts Kaecilius, who accuses her of betrayal, saying, “I came to you broken, lost, bleeding. I trusted you to be my teacher, and you fed me lies.” The Ancient One responds, “I tried to protect you.” Kaecilius retorts, “From the truth?” to which she answers, “From yourself.” As the confrontation escalates, she warns him, “Dormammu

deceives you. You have no idea of what he truly is. His eternal life is not paradise, but torment.” During the fight, the Ancient One helps Doctor Strange by intervening in his battle against Kaecilius. She assists Strange by protecting him from Kaecilius’ attacks, but tragically, she is fatally wounded.

Her sacrifice solidifies her role as a Helper in Propp’s theory, as she aids Strange in his fight against the villain Kaecilius and attempts to protect him from great danger, pushing him toward his ultimate destiny as the Sorcerer Supreme.

### **Helper 2 (Karl Mordo)**

In *Doctor Strange* (2016), Karl Mordo serves as an important Helper to Doctor Strange, both morally and physically, especially during their fight against Kaecilius. In a crucial scene (01:16:33 - 01:18:00), Mordo urges Strange, “No, Stephen. You lack a spine. They’re back. We have to end this. Now! Strange! Get down here and fight!” As Strange retreats into the Mirror Dimension to contain the battle’s impact on the real world, Mordo warns, “Their connection to the Dark Dimension makes them more powerful in the Mirror Dimension. They can’t affect the real world, but they can still kill us. This wasn’t clever. This was suicide!”

Mordo’s support is critical in this moment. While Strange assumes the Mirror Dimension will limit the danger, Mordo quickly realizes the true risks and urges him to face the danger head-on. Based on Propp’s theory, Mordo plays the role of a Helper by providing both guidance and physical assistance in the fight against Kaecilius. His encouragement and strategic insights help Strange navigate the situation, making Mordo an essential ally in their struggle.

### **Helper 3 (Wong)**

In *Doctor Strange* (2016), Wong plays a crucial role as a Helper by protecting the Sanctum and assisting Doctor Strange in the fight against Kaecilius. In a key scene (01:28:57 - 01:29:30), Wong warns, "Choose your weapon wisely. No one steps foot in this Sanctum. No one." His words highlight his dedication to guarding the Sanctum from intruders. Shortly after, Kaecilius arrives to destroy the temple and summon Dormammu, a clear sign of the grave threat he poses.

Wong's actions demonstrate his readiness to defend the Sanctum at all costs. His decision to protect the Hong Kong temple and confront Kaecilius is critical to the battle. Wong is not only a guardian but also an ally to Doctor Strange, assisting him in the fight against the villain. Based on Propp's theory, Wong fulfills the role of Helper, as he is actively involved in the defense of the Sanctum and in aiding Strange. His commitment to the safety of the temple and his willingness to engage in battle show his readiness to help Strange face the looming threat of Kaecilius and Dormammu.

### **Helper in *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness***

The helpers in this movie are Wong and America Chavez. Wong is a Sorcerer Supreme. Wong is responsible for the safety and magical balance in the world. He is working together with Doctor Strange and other characters to deal with the multiversal threats that appear in the movie. While America Chavez is a teenager who has the ability to open portals between universes, this ability makes her a prime target for antagonistic characters who want to kill and then take her power.

### **Helper 1 (Wong)**

In *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness*, Wong and

America Chavez serve as vital Helpers in the fight against multiversal threats. Wong, as the Sorcerer Supreme, is responsible for maintaining the safety and magical balance of the world. He works closely with Doctor Strange to combat the dangers posed by the multiverse. America Chavez, a teenager with the ability to open portals between universes, becomes a prime target for antagonists seeking to exploit her powers.

In a key scene (00:25:20 - 00:26:15), Wong takes charge at Kamar-Taj, saying, "Suspend teaching at once. And arm the students. Kamar-Taj must now become a fortress." When Rintrah reports that the Masters of the Hong Kong and London Sanctums are ready to fight, Wong responds, "The honor is ours," acknowledging the support of his fellow sorcerers. Wong's decisive actions and leadership show his commitment to protecting America Chavez and defending Kamar-Taj from Scarlet Witch's attack.

Based on Propp's theory, Wong fulfills the role of Helper by joining the battle and assisting Doctor Strange. His efforts to protect America and safeguard Kamar-Taj are crucial to the success of their mission, ensuring the safety of both the multiverse and their allies.

### **Helper 2 (America Chavez)**

In *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness*, America Chavez plays a crucial role as a Helper, aiding Doctor Strange and others in their battle against the multiversal threats. In a key scene (01:44:32 - 01:46:23), Doctor Strange encourages America, saying, "No, America. I've come here to tell you to trust yourself, trust your power. That's how we stop her." America doubts herself, responding, "I can't control it..." but Strange reassures her, "Yes, you can. You have been all along. Every time you opened a portal, you sent us exactly where we needed to go."

America then asks, “What about the first time?” and Strange replies, “Even that led you to this moment. You are gonna kick that witch’s ass.”

Despite her initial uncertainty, America faces Wanda and opens a portal that shows Wanda’s children, forcing Wanda to confront her actions. In this moment, America bravely makes the difficult decision to give Wanda what she wants, showing great courage. Based on Propp’s theory, America Chavez fulfills the role of Helper by trusting her powers and helping Strange and others by opening portals at critical moments. Her self-belief, encouraged by Strange, is essential in defeating the antagonist and ensuring the heroes’ success.

### **Hero in *Doctor Strange (2016)* Movie**

The hero in this movie is Doctor Strange. Doctor Stephen Strange an arrogant yet extremely talented neurosurgeon, who was in a tragic car accident that left his hands severely damaged. After his attempts at conventional healing fail, he seeks help from Kamar-Taj and eventually becomes a powerful wizard who fights against dark forces.

### **Doctor Strange**

In *Doctor Strange (2016)*, the hero of the story is Doctor Stephen Strange, a brilliant yet arrogant neurosurgeon who is severely injured in a car accident that ruins his hands. Unable to heal through conventional means, Strange seeks help at Kamar-Taj, where he learns the mystical arts and transforms into a powerful wizard, fighting dark forces. In a climactic scene (01:37:50 - 01:39:55), Strange faces the powerful antagonist, Dormammu, from the Dark Dimension. Using the Eye of Agamotto (which contains the Time Stone), Strange traps himself and Dormammu in a time loop, saying, “Dormammu! I’ve come to bargain.” Each time Dormammu kills him,

Strange is resurrected, continuing the loop indefinitely. Strange calmly declares, “I can lose... again, and again, and again, and again, forever. And that makes you my prisoner.”

Strange’s willingness to die repeatedly to protect Earth demonstrates his resilience and determination. Despite the constant torment, he forces Dormammu to agree to a deal: to leave Earth and never return in exchange for ending the time loop. Based on Propp’s theory, Strange exemplifies the hero role through his sacrifice, intelligence, and unyielding drive to protect the world from evil.

### **Hero in *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness***

In *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness*, Doctor Stephen Strange again fulfills the role of the hero, similar to his character in the 2016 movie. In a crucial scene (01:36:30 - 01:50:00), Strange is determined to save America Chavez, who is in great danger. He decides to use the Darkhold, a dangerous book of dark magic, to perform a “dream walk” — a magical technique that allows a person to possess the body of their alternate self in another universe. However, Strange plans to take over the body of a dead version of himself, which is a risky and forbidden act. He tells Christine Palmer, “I need you to protect my body, in case they attack me for trespassing,” referring to the Souls of the Damned, entities that guard the laws of magic.

Christine questions him, but Strange confidently responds, “Who said they have to be living?” As Strange begins the dream walk, Christine assists him, urging him, “Use them. Use them. Use them.” Based on Propp’s theory, Doctor Strange embodies the hero by facing grave challenges, using his intelligence, strength, and courage to protect America Chavez and navigate multiversal dangers. His willingness to

take drastic measures to save others exemplifies his role as a resilient and determined hero.

### **False Hero in *Doctor Strange* (2016) movie.**

In *Doctor Strange* (2016), Kaecilius plays the role of the "false hero" according to Propp's theory. A former disciple of the Ancient One, Kaecilius betrays her and seeks to master dark forces to bring Dormammu to Earth. In a key dialogue scene (01:02:40 - 01:05:00), Kaecilius tries to convince Doctor Strange that his actions are for the greater good, stating, "This world doesn't have to die, Doctor. This world can take its rightful place among so many others, as part of the One. The great and beautiful One. And we can all live forever." When Strange questions his motives, Kaecilius justifies his actions by claiming, "Time kills everything," and that humanity's true desire is for eternal life, free from the constraints of time and death.

He presents Dormammu as the ultimate force of evolution, claiming, "We don't seek to rule this world. We seek to save it, to hand it over to Dormammu, who is the intent of all evolution, the Why of all existence." Despite presenting himself as the savior, Kaecilius is actually working to bring about Dormammu's destructive influence. Based on Propp's theory, Kaecilius embodies the "false hero" who uses philosophical arguments and promises of utopia to disguise his evil intentions, ultimately serving Dormammu's dark purposes.

### **False Hero in *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness* Movie.**

In *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness*, Karl Mordo plays the role of the "false hero." As the Sorcerer Supreme and a member of the Illuminati, Mordo initially appears to be a trusted ally. In a pivotal scene

(00:46:30 - 00:47:45), Mordo welcomes Doctor Strange, saying, "I always suspected this day would come." When Strange asks if he really suspected it, Mordo responds, "Yes. Because you always suspected this day would come. My brother." Mordo then invites Strange to share information about his universe, suggesting a sense of friendship and understanding, "Come, and tell me everything... About your universe."

However, despite this friendly demeanor, Mordo's actions later reveal his true intentions. He initially presents himself as an ally, but his betrayal later in the movie exposes his harmful motivations. According to Vladimir Propp's theory, Mordo embodies the "false hero" archetype. He pretends to be a supportive figure, only to later act against Strange's interests, revealing his true, darker intentions. This aligns with the false hero's role of deceiving the protagonist by initially appearing as a helper or ally before revealing their true, antagonistic nature.

### **The Comparison between Spheres of Actions in *Doctor Strange* Movie and *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness* Movie.**

The comparison between *Doctor Strange* (2016) and *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness* (2022) highlights the evolution of key narrative elements. Both films feature villains driven by personal loss and a desire to reshape reality, with Kaecilius in the first movie and Wanda Maximoff in the second acting as antagonistic forces opposing Doctor Strange. The dispatchers in both films—The Ancient One and America Chavez—guide Strange on his journey, introducing him to crucial magical and multiversal concepts. The donors, including Wong, Christine Palmer, and Charles Xavier, provide the resources and knowledge necessary for Strange's success. Similarly, the helpers, like Wong and

America Chavez, offer direct support to Strange in overcoming obstacles. Finally, while Doctor Strange remains the hero in both movies, the false heroes—Kaecilius and Mordo—betray him despite initially appearing as allies. This comparison shows the progression of Strange's journey from a self-centered surgeon to a multiversal protector.

### **1. The Villains in Doctor Strange (2016) and Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness (2022)**

In *Doctor Strange* (2016), the villains are Kaecilius and Dormammu. Kaecilius, a former disciple of the Ancient One, betrays her and seeks to bring Dormammu, a powerful being from the Dark Dimension, to Earth. Kaecilius opposes Doctor Strange and tries to master dark forces to reshape reality, believing that eternal life is the solution to humanity's suffering. In *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness* (2022), the villain is Wanda Maximoff. Once an ally of Doctor Strange, Wanda turns antagonist after the loss of her children, which drives her to madness. She becomes obsessed with the Darkhold, a book of forbidden magic, and seeks to exploit its power to manipulate the multiverse to reunite with her children. Both villains share similar traits—they become antagonistic forces because of their desire to control and shape the universe to their will. Though different in motives and powers, both Kaecilius and Wanda's descent into darkness makes them the opponents of the hero, Doctor Strange, who must stop them from causing irreversible damage to the world.

### **2. The Dispatchers in Doctor Strange (2016) and Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness (2022)**

In *Doctor Strange* (2016), the dispatcher is the Ancient One. She introduces Doctor Strange to the

mystical arts and the dangers that exist beyond the physical world. Without her guidance, Strange would not have understood the importance of the mystical arts or the threats that loom over Earth. Similarly, in *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness* (2022), America Chavez acts as the dispatcher. America is a teenager who can open portals between universes, making her central to the multiversal conflict. Her powers draw the attention of various antagonists, and her ability to navigate the multiverse becomes the key to solving the movie's central problem. Both characters, although from different worlds, initiate the protagonist's journey, introduce critical elements of the story, and propel the narrative forward. The Ancient One does this through her mentorship and knowledge of magic, while America Chavez does so by being the literal key to the multiverse, around which the entire conflict revolves.

### **3. The Donors in Doctor Strange (2016) and Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness (2022)**

In *Doctor Strange* (2016), there are three key donors: The Ancient One, Wong, and Christine Palmer. The Ancient One provides Doctor Strange with the magical knowledge and skills necessary for his transformation. Wong, a skilled sorcerer, helps Strange navigate the complexities of the mystical arts, especially through his access to the Kamar-Taj library. Christine Palmer, Strange's former lover, offers emotional support and later helps Strange when he is in need of medical expertise. In *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness* (2022), the donors are Wong, Christine Palmer (from another universe), and Charles Xavier. Wong, now the Sorcerer Supreme, continues to be a crucial guide, providing Strange with protection and advice regarding multiversal threats. Christine Palmer

from another universe brings her knowledge of the multiverse and provides vital assistance. Charles Xavier, a member of the Illuminati, shares insights about the dangers posed by variants of Strange and the multiverse. All of these characters play essential roles in providing Doctor Strange with the knowledge, support, and resources necessary for his journey, aiding his success in both films.

#### **4. The Helpers in Doctor Strange (2016) and Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness (2022)**

In *Doctor Strange* (2016), the helpers are The Ancient One, Wong, and Mordo. The Ancient One leads Kamar-Taj and teaches Strange the mystic arts, while Wong helps Strange access and understand the magical knowledge housed in the Kamar-Taj library. Mordo, a fellow disciple, aids Strange in learning the mystical arts and provides support during their initial battles. In *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness* (2022), Wong and America Chavez continue to serve as helpers. Wong, as the Sorcerer Supreme, protects Earth from multiversal threats and works closely with Doctor Strange to combat the Scarlet Witch and other dangers. America Chavez, with her unique ability to open portals between universes, becomes instrumental in their fight to save the multiverse. Both sets of helpers contribute to Doctor Strange's mission by offering their expertise, support, and abilities, allowing him to achieve his goals. These characters, through their knowledge, resources, and bravery, play pivotal roles in ensuring Strange's success in both films.

#### **5. The Hero and False Heroes in Doctor Strange (2016) and Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness (2022)**

Doctor Strange remains the hero in both *Doctor Strange* (2016) and

*Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness* (2022). In both films, Doctor Strange embodies the hero's journey, marked by transformation, sacrifice, and the battle against evil. In *Doctor Strange* (2016), he transitions from a self-centered neurosurgeon to a selfless protector of Earth. In *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness* (2022), he continues to protect the multiverse, facing threats from versions of himself and Wanda Maximoff. In both films, his courage, intelligence, and sacrifice define his heroism. The false heroes in both films, Kaecilius and Karl Mordo, appear to be allies at first. Kaecilius, in *Doctor Strange* (2016), betrays the Ancient One and seeks to bring Dormammu to Earth under the guise of saving humanity. Similarly, Karl Mordo in *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness* (2022) initially presents himself as a trusted ally but ultimately betrays Doctor Strange, becoming an antagonist. Both characters are false heroes because they deceive the protagonist and act against his interests, marking their transition from potential allies to villains.

#### **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

This research analyzed the application of Vladimir Propp's six spheres of action in *Doctor Strange* (2016) and *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness* (2022). In the first film, six out of seven categories were identified, with Doctor Strange as the Hero, Kaecilius and Dormammu as Villains, the Ancient One as the Dispatcher, Wong, Jonathan Pangborn, The Ancient One, and Christine Palmer as Donors, Wong and Karl Mordo as Helpers, and Kaecilius as a False Hero. In *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness*, similar spheres of action were found, with Doctor Strange again as the Hero, Wanda Maximoff as the Villain, America Chavez as the Dispatcher, Wong, Christine Palmer (from another

universe), Charles Xavier, and Doctor Strange himself as Donors, and Wong and America Chavez as Helpers. Notably, both films share similar patterns in their character roles, with slight variations in the number and identities of donors and helpers. Both movies feature the same Hero, Doctor Strange, and the False Hero character is different in each film.

While the research highlights that one category, "The Princess and Her Father," was absent in both movies, it provides a valuable foundation for future studies. It is suggested that researchers expand their analysis to other film genres to determine if all categories of Propp's spheres of action appear in different contexts. Exploring films with different narrative structures could offer a more comprehensive understanding of Propp's theory across various genres. This research serves as a reference for future studies, enriching the field of narrative analysis in cinema and furthering our understanding of how these archetypes function in storytelling.

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