

## THE AMERICANIZATION OF *SUPER SENTAI* IN THE *POWER RANGERS* TELEVISION SERIES

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### ***Abstract***

This article investigates matters of Americanization in the adaptation of Power Rangers superhero serials to be imbued with American values from its original Japanese version entitled Super Sentai. Even though transcultural serials are considered successful in the United States and worldwide, they are deemed culturally problematic. Through a qualitative method and an explorative approach, the analysis explores that Power Rangers' adaptation is shadowed by gender, racial, and second character issues. For instance, the gender aspect is related to gender swap, pink rangers, and the wearing of skirts by female rangers. Racial issues cover matters of the idealized melting pot in the U.S. Second character issues include matters of child employment, demonized monsters, and the usage of armed weapons. In conclusion, while Power Rangers is commercially successful, its adaptation process selectively modifies cultural elements, presenting an idealized rather than an authentic reality.

***Keywords:*** Adaptation Studies, *Power Rangers*, *Super Sentai*, Transcultural Adaptation

### **INTRODUCTION**

Adaptation is actually never so neutral at all, as there are always such tensions between fidelity and fluidity from source text to target audience. Mukherjee (2021) as well as Shafiq and Anwar (2020) argue that the main idea then prolongs the method to create an adaptation that is both enjoyable and still related to the original source. Besides, it is quite inevitable that adaptation is transcultural as it may lead to changes to its essence. O'Melia and O'Melia (2019) state that a source that is brought elsewhere and then adapted certainly brings in cultural values that are sometimes contested with the host's ideas. Furthermore, Tran (2023) and Turcotte (2021) argue that it could also affect such reception to the mentioned adaptation.

To create a well-accepted adaptation, the adaptor must compromise between three aspects, namely (1) the values of the source, (2) the ideas from the home place, and (3) the considerations in host place. Albrecht-Crane and Cutchins (2010) believe that no adaptor

can holistically satisfy all those three aspects. This is because, according to Leitch (2008), an adaptor could not change the past from the source text, but he/she could change the future by shaping further values. Adaptations could shape the host place's culture. In advance, the idea of being transcultural indeed enriches the adaptation studies to give greater consideration to the cultural values involved in the adapted texts and their adaptation process.

One transcultural adaptation is *Power Rangers*, a published in superhero serials in the United States which was brought from Japan and is called *Super Sentai* its country of origin. As stated by Green (2018) and RangerWiki (2024), both series have the same core plot, where several people cooperate in defeating villains using their superhero powers while facing various problems, from internal teenage problems to becoming the enemies' scapegoats. Since its debut in 1993, *Power Rangers* has remained a commercially successful franchise. Heim Saban, the owner of Saban Company, brought these series to the U.S. from Japan after buying the license, re-shooting, and modifying the serials according to Americans' cultural tastes. From 1993 until now, the *Power Rangers* series has been aired in more than 60 countries, publishing more than 20 seasons and 800 episodes (Green, 2018; RangerWiki, 2024), generating billions of dollars from views.

The *Power Rangers* series has four eras. In the first era or "the Saban era", this series was held by the Saban company from *Mighty Morphin' Power Rangers* to *Power Rangers Wild Force*. As stated by Green (2018) and RangerWiki (2024), its second era or "the Disney era" which started in 2001, it was held by Disney, which produced seven seasons, from *Power Rangers Ninja Storm* to *Power Rangers RPM*. After Disney's ownership ended, Saban Brands regained the rights and produced several seasons. Neo Saban, the new Saban's production house, used the power-up concept in the second season by adding the name "super" to the serial name. It produced *Power Rangers Samurai* until *Power Rangers Ninja Steel*. After the Neo Saban era ended, Hasbro continued the *Power Rangers* series, using almost similar concepts as Neo Saban, but by adding the season series (Green, 2018; RangerWiki, 2024). Hasbro produced *Power Rangers Beast Morpher* Seasons 1 and 2; *Power Rangers Dino Fury* Seasons 1 and 2; and the latest *Power Rangers Cosmic Fury*.

Indeed, *Power Rangers* is beyond mere adaptation of the Japanese *Super Sentai* as it contains transcultural certainties that slowly but consistently position these superheroes as an American trademark. There are some points to be underlined. First, the *Power Rangers* series developed independently from its original *Super Sentai* and changes made in the adaptation do not affect the original series. In reverse, as stated by Green (2018) and RangerWiki (2024), *Power Rangers* enriches *Super Sentai's* value as these serials still obtain great revenue even though Saban Company only takes and adapts part of *Super Sentai's* themes. Second, *Power Rangers'* adaptation of *Super Sentai* increases the United States' significance in the television era. Fithratullah (2020) state that these superhero series that are targeted for children to young adult audiences continuously shape American values, even though the original serials come from Japan. Third, *Power Rangers* becomes such proof that transcultural adaptation is possible and may even be greatly successful with its

series lasting more than three decades alongside various merchandise, games, movies, and even toys consumed by Americans and global communities.

Chaplin (2018), EWK (2018), and Fithratullah (2020) believe that Saban Company practices its freedom to modify *Super Sentai* into *Power Rangers* quite well as it is further involved in transculturation, including appropriation of American race, gender, location, and other backgrounds. Through this point, it is clear that *Power Rangers* is also part of Americanization in the adaptation of television series even though it also brings further problems. Further transculturation often struggles to align with diverse American perspectives. Many aspects are quite forced by practicing total freedom of *Super Sentai* adaptation, including various idealized aspects of American societies.

This paper investigates how *Super Sentai's* adaptation to *Power Rangers* may reflect transcultural tensions of Americanization that are inevitable since transcultural aspects are never totally about the original senses, but rather mixed ones. Then, this article also would like to propose a thesis statement that *Power Rangers* television series have a problematic success in adapting *Super Sentai* due to the adaptation's wide understanding of American cultural development. According to Chaplin (2018), EWK (2018), and Fithratullah (2020), it is also related to matters of cultural indigenization as a direct reflection of Americanization. These television series never ignore how racial, gender, and even second-character tensions affect the audience's reception issues. Later, the particular series even contribute to shaping American culture in the past, present, and future.

## METHOD

In this article, the authors employed qualitative methods, certain concepts, and written data to answer the research question. All research activities were carried out through an explorative approach to books and journals related to the analysis of *Power Rangers* and *Super Sentai* series. The idea was also emphasized through transcultural ideas by Fernando Ortiz and other gender and racial discourses regarding the explorative approach. This paper employed content analysis that includes obtaining sources, carefully reading the data, comparing the rest with other issues, quoting them into paper, and writing all of them down in reference lists.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Transcultural Adaptation and Americanization in Adaptation Studies

Adaptation encompasses an extensive process of repeating interpretations and creations, moving from one medium to another, intending to create a new thing from an older one. According to Albrecht-Crane and Cutchins (2010) as well as Leitch (2008), the idea of transcultural adaptation is taking a text from a certain place and making another in a different space. Any transcultural adaptation is shaped by the problems of home and host places and culturally stated, there is always change in between. Furthermore, Hutcheon (2006) and Leitch (2008) argue that transcultural indications point out that no

culture is ever static, rather it is dynamic as it grows and is grown by meanings involved alongside various cultural appropriations in between.

The cultural meanings in adaptations also move in tensions. Indeed, there is no single, monolithic, or even universal point that could cover all indications of transculturation. Transcultural adaptation is always related to, at least, three aspects, namely *original vs adaptation*; *us vs them*; and *modern vs contemporary*. The original creation emphasizes matters of fidelity, while the adaptation has a more fluid development. Hutcheon (2006), Pasopati (2024b), and Leitch (2008) pinpoint that it also prolongs the idea between concept and context, where transculturalism is actually more contextual. The 'us' idea rather underlines the host aspect in which adaptation takes place, while the 'them' idea regards otherness in the emphasis of the home where the source originated. Indeed, it later also indicates tension related to *self vs others* that includes matters of being ethical and aesthetic about any indicated value of adaptation. The modern aspect then is more defined, measurable, and predictable rather than contemporary points that are more flexible but less methodological. In its interpretations of symbolic signs, the idea of *modern vs contemporary* also evolves through time.

The transcultural idea is used to replace the word *acculturation*, making it more obvious that host values are far stronger than home ones. According to Arnedo-Gómez (2022) and Aykaç (2021), Fernando Ortiz founded the idea of transculturation, i.e., a concept which underscores the continual process of learning and re-learning extending culture. The idea then also expands into an indication that any dominance in the transcultural aspect is inevitable. However, the dominance is not from home to host values, but in reverse, as clearly seen in the process of cultural indigenization. As explained by Arnedo-Gómez (2022), Pasopati (2024b), and Aykaç (2021), the host as the place where adaptation takes place has greater freedom to be applied against static symbols. The adaptation is more dynamic as well since it relies on the flexibility of the host place which may also reform further cultural transformations while also reflecting the idea of counter-hegemonic culture in which ideological negotiations exist through reciprocal reflections.

Through the above sense, Arnedo-Gómez (2022), Pasopati (2024b), and Aykaç (2021) argue that the matter of adaptation does not merely concern business or even buying license and re-shoots of the new medium as it underlines the idea of cultural heterogenization that rejects such homogenization of fidelity in adaptation. Although Ortiz's idea is intended to explain the conditions in Central and South America, transcultural foundation is also realized in the United States. Therefore, through transcultural points, Americanization finds its sense; that is to bring any external value to this country and adapt it to suit its values as well. Carlson (2022) and van Elteren (2006) state that it also walks together with the ideology of Americanism, where going outward works through values but also lives as ongoing elements of culture. Americanism plays the United States' dominant domestic power on any value brought from other places.

In transcultural adaptation, once it is adapted in America, it becomes a trademark, emphasizing how Americanization is going local and global as well. According to Chaplin (2018), EWK (2018), and Fithratullah (2020), if it is aired outside America, then it is sure that other places and values consume American values. Moreover, in adaptation, Americanization shows that any value is possibly maintained in between as the results of cultural indigenization as it is not a matter of merely passing, but also keeping, as stated by Carlson (2022), Pasopati (2024b) and van Elteren (2006). Therefore, it is also inevitable that any Americanized aspect brought outward is also an internalization of American culture, strengthening the dominance of American values. Carlson (2022), Conrad (2014), and van Elteren (2006) argue that it must be understood that transcultural adaptation does not always go forever although its process is continual. For instance, in the American sense, it is Americanization that is continual.

### ***Power Rangers* in the Frameworks of Transcultural Adaptation and Americanization**

From the background and the concepts above, this paper indicates transcultural tensions regarding *Power Rangers* in points of gender, race, and second character issues. The first part is about gender issues in *Power Rangers*, as this series highly = pays attention to the matter of gender. Fithratullah (2020) and Shamsian (2018) pinpoint how *Power Rangers* is not genderless but stated between men and women, underlining how gender and sex are important in adaptation, defining matters of which one is man and woman. However, that fact later also closes other possibilities for other genders. As Bolt et al. (2021) and Tacikowski et al. (2020) state, from the points of stable cultural values, static gender roles are important to enact definitive progress of culture. This is clearly seen in the U.S. as the foundation of this nation is still stated between man and woman. It is also believed that the *Power Rangers* series that is targeted at a young adult audience should speak of ethical moral reasons. However, as stated by Shamsian (2018), recent American shows have different perceptions where gender is so open for further interpretations. Therefore, *Power Rangers* is criticized by those labeled “Social Justice Warriors”, that the series tend to dictate rather than free American people’s minds.

In *Power Rangers*, another crucial aspect of gender is gender swap, a common aspect in many *Power Rangers* seasons. The example is clearly seen in Mighty Morphin’ Power Ranger, where the Yellow Ranger is female compared to the male actor in Super Sentai’s Zyuranger. Another example is Green Ranger, which was played by a female actress in Dino Fury while in Super Sentai’s Ryusoulger as its source, it is played by a male actor. Then, traditionally, Red Rangers are seen starring male actors; however, female actresses sometimes also take the roles, such as Red Rangers in *Power Rangers SPD*, *Power Rangers Super Samurai*, and *Power Rangers Cosmic Fury*. Colucci (2023) states that Saban Company justifies the gender swap by saying that it is the original *Super Sentai* that does the swap and that the company only follows these superheroes’ exact stories. In other words, Saban Company would like to put gender swap among Rangers as part of fidelity which is also good for business and to satisfy the known audience who are loyal to *Super Sentai* series.



Picture 1 and 2 Gender Swap in Mighty Morphin' Power Rangers-Zyuranger and in Dino Fury-Ryusoulger

However, the gender swap is problematic since it shows a blunder. On one hand, the roles of man and woman are clearly defined in Power Rangers as the gender roles are different and it is never easy to change the realities. However, on the other hand, the gender swap is so easy to carry out, making Power Rangers quite flexible in gender roles depending on which theme is being adapted. Bolt et al. (2021) argue that the definition of men's and women's roles in Power Rangers is problematic since it is not so static at all. Meanwhile, according to Tacikowski et al. (2020), it is not so flexible either since the gender swap still contains both cis-gender without any other open options. The gender swap in Power Rangers highlights the complex issues surrounding gender representation in media. While it allows for some flexibility in adapting the show to different cultural contexts, it also reinforces traditional gender roles and binary notions of gender. Bolt et al. (2021) and Tacikowski et al. (2020) suggest that the franchise could benefit from exploring more diverse and inclusive representations of gender, moving beyond the limitations of cis-gender roles.

It is also impossible to merely see gender swaps as points of business while it creates discrepancies among gender aspects in the U.S. Saban Company easily carries out gender swaps but never involves any trans people, showing the sense of Americanization in which the ideas of conservatism and liberalism collide with each other, where one would like to stay static while the other is more flexible. Bolt et al. (2021) and Tacikowski et al. (2020) state that such tensions are taken to the spotlight and there is not one mere perspective that dictates everything. Saban Company commits to gender politics through the adaptation business, undermining the complexities of gender roles by carrying out gender swaps without being consistent with the values in between.

Moreover, gender aspects are also included in Power Rangers' costumes as it is clearly seen that female Rangers' costumes are differentiated from the male ones by wearing skirts outside their spandex costumes to show that they are women. Colucci (2023) and

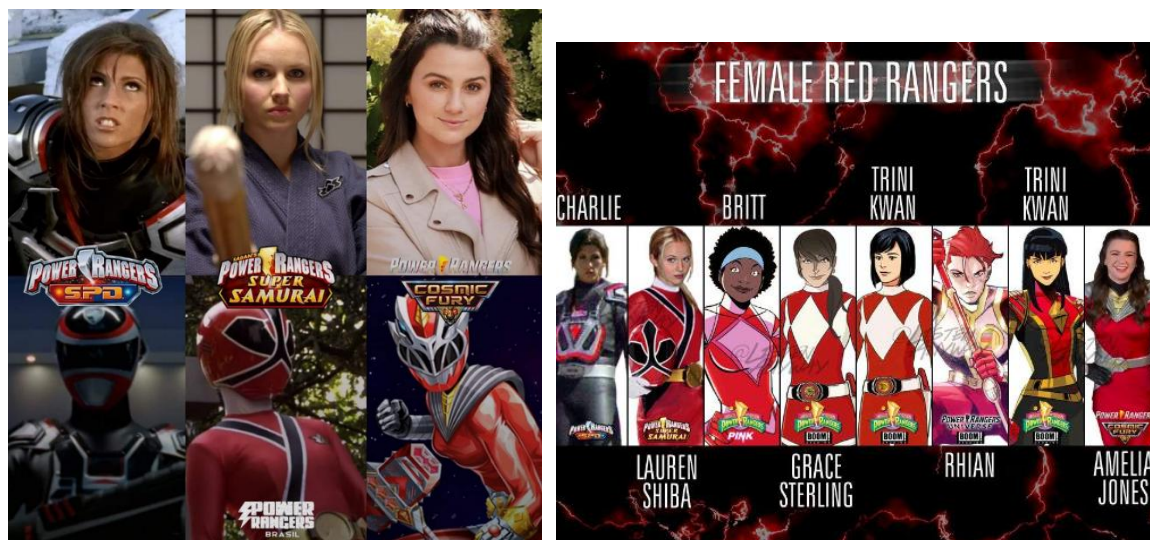
Shamsian (2018) pinpoint that the skirt is not genderless since it signifies female beings and such a differentiation may mean dual aspects between being appreciated and being undermined. Specific stories based on their everydayness and a different costume that is manifested in the form of these skirts show that female Rangers are more special than the others. Female bodies should not be displayed obscenely, but showing the skirt is enough as a necessary value of female beings. Meanwhile, female Rangers are only two people compared to the other three male Rangers or are less in quantity than the male ones. The female Rangers are not specified, but they are considered merely as complementary only to show fidelity to the former *Super Sentai* series.

Saban Company once again justifies themselves that female *Super Sentai* also wear skirts (Colucci, 2023; Shamsian, 2018), a rather intriguing opinion since that company could easily re-shoot the series based on their own perspectives. The main idea why some Power Rangers wear skirts is to identify female Rangers from other Rangers as well as to underline that Power Rangers is gender-specific as the ones wearing skirts are also starred and voiced by female actresses. Colucci (2023) and Shamsian (2018) also assume that the skirt is a sign of femininity in the female Rangers. Besides, skirts reflect higher movement flexibility than trousers, even though spandex is already elastic, indicating that Power Rangers may contain moral values for young adults to specifically differentiate between men and women and not to mix them altogether. In this sense, female Rangers wearing skirts is also conservative in values since it puts exact significance between men and women.

Obviously, the norm of women wearing skirts is different from the current American value where people could wear anything they like. Bolt et al. (2021) and Tacikowski et al. (2020) state that gender become more flexible and performative yet cannot be identified by what people wear. It is also possible that the success of Power Rangers is not always due to their flexible adaptation, but because in the process, the adapter underlines stable values. Power Rangers may be differently re-shot from *Super Sentai*, but the gender value remains stays intact since Japan's modern values are similar to those of the U.S.

The modern value is also indicated in Power Rangers which is male-dominated. It is inevitable that the Rangers have muscular strength identified in the male bodies. Fuller (2017) states that because the male in this sense is exemplary for the attack power of the Rangers if there are female Rangers, she has to be as strong as their male counterpart. It is also true that male-dominated Power Rangers is the fidelity from series of *Super Sentai*. Once again, Power Rangers defines itself through such stable values. Even if there are female Red Rangers, the reception is still comparing the actress to the traditional Red Rangers, such as shown in Power Rangers SPD, Power Rangers Super Samurai, and Power Rangers Cosmic Fury. Fuller (2017) argues that it may not clearly reflect such patriarchal dictations in Power Rangers, but it is transparent that the red color indicates strength and dominance, while pink is merely a combination between red and white. Through that sense, red is the representation of man in which pureness of power is expected while pink is the supportive aspect of the red one.





Picture 3 and 4 Female Red Rangers

It is assumed that Power Rangers prolong the value that pink is a female color, while red is very masculine by keeping Pink Rangers as female, while Red Rangers could be acted by both men and women. Men and women could be leaders through Red Rangers, but the Pink supportive character is always female. Fuller (2017) states that the gender in the Red Power Rangers is flexible, while it is static in the Pink one, shown by the fact that from the first Mighty Morphin' Power Rangers in 1993 to the latest of Power Rangers Cosmic Fury in 2023, where Pink Rangers always feature female beings. Then, Power Rangers prolongs the traditional meaning of color where pink is always related to femininity, as men who wear pink clothes are deemed less masculine. This gendered color scheme reflects broader societal norms and expectations surrounding masculinity and femininity. As stated by Fuller (2017) and Winter (2023), the franchise has historically defined color-based roles, with the Pink Ranger being a female-only position, while the Red Ranger has been portrayed by both male and female actors. This dynamic suggests that while leadership roles can be flexible, supporting roles remain rigidly gendered.

Color shows such a significant gender in Power Rangers. Further development of Power Rangers may show different points of view, but the traditional values are still intact and closely related to stable values. Winter (2023) argues that this condition is in line with the reality of the United States, where various gender emancipations exist everywhere but men are still considered as the best leaders. Women could be leaders, but they are deemed Alpha Females who are still supported by other women from behind. In this sense, the male-dominated culture in Power Rangers is in accordance with the reality of American values in which men are still the first sex after all.

The second part is racial issues in Power Rangers, where Power Rangers is truly seen as more diverse than *Super Sentai*. Actors and actresses who act as the Rangers come from various ethnicities, including Hispanic, Afro-American, and even Asian, as shown in Green Ranger of Power Rangers Lost Galaxy, Green Ranger of Power Ranger Turbo, and Black Ranger of Mighty Morphin' Power Rangers. Myrick (2024), O'Melia and O'Melia



(2019), as well as Puga (2014) state that this reality points out to the real condition of the United States which is a melting pot consisting of people from various backgrounds, unlike the original *Super Sentai* with all-Asian actors and actresses. People could come and live in America to reach their dreams, as idealized in the American Dream. Power Rangers is also such a symbol of heterogeneous communities in which it is implied that everyone could be a hero and be blessed with power in the United States.

Through the above sense, Power Rangers could easily swap any Ranger with people of different skin color and ethnicity. In various themes of Power Rangers, Myrick (2024), O'Melia and O'Melia (2019), as well as Puga (2014) show that Afro-Americans are not specifically played by Afro-American actors to avoid any racial controversies. Red Rangers could even be acted by Hispanic, Asian, or even Afro-American people as well. It is also signified that Power Rangers is not only aware of ethnic problems but can also keep up with various ethnical developments in the United States. This serial does not state that Hispanic people face such immigration problems or that Afro-American ones must deal with injustice in wider societies. Saban Company indeed also considered playing safe regarding racial issues to keep diversities intact, which is always good for business advancement (Myrick, 2024; Puga, 2014; Suderman, 2017). This strategy reflects a growing awareness in the entertainment industry of the importance of inclusivity and representation, as companies recognize that diverse content resonates with viewers and can lead to greater success. However, as stated by Myrick (2024), O'Melia and O'Melia (2019), as well as Puga (2014), it also raises questions about the authenticity of such diversity when it is primarily driven by business considerations rather than a genuine commitment to addressing racial and social issues.

However, the racial issues in Power Rangers are not without problems at all. By indicating various people with different skin colors to play as the Rangers, O'Melia and O'Melia (2019) as well as Phi (2017) suggest that the series would intensely like to cover and give proper ethnic equality. Meanwhile, people with those different skin colors are actors and actresses who intend to play such roles and cannot truly reflect racial issues in the United States. Indeed, Power Rangers underline that everything is fine and without any problem in the land of America, in contrast to the reality where the U.S. is still dominated by White Supremacy against other skin colors. The Saban Company would like to create an image that the adaptation is good for the U.S. since it underscores the real diversities of America, but in a consistently casual sense while avoiding any devastating problems.

The series are then quite conservative regarding racial issues. It does not agree with any White dominance but also refrains from upheaving the real racial problems in the U.S. The employment of actors and actresses with various skin colors is just a mere imagery of the ideal racial system in the United States, but not the reality itself. Furthermore, Lee (2017) and Phi (2017) state that the racial issues are more generalized in Power Rangers as the series do not pay much attention to any particular event faced by many people with diverse skin colors living in the U.S. The Rangers are generalized to have teenage problems

such as degrading self-confidence, fake friendships, betrayal in relationships, and so on. The issues of skin colors indeed make Power Rangers successful since this serial is quite well accepted in the U.S. although it is merely for business purposes since it provides such ideal imageries to the audience, but not the real ones (Lee, 2017; Phi, 2017; Suderman, 2017). The series view a dream that everyone living in the U.S. wants to realize in their life. The adaptation is transcultural but still limited to the scenes being displayed as it may cover up the real condition.

No racial stereotype is involved in Power Rangers as within the lives of the superheroes, everything is so racially ideal. For instance, there is never any mention of Asian people facing Yellow Peril; Afro-American people babysitting their children at school; or Hispanic people becoming stigmatized for being illegal citizens in the U.S. Indeed, those series are quite stated in the right-wing system in which the traditional system is best applied in the U.S, which, according to Lee (2017), Phi (2017), and Tran (2023), also underlines that this country is the best place that is always a safe for everyone to come to. There is nothing wrong with America alongside its Americanism and Americanization because everything is good, nice, and even necessary under the big umbrella of America. Through Power Rangers, an implicit lesson that is taught is that the real enemy is from outside of the U.S. and not from within it since the superheroes in this nation always preserve peace. Power Rangers also signifies how the term *melting pot* is still believable in America. At first, Power Rangers seems so heterogeneous by employing various people of skin colors as its members. Then, it is actually deceivable that the people with superpowers are so homogeneous since they only care about their own problems, but not the real matters of the U.S. According to Lee (2017), Phi (2017), and Suderman (2023), the *melting pot* is still embraced as a common culture under the U.S. within such prolonging harmonies in Power Rangers. The members and their surroundings could easily unite to destroy any enemy by pushing aside their own problems, which is starkly different from the real-life individualism in this country. However, the Power Rangers series is still confident in indicating cooperations between the Rangers, indicating that the series are the real American Dream where the melting pot is the necessary past, present, and future value to be realized.

The third point is about the existence of a second character in Power Rangers. Although this serial is successful in adapting *Super Sentai*, Power Rangers is still vague regarding its second characters. According to Green (2018) and RangerWiki (2024), the second characters are related to the enemies and the ones that later will come to help the Rangers and become the new Rangers. Concerning the enemies, this adaptation is problematic since it totally shapes the other side as evil or even detrimental. In many themes of Power Rangers, violence is also permitted in order to destroy the enemies and bad actions are allowed to prevent any larger damage. To get to that sense, the enemies must be dehumanized and even demonized.

Through the above understanding, the enemy as the second character is not the antagonist one, but the evil one that must be annihilated. If they grow larger, even Power

Rangers also have a big robot named Zord to destroy them all, reflecting the attitude of Americans after the destruction of the Twin Towers on 9/11. Indeed, this value is also more conservative than liberal, as according to Chaplin (2013), Green (2018), and RangerWiki (2024), Power Rangers do not only bring good values of cooperation, but they also violently attack those who come to their territories. This is more hawkish than dovish, and it truly shows how Power Rangers commit pre-emptive strikes. The superheroes protect the earth by destroying anything that may come and they have even prepared and involved weapons, robots, and other parties to kill anyone.



Picture 5 and 6 Weapons and Zords of Power Rangers

Among its many themes, the enemies are portrayed as truly inhuman and reflections of evil in everyday life that are detrimental and must be pushed aside and omitted. There are also second characters as enemies but later become allies who, according to Tran (2023), Green (2018), and RangerWiki (2024), usually come with some dilemmas in their lives. Later, members of Power Rangers come to remind the goodness inside their minds, making the enemies change into friends that later empower the Rangers with another power, such as in the cases of the White Ranger of Mighty Morphin' Power Rangers and Gold Ranger in Power Rangers Dino Charge. In this case, Power Rangers work not only as the ones who bring peace to the earth but also as such moral police that enforce moral visions to their enemies. They keep reminding the enemies, but if that effort fails, then the enemies must face Power Rangers' wrath.

In that sense, Power Rangers are also such exemplary roles that reflect good and ethical points inside the earth, a direct reflection of the American ways of becoming the police of the world. This country feels justified to do good and apply their American ways

to the enemies, including increasing the use of weapons. Indeed, Tran (2023), Green (2018), and RangerWiki (2024) indicate that this role of Power Rangers has been criticized for a long time but Saban Company continues to portray such themes as they still bring profit to the company. It is also supported by the Second Amendment ratified by the U. S. Congress which allows individual citizens to buy, own, and carry firearms, comparable with Power Rangers that is indeed is so American since it reflects the desire of the American people.

Though problematic, Chaplin (2013) and Tran (2023) show that Power Rangers still bears American values, including the ownership of other weapons and even Zords as any Power Rangers series bears firearms issuing lasers rather than bullets because standard young American people are so limited to bullets or firearms. Chaplin (2013), Green (2018), and RangerWiki (2024) pinpoint that there is a difference between Zord Power Rangers and *Super Sentai*, as in the former, there is additional armor and weapons in the cockpit as seen in Power Rangers Dino Charger and Ninja Steel, where in the Megazord, the Rangers received armor on their shoulders.

In Power Rangers, the existence of weapons is a sign of the protagonists' strength against the antagonists. Moreover, in this sense, the protagonists are always the good ones against the evil ones. Indeed, bearing firearms may involve such criminal acts, but Power Rangers are justified to do so (Chaplin, 2013; Green, 2018; Pasopati, 2024a). By stating so, even Power Rangers could be an evil group that justifies the usage of firearms, and even violence, among children and young adults. Later, the guidance of parents is needed, but somehow Power Rangers as the role models are beyond what parents assume as merely entertainment. According to Chaplin (2013), Green (2018), and Pasopati (2024a), on one hand, entertainment is a trivial matter but on the other hand, as it is cultural, it may involve a situation of moral considerations alongside any wrong aspects or even justifications of violence.

Another second character aspect is the employment of child characters in Power Rangers. It is quite usual in themes of *Super Sentai* where superheroes come from children and young people. According to Green (2018) and RangerWiki (2024), Power Rangers do the same in the adaptation, such as the Blue Ranger of Power Rangers Turbo and Power Rangers Kids Force, a fidelity to the *Super Sentai*. Different from the racial issues above, child characters in Power Rangers do not have diverse skin colors. It seems like normal children are the ones who could be heroes in the world of Power Rangers. On one hand, Power Rangers may reflect such diversities including the employment of various ethnicities as the Rangers. On the other hand, the values are still traditional, while actually, any child from any skin color could be a hero in the reality of America.

Furthermore, the fidelity regarding child characters in Power Rangers is similar to what happens in *Super Sentai* where children obtain the spotlight due to their genuine attitude and goodness. However, according to Edmonds (2022) and Momen (2021), it brings a dilemma to America as children in the U.S. are prohibited from working as child labor, including as actors. Children should live their own world of playing, not working.

They are not ready to define themselves, therefore, any guidance from both parents is needed, although the reality in the U.S. is in reverse. According to Edmonds (2022) and Momen (2021), many American children must stop going to school to help their parents work. Orphans must live on the streets and face such a hard life with other homeless people and are even ignored by other adults. In many cases, they become the victims of bullying or are hurt by the divorce of their parents.

Indeed, children in *Power Rangers* show the ideal American imagery. They are whites and blonds, who obtain full attention from their parents and surroundings. They even have power as good as adolescents and they could define who they really are as they are imbued with individualism from their childhood. In this sense, according to Green (2018), RangerWiki (2024), and Turcotte (2021), *Power Rangers* may become role models for them by motivating them to become braver in facing any situation, including encouraging them to always strengthen their own characters.

All the three aspects above happen because Saban Company picks and modifies. O'Melia and O'Melia (2019), Tran (2023), and Turcotte (2021) state that the adaptation is considered as successful since it could attract various and abundant viewers and more profit, lasting 30 years and aired from various places worldwide. The success is realized due to the Saban Company's effort of picking and modifying, such as by refraining from adapting all series of *Super Sentai*. O'Melia and O'Melia (2019), Tran (2023), and Turcotte (2021) state that the company only takes some themes and modifies the rest, making *Power Rangers* so American since it continuously adapts, not only the series but also adopts American values inside of it.

The series even introduced more monsters and problems that could not be found in the original series. By doing so, the series may also contain such moral messages that are prolonged in the U.S. and worldwide. According to O'Melia and O'Melia (2019), Tran (2023), and Turcotte (2021), it is crucial to be persistent and never surrender in facing any obstacle ahead, including different, strong, and even cruel opponents. By doing so, *Power Rangers* could bring further transcultural values that are more suitable for domestic consumption. Though the *Power Rangers* is not entirely shot in the U.S.—some settings are shot in New Zealand, *Power Rangers* are already characterized as part of American culture. It is mainly because this serial could play a big role in the growth and development of young children, even though it is only a fantasy, at least the optimistic, brave, helpful, and confident nature of *Power Rangers* characters can be applied in the real world.

## CONCLUSION

What needs to be underlined in this paper is that the transcultural adaptation prolongs the tensions within the success of *Power Rangers*. It is shadowed by various problems regarding the transcultural realities of America. It is especially seen where gender, racial, and second character issues are indicated within the series. On one hand, the series could cope with various cultural values in the U.S. On the other hand, the coping

mechanism is not total, but partial, since *Power Rangers* keeps displaying the idealized conditions in the U.S. The gender roles are stable, there is no stereotype regarding racial issues, and children can have full power to define who they really are. The transcultural adaptation of *Super Sentai* into *Power Rangers* is a type of Americanization where American values are embedded extensively in the series of a superhero group. It departs from Japanese values to total American values in order to secure the business in the U.S. and worldwide, while becoming such a tool to promote more American ideas around the world by showing the idealized goodness, such as seen in its image as the melting pot and the promised land of America with its American dream.

However, there are certain limitations that cannot be conversed within this paper. First, the *Power Rangers* show has now faced criticism for its portrayal of racial and gender dynamics, including concerns about tokenism and the representation of female characters. Second, this paper does not explore how audiences in different cultural contexts perceive and interpret the show. Third, the transcultural adaptation approach tends to overgeneralize by suggesting a total departure from Japanese values in favour of American ones. Some aspects of *Super Sentai*—such as teamwork, moral lessons, or fighting spirit—might still resonate within *Power Rangers*. Lastly, this paper does not delve into how financial motivations might sometimes contradict ideological objectives between the productions of the series. Therefore, deeper examinations of these controversies could strengthen the research.

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