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1 The recent BBC TV series *Upstairs, Downstairs*, which is a reboot of a 1970s TV series taking place between 1903 and 1930,[1] starts in London's prestigious Belgravia in 1936, with the arrival at n°165 Eaton Place of a young couple of new owners, Sir and Lady Holland, who have just returned from the United States where Sir Hallam worked as a member of the British embassy. His wife Lady Agnes is soon shown as going to a domestic employment agency to recruit a set of six servants as the couple needs to entertain diplomats and other prominent people. Created by *Call the Midwife* screenwriter Heidi Thomas, *Upstairs, Downstairs* is very often compared to *Downton Abbey* (ITV, 2010-2015):[2] indeed, along with films such as *Gosford Park* (2001), TV series like *Downton Abbey* and *Upstairs, Downstairs* are quite typical of a fairly recent body of British fictional filmic and TV production which tends to provide a greater visibility to “life below stairs”. Indeed, if “characters from below” were already present in 18th century novels, they have come back to the fore as protagonists and narrators with Ishiguro's *Remains of the Days* (1989) and its butler narrator,[3] or with Jo Baker's recent *Longbourn* (2013) which rewrites *Pride and Prejudice* from the point of view of Elizabeth Bennet's hou-

semaid, not to mention Pamela Cox's serial documentary "Servants: The True Story of Life Below Stairs" (BBC2, 2012), which unveils the gritty reality behind most glamorized TV representations, which tend to be led by the upstairs characters.

2 Indeed, in spite of a symmetrical title that may sound as if it were suggesting a form of quantitative equality in the representations of characters from both upstairs and downstairs, the TV series tends to focus more on the upstairs protagonists as they actually drive the narrative arc, which mainly relies on the interweaving of the national history of Great Britain on the eve of World War II and the household stories related to Sir Hallam, who works for the British government and Foreign Affairs. Yet, we will see that the figure of Mr Amanjit, a personal secretary who belongs neither to upstairs nor to downstairs, is construed as a Gramscian "subaltern" by the TV series in so far as his characterization remains fragmentary and elliptic while he simultaneously turns out to participate in the national history of Great Britain – so that he also happens to share the limelight with his masters on some occasions. Quite interestingly, it is the female masters' involvement with world politics that leads to the introduction of the character of Mr Amanjit Singh, who arrives at Eaton Place along with Lady Maud Holland, who has been living in India for over thirty years on account of the diplomatic activities of her recently deceased husband. Now a widow, Lady Maud returns to England to live with her son, Sir Hallam, and she arrives in the first episode with an urn, a monkey and a Sikh Indian personal secretary, Mr Amanjit, who is there to help her write her memoirs after being at her service in India for some years already. In his case, the server-served relationship is therefore reduplicated by the colonizer-colonized relationship at a time when India still belonged to the British Empire and I shall bear in mind here how this specific status of Mr Amanjit influences the kind of relationship he may have with the Holland family.

3 We shall first see that, however personal a secretary Mr Amanjit may be, no sign of any form of intimacy, in the sense of physical proximity or emotional closeness, is ever exchanged between him and his mistress, nor with the Holland family at large. In the TV series, Mr Amanjit's obvious physical remoteness is all the more foregrounded by the elliptic visual and narrative functioning of the show, a characteristic that appears to relegate the body of the Indian secretary off-screen,

or in the background, or in the margins of many shots in the first half of season 1. Yet, what may be regarded as a form of physical distance on the parts of both masters and personal secretary is actually countered by a strong form of reciprocal loyalty, leading the two parties to engage with matters that entail an individual and collective dimension, or, to put it differently, an intimate and a national dimension, which is made visually perceptible on the screen as well. So that more than being a mere "rhetorical doubling" (Robbins, 1986: x) of the master protagonists, Mr Amanjit triggers subplots that eventually become master plots as the masters themselves join him or support him in his enterprises, most of them turning to be political enterprises. Still, if the series promotes a form of growing social and public agency of the character of Mr Amanjit, it is obvious that his autonomy remains possible within the confines of the masters' supervision and paternal/maternal companionship – which can also be read in a broader perspective as a contemporary interrogation on would-be "model migrants" from the former Commonwealth as both self-governing and faithful, instead of dependent, or rebellious and potentially threatening.

4 Mr Amanjit is attached to the person of Lady Maud for his intellectual qualities, which ranks him higher than all the other servants who are circumscribed to physical work in the house. These qualities also exemplify the degree of education and mastery of oral and written English a number of Indian people could display as descendents of "Macaulay's children". His relative superiority first sets Mr Amanjit apart from the rest of the servants and confines him to Lady Maud's study-room where he types the memoirs she dictates to him on a daily basis. One may note that memoirs point to the fairly public dimension of her narrative, which is not an autobiography, so that Mr Amanjit is never allowed into more than an account of a personal viewpoint on experiences that are never intimate. What is more, only one scene in the whole of season 1 actually stages him working with Lady Maud, while the few scenes when he is shown interacting with her leave him literally in the background as he takes care of Lady Maud's monkey or brings her objects she requires. So, at first, no conversation proper is ever shown between the two characters and the one and only working scene of season 1 in the study room confines Mr Amanjit to a silent role as he types Lady Maud's oral

story without interfering in any way in her text. Ironically though, and proleptically, Mr Amanjit is later shown tuning in the wireless for the Hollands in the drawing room and playing the piano at one of their parties (S01E01), so that the series stages him as a discreet presence, whose own personal voice is not heard yet in discussions, but who is constantly heard as the physical provider of news information or as the final musical touch to a social gathering of political acquaintances. It may be tempting to describe such a mute role as that of the jewel in the crown of the Holland family, which it is undeniably – but only up to a certain point. Generally speaking, the TV series never clarifies the conditions of Mr Amanjit's recruitment, nor his legal status as a citizen of the Commonwealth working in Great Britain. We may assume that he is employed as a bonded servant to Lady Maud, but we are never explained how he is entitled to remain at the service of the young Holland couple when Lady Maud dies between season 1 and season 2. The fact that her death takes place in a narrative ellipsis may account for the reinforced vagueness of his subsequent official status. While the recruitment of the other servants is the object of a substantial number of scenes in the show, silence prevails as far as Mr Amanjit's presence is concerned. This somehow instils the idea that he is part of Lady Maud's heritage ––not as an object though, but rather as a sort of foster family member whose involvement in household matters will prove more and more central.

5 Still, "family member" remains an inappropriate term as Mr Amanjit never shares his meals with the Hollands, just like any of the other servants, with whom he is also forbidden to eat by Lady Maud who wants him to be served in her study room by one of the maids. His in-between status in the house, as belonging neither completely to upstairs nor to downstairs, implicitly points to his ethnic specificity, even though once again this is never given as a reason for the physical distance that he feels he must maintain with his masters, but also with the servants. Interestingly, the fact that his Indian origin is an accepted fact that keeps him apart from the other servants is unveiled thanks to a conversation he has in the middle of season 1 with a new maid, Rachel, who reveals to him that, as a Jew, she had to resign from her position as a university professor in Frankfort so as to flee Germany with her daughter. Her explicit speech about the racism she suffered from may be read as an indirect comment on his own situa-

tion as a character who is relatively marginalised on account of his ethnic background. So Rachel's own in-between status as a demoted ethnic character enables them to share an intimacy that would otherwise have been hindered. Thanks to her arrival at Eaton Place, we learn about private details concerning Mr Amanjit's past family life as well as geographical and social provenance. Quite tellingly, the first time Rachel appears on the screen illustrates this shift of focus visually operated by the camera (S01E02): Mr Amanjit is proof-reading Lady Maud's text and is shown on the left-hand side of the shot, in shallow focus though standing in the foreground. As he turns round to look at the newly-arrived Rachel, the focus on his face sharpens and attracts our attention to his growing relevance for the plot, considering that Lady Maud remains at the centre of the shot, even though blurred in the background and slightly pushed to the right of the shot. Yet, the circumstances that led to both his wife and child's deaths remain unknown to the spectators, pointing once again to the show's narrative elliptical functioning as far as servants are concerned, literally illustrating Antonio Gramsci's *Prison Notebooks* when he states that "The history of subaltern social group is necessarily fragmented and episodic" (Gramsci 1971: 54), and that the intertwining with the history of "civil society and thereby with the history of States and groups of States" is another typical trait of the subaltern's intervention in world affairs, as we shall see in a second later part.

6 But, to come back to Mr Amanjit and his lack of obvious intimacy with his masters, one may underline that if no physical contact is ever shown between himself and the Holland family,[4] a subtle emotional proximity is made obvious when, at the opening of season 2, Mr Amanjit is seen holding in his hands the urn encasing the ashes of his dead mistress which he brings back to Eaton Place, as a son would do. This moment also mirrors the situation of Lady Maud at the beginning of season 1, when she puts the urn of her late husband on the mantelpiece of her study room while referring to the Sikhs' conception of death as a passing though fire. The gradual blurring of boundaries between his own body and bodies from a higher social class is also discreetly hinted at in several scenes with Rachel, the former German teacher (when she hangs the laundry in the courtyard just like his mother used to, when she is about to faint in the study room, when he accompanies her in the crowd scene during the anti Oswald

Mosley march, and when he eventually discovers Rachel's dead body in her bedroom, in S01E02), and later with Rachel's daughter Lotte (whom he appears to physically shelter when she is brought back to the Hollands' after her mother's death in S01E02 & E03), or again with Mrs Fuller, Lotte's headmistress (with whom he takes a photograph in the street with Lotte in between them – standing together as a close family group in S02E04). Thus, the TV series gives us to understand that Mr Amanjit is not limited to having physical caring contacts with animals only, such as when he "protects" Lady Maud's pet monkey from the fright of the maids (S01E01) or when he tends to the little abandoned bird that he finds with young Johnny (S01E01). Actually, far from reducing him to the animal level, these two scenes also point to the range of his abilities, which are not limited to typing and proof-reading skills, and to some of his moral qualities such as self-control when confronted with panic and sympathy when facing the destitution of a weaker being. This moral dimension of his character is definitely the one that is most invested by the TV series, and the domain where his interactions with master characters are made most manifest through a combination of more frequent physical presence in the shots and gradual integration in the dialogues between himself and the master characters.

7 Mr Amanjit is thus staged as evolving from being a fairly invisible, self-effaced coloured individual to becoming a growingly dependable, self-asserting member of the household who reaches centre stage and becomes more visible on the screen. Indeed, even though he remains a secondary character like most of the servants, he is one of those who are most actively in touch with « upstairs » and one who tends to defend respect and loyalty to the masters more eagerly than the other servants. Oddly enough, while some spectators discussing the show on blogs and forums find Mr Amanjit too ill-defined so that the TV series could well have done without him, I think that this character, who is obviously not designed to attract the viewer's immediate sympathy – contrary to the glamorous chauffeur, the boisterous cook, the faulty young Johnny or the hard-working butler – is conceived so as to embody a form of moral devotion to his masters, who are also promoted as acting loyally towards him. One may think again of the opening of season 2, which shows Mr Amanjit "coming back home" at Eaton Place with the urn, so that we infer Sir Hallam has

kept him in their service with no further explanation, as if the TV series took for granted that Mr Amanjit's unswerving faithfulness to his mother's most whimsical and demanding attitudes were all to his credit and placed Sir Hallam in the moral obligation not to terminate his working contract. But it is true that this is left to the spectator's interpretation, which may be read as one of the show's drawbacks as far as the fleshing out of this master-servant relation is concerned, or which may also be read as reflecting a relation which the TV series constructs as based on implicitness, reserve and a form of reciprocal trust which goes without saying.

8 Indeed, as the TV series progresses, Mr Amanjit is being entrusted with missions (rather than duties) testifying to the growing confidence he is attributed by Sir Hallam, and later by his aunt Blanche, but also by Rachel and by Mrs Fuller. Some of his missions are directly connected to domestic services, but each time they reveal a commitment that goes beyond Mr Amanjit's professional obligations and puts him on an equal moral footing with some master characters, and sometimes even on a superior footing. [5] However, the TV series also offers a nuanced portrayal of a man who may not have the choice of his morality because of his inferior position as a servant. We may think of the moment when he replaces the missing chauffeur at Sir Hallam's request and secretly drives Sir Hallam's step sister Persephone back from prison. If this intervention is a means to avoid the shame of having a family member related to an infamous detention, it also illustrates a conflict of loyalties that Mr Amanjit has to submit to as Persephone was arrested for taking part in the march organised by Oswald Mosley's right-wing party whereas Mr Amanjit had joined the counter march with Rachel. Conversely, another scene underlines the sense of consistency between personal and professional commitment, when Lady Agnes asks Mr Amanjit to replace the butler, Mr Pritchard. The latter has fallen back to alcoholism after being jilted by a lady friend once she discovered that he was a conscientious objector during World War I, leaving others to sacrifice their lives on the battlefield while he was "only" an ambulance man. An earlier conversation between Mr Amanjit and Sir Hallam, which is one of the rare actual discussions they have together while alone, had enabled Mr Amanjit to disclose that he had been a soldier in the Indian troops that fought alongside the allies in France during World War I. He then

confides to Sir Hallam that he was in the Jallundur 59th Brigade and confirms to him that he was wounded at Ypres, where most of the Indian soldiers involved in this battle died or were injured. This moment of individual exchange, and even manly intimate confidence on Mr Amanjit's part, is inserted just after Sir Hallam has decreed the personal secretary to be the only guardian of his mother's letters, journals and papers which his aunt was trying to go through on her own (S02E01). This first sign of great trust on Sir Hallam's part is immediately followed by another similar moment when Sir Hallam hands him the gun he used to carry when he was in the navy, so as to protect the household in the event of a German invasion taking place in his absence (S02E01). So the TV series foregrounds Mr Amanjit as not only replacing key male figures downstairs, but also potentially replacing the master figure as moral and physical defender, both of the written heritage of his mother and of his entire household.

9 This agency by proxy, which is a conventional motif of patronizing colonial history and fiction, is clearly a way of showcasing the master's wisdom and sense in the prospect of circumstances that will radically alter the traditional order of things. But, as season 2 draws to a close, the character of Mr Amanjit is no longer only depicted as reliable, discreet and self-forgetful since a form of empowerment, triggered by his own self-confidence and his masters' respect and trust, makes him more enterprising and influential, and no less dependable. The moral and political sharing of common values thus appears to be the basis of an intimacy which is a subtle mixture of physical and intellectual trust as far as his masters are concerned, rekindling in this contemporary TV series the ideal of the servant/slave as both trustworthy and self-reliant, even in, or especially in, situations of crisis. If this is a typical trope of the American South myth of the "loyal slave",[6] we may think of echoing examples in colonial novels about the 1857 uprising among sepoys in the Indian Army where a white child, or a white family, is protected and saved by the masters' dedicated servant or nurse.[7] Such is the case of J.F. Fanthorne's novel entitled *Mariam: A Tale of the Indian Mutiny of 1857* (1896) where an old faithful ayah and a fellow servant rescue the Lavaters (except for the husband) from the slaughtering rebels at their own peril. A similar plot pattern is adopted by Flora Annie Steel in *Face of the Waters. A tale of the Mutiny* (1896) in which both male and female servants par-

ticipate in the hiding of female protagonist Kate Erlton. This reassuring display of loyalty was still being recycled by post-independence novels such as M. M. Kayes' *The Far Pavilions* (1978) in which young orphaned Ashton Pelham-Martyn is raised by Sita, the wife of his father's Hindu groom, who makes him pass as an Indian boy when she realizes that British families are being massacred during the 1857 mutiny.

10 Still, the growing agency of the character of Mr Amanjit remains under control and operates from the heart of a household that has adopted him, from the centre of the British Empire and close to the heart of the British government. Thus, if two other scenes relegate Sir Hallam in the wings of the action in order to favour Mr Amanjit's initiatives, these initiatives are clearly backed by the master figure. Such is the case of Mr Amanjit's search for Lotte's German father, for which he writes many letters to try and find out the prison where he was sent to, even though this quest proves fruitless. The other example is that of Mr Amanjit's participation in the organisation of a network of refugee Jewish children along with the headmistress Mrs Fuller, as well as with Blanche with whom he reaches an understanding after their quarrel, and also with Lady Agnes who contributes to raising funds for the network while Sir Hallam deals with the required entrance visas (S02E02). Thus, on several occasions starting at the end of season 1, Mr Amanjit is staged in short moments of political conversations where his ideas are opposed, debated, or willingly accepted by the strong-willed and independent character of Blanche in particular, underlining his decisive participation in the group of master characters. Some shots visually enhance this newly acquired status, as when he sits side by side with other volunteers looking for host families, or finds himself elected by the camera among the British people waiting for the refugee children at the strain station (S02E02), or again when Lady Agnes is shown literally looking up to him as he advises her about the servants' new management (S02E03).

11 However, the equal position he gradually acquires with the masters of the house is toned down by two other very different episodes, and the portrayal of the character once again appears fairly balanced, however sketchy it remains. When Mr Amanjit's excess of zeal, as he himself calls it, throws him into a temper and an argument with the butler about what it means to refuse to wage war, he starts practising

shooting in the back garden so that both Blanche and Lady Agnes are compelled to intervene and momentarily disarm him (S02E01). In this case, the female masters' agency can be interpreted as exposing Mr Amanjit's own agency as maybe too precocious and potentially dangerous (a replica of Great Britain's overall position about Indian nationalists' growing demand for self-government?). Yet, in the same episode, Mr Amanjit, acting as butler with Sir Hallam's guests, is bluntly rebuffed by Stanhope, the Foreign Affairs Secretary, who considers a servant (again, he does not mention the fact that he is Indian, but he probably does not need to) has no right to participate in a political conversation. Blanche later supports Mr Amanjit, underlining their respective status as "outsiders" and "misfits" who yet manage to achieve things together, but she does not dare say it in Stanhope's face (S02E01). This time, as her name conspicuously underscores, it is not so much Blanche's ethnic dimension which makes her side with Mr Amanjit but rather her inordinate situation as a middle-aged single working woman who had a homosexual affair with a married woman and mother of two. The frontal confrontation with a "white master" raises a question which shakes Mr Amanjit's tendency to defend loyalty to masters over servants' professional claims in a subsequent exchange with Mr Pritchard, the butler he replaces:

> Mr Amanjit: "It's not easy to bite your tongue when hearing such stupidity. [referring to Stanhope's erroneous worldview]"
> Mr Pritchard: "A butler hears nothing."
> Mr Amanjit: "I don't understand. (…) I'm a servant but before that I'm a man."
> Mr Pritchard: "So you have no place downstairs." (S02E01)

12 This passage is interesting in so far as it is colour-blind and appears to state that social division is stronger than racial hierarchy, that notions of social superiority and inferiority may be more accepted by servants themselves (also a well-known motif of integrated alienation), but it also points to the position of a white servant speaker who feels less threatened by his dependence in a white society than a coloured servant in this very same white society. A last example indeed reminds Mr Amanjit that the outside world is not as benevolent as the Holland masters, when he is asked by a waiter in a tea parlour to move from the front room to the back room as there is no place for

him in the front room. It is one of the rare moments when the character of Mr Amanjit is so explicitly reminded (by a member of the domestic servants, who may act on his own accord and/or on account of the owner of the place) that he is Indian-born and that his presence visually "spoils the place".

13 Thus Mr Amanjit gradually appears as a quasi flawless model of devoted colonial servant embodying the benefits and advantages of self-government and collaboration for the good of Great Britain. He is thus depicted as a servant who generally embraces the cause of Great Britain but remains oblivious to what was going on in India in the 1930s, at a time when frustrated claims of home-rule had given way to demands for total independence and partition, especially after the rejection of the 1935 Government of India Act. Indeed, Mr Amanjit appears to never question the option of Indians supporting the war effort or not. Added to the fact that the TV series represents a Sikh Indian character rather than a Hindu or a Muslim character, this choice may be a way of overlooking the internal divergences that opposed the Indian National Congress (with a Hindu majority) to the Muslim League as to the renewal of India's participation to a second world war, and to recycle the now well-known presence of a majority of Sikh soldiers in the British army during the two world wars. This reality contributed to fuelling the stereotypical figure of the fierce Sikh warrior who does not betray, going back to the numerous Sikh soldiers who remained faithful to the British colonizers during the 1857 Sepoy Mutiny. On the eve of the 2014 commemorations of the commitment of Indian troops in World War I celebrated with cultural and historical events such as conferences, exhibitions and monuments, the TV series turns the character of Mr Amanjit into a complex fetish object/subject of mutual trust between colonised servant and master colonizer. What is more, in a post-9/11 and 7/7 context, the TV series also reminds its viewers of the crucial supportive role played by loyal colonial subjects in the defence of Great Britain and its allies during the two world conflicts – somehow inviting spectators to question contemporary suspicion as regard descendants of these idealized devoted servants and fighters now demonized by some as potential "enemies from within", whether they be Muslims, Hindus or Sikhs.

14 *Upstairs*, *Downstairs* can thus be viewed as retracing the first moments of a British Asian diaspora in the making, at a time when emi-

grating to Great Britain was still a singular enterprise – just before the Partition of India and Pakistan and the post-war reconstruction era in Great Britain initiated a wider movement of migrations of workers and technicians, who were later followed by their families. By reminding TV viewers that their recent national and European history was the result of numerous collaborations based on trust and common moral and political values between colonizers and colonized, between served and server, the show also provides positive images of an Indian servant as a steadfast supporter and protector of Great Britain, like many others in his time, and many others today. What is more, by turning Mr Amanjit into a dedicated and reliable typist, not departing from his mistress's text and the master text of the heydays of Great Britain as a nation that still counted in the balance of world power, *Upstairs*, *Downstairs* gives us to watch a character who paves the way for the emancipation of Indian writing from the master's dictation – as if Mr Amanjit stood as a precursor of those emancipated writers and artists whose own personal voices started to be heard and seen in British and world culture fifty years later. For that matter, it is relevant that Mr Amanjit should follow in the steps of an independent woman writing about her own perceptions of diplomatic affairs in India, which was still regarded as a male sphere of influence in spite of British women's growing involvement in political life. Quite tellingly, one shot of a page being typed by Mr Amanjit reveals a text in which Lady Maud appears to be quite aware of the intricacies of the domestic and the political when she writes that "'Domestic space' undoubtedly represented politicised space." (S01E02) – a fleeting but undeniable subtext for the TV series itself where the upstairs/downstairs domestic space and its inhabitants are both literally and metaphorically politicised.

15 As such a progressive image of the master-servant / coloniser-colonised relationship is clearly idealized on both the master's and the servant's parts by the series, it appears to me that the TV series tries – and partly fails – to write back to the 1980 British tradition of TV Raj revival films by recycling the "heritage film" fashion so characteristic of British fiction programs in the 1980s. Indeed, Mr Amanjit is depicted as the embodiment of a successful and fruitful outcome of the colonizer-colonized relationship that evolves into a partnership which remains unequal but which turns out to be beneficial for both

parties. In that respect, *Upstairs*, *Downstairs* favours a positive representation of the consequences of both colonization and "deserved" gradual emancipation, which flatters a certain British view and nationalist Indian view of India's independence as "a gentlemen's agreement." Simultaneously, the TV series opts for a geographical shift of perspective, showing that before 1947, Indian people were no longer exotic foreigners living abroad (as in Raj revival films) but that they had started to settle in Great Britain and become close neighbours – reminding us that the history of Indo-Pakistani migration to Great Britain is a progressive one, initiated as much by the British as by the Indo-Pakistani people themselves. But this perspective was already introduced on British big and small screens by such script writers as Hanif Kureishi in *My Beautiful Laundrette* (1985) or *The Buddha of Suburbia* (BBC, 1993) – so that *Upstairs Downstairs* looks a little outdated, or at least progressive in a retrograde and benign way. The casting of Art Malik in the role of Mr Amanjit as a middle-aged compliant man may also come as a disappointment for spectators who remember his central and sensational role as a young British Asian student in the mini-series *The Jewel in the Crown* (ITV, 1984) taking place in India between 1942 and 1946. In this story, a dashing Hari Kumar discovers India after living most of his life in England, and challenges British propriety abroad by falling in love with a young white British woman, which proves fatal for the two of them. Even though a Raj revival TV series, *The Jewel in the Crown* was audacious enough to cast the unknown Art Malik as a rebellious young man who felt more British than Indian and died from challenging the prejudices and violence of some British protagonists. *Upstairs*, *Downstairs* ironically gives us to see a more tamed version and interpretation of the young independent and rebellious mind Art Malik used to embody in *The Jewel in the Crown*, implicitly pointing to the lack of prominent roles that this kind of programmes can offer today to an actor of his age and status.

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1 *Upstairs Downstairs* (ITV, 1971-1975) consists of 68 episodes divided into 5 series.

2 *Downton Abbey* happened to be launched a few weeks only after the first episode of *Upstairs, Downstairs* and, in spite of the great popularity of the original series broadcast on ITV between 1970 and 1975, *Downton Abbey* proved to be much more successful than *Upstairs, Downstairs*. If the latter plays a lower key than the glamorous *Downton Abbey*, it is my intention here to point out a particularity not chosen by the rival TV series, which is embodied by the choice to introduce a regular Indian character in the cast.

3 Later famously performed on the big screen by Anthony Hopkins and Emma Thomson as the former housekeeper of Darlington Hall in the 1993 film directed by James Ivory, and written by by Ruth Prawar Jhabwallah.

4 Contrary to the chauffeur Spargo, who becomes at one stage the secret lover of Sir Hallam's step sister, and contrary to the butler Mr Pritchard, who delivers the first baby of Lady Agnes in an emergency situation.

5 When he sides with Rachel "against" Lady Persephone's adherence to British right-wing ideas and German national-socialist characters; when he remains faithful to the memory of his departed wife while Sir Hallam betrays Lady Agnes under their own roof with her own sister, who appears as an easy scapegoat responsible for Sir Hallam's lapse and who is gotten rid of at the end thanks to her convenient suicide.

6 See Joseph Crespino, "All Strom's Children: Gender, Race, and Memory in the 20th Century American South" (pp. 112-128) in Gyanendra Pandey, *Subalternity and Difference: Investigations from the North and the South*, Routledge, 2011.

7 Indrani Sen, "Discourses of gendered 'loyalty'. Indian women in nineteenth century 'mutiny' fiction" (pp. 111-127) in Biswamoi Pati, *The Great Re-*

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English

While recent past years have seen the multiplication of British TV series (re)staging the cohabitation of masters and servants in period dramas dealing with the beginning of the 20th century in the United Kingdom (*Downtown Abbey*, *The Forsyte Saga*), *Downstairs, Upstairs* is the only example of a TV series choosing to include an Indian-born character as one of the servants living in the same house as the masters and other servants. The 2010 *Downstairs, Upstairs* is actually a reboot of a 1970s TV series as it starts in 1936, i.e. six years after the ending of the original plot, and focuses on a historical context overshadowed by the threat of the Second World War. This slight chronological shift may account for the introduction of Mr Amanjit Singh as the personal secretary of Lady Holland, who has just returned from India to live with her son, Sir Hallam Holland, the new owner of number 165 Eaton Place in London, which was the main setting of the original show. Apart from the novelty of the physical presence of a foreign servant in the cast (both in terms of the history of the migrations of Indians to the United Kingdom in the 1930s and in terms of the history of British period dramas and their integration of coloured servants in their plots), this paper addresses the ways Mr Amanjit Singh's physical and intellectual part evolves throughout the two seasons. I first study how the visual nature of the show aptly enhances the in-between status of the character, who belongs neither to upstairs nor to downstairs. Then I examine the staging of the growing trust which takes place between the people living in those three spheres of the house, which leads to Mr Amanjit Singh's growing agency as a proper character in the TV series, even though his autonomy is regularly held in check by characters from both upstairs and downstairs. Eventually, I offer a contemporary analysis of the way Mr Amanjit Singh's controlled emancipation may be read as an ideal model of Anglo-Indian relation (from the masters' viewpoint), reconfiguring both pre-independence and contemporary attitudes to Indo-Pakistani people through the prism of gentlemanly devotion and regulated initiative.

Français

Si l'on a récemment assisté à la multiplication de séries britanniques (re)mettant en scène la cohabitation entre maîtres et domestiques dans des productions en costumes revenant sur les premières décennies du XXème siècle au Royaume Uni (*Downtown Abbey*, *The Forsyte Saga*), *Downstairs, Upstairs* est le seul exemple de série télévisée qui ait choisi d'inclure comme domestique vivant sous le même toit que ses maîtres un personnage né en Inde. La version 2010 de *Downstairs, Upstairs* reprend en fait une série diffusée dans les années 1970, et la fait redémarrer en 1936 (soit six ans après la fin de la série d'origine), pour s'intéresser aux circonstances qui débouche-

ront sur la déclaration de la Seconde Guerre mondiale. Ce décalage temporel justifie peut-être que les créateurs de cette nouvelle série aient décidé d'introduire au 165 Eaton Place à Londres le personnage de M. Amanjit Singh, qui n'est autre que le secrétaire particulier de Lady Holland, alors que celle-ci rentre d'Inde et vient habiter chez son fils, Sir Hallam Holland, désormais propriétaire du lieu où se déroulait déjà la série précédente. Indépendamment du fait que la présence physique d'un domestique étranger au sein du groupe de personnages est un phénomène assez rare en soi (tant du point de vue de l'histoire des migrations depuis l'Inde vers le Royaume-Uni dans les années 1930 que de l'évolution des séries historiques et de leur intégration de domestiques étrangers dans leur scénario), cet article propose d'étudier les modifications du rôle de M. Amanjit Singh au cours de ses deux saisons, en s'intéressant à la mise en scène de son corps ainsi que de son agentivité intellectuelle. Nous verrons d'abord comment la série souligne visuellement la situation d'entre-deux spatial dans laquelle se trouve le personnage qui, dans cette nouvelle demeure, n'appartient ni au monde d'en haut ni à celui d'en bas. Puis, nous montrerons que la série s'articule autour d'une confiance croissante entre les personnages attachés à ces trois espaces connexes, si bien que de personnage mineur, M. Amanjit Singh passe de plus en plus au premier plan de nombreuses scènes où autonomie et reprise en main (d'en haut et d'en bas) alternent et se régulent l'une l'autre. Enfin, nous proposerons une analyse rétrospective de l'émancipation contrôlée de ce personnage au sein de la série comme la trace fictionnelle d'un idéal de rapports entre Indiens et Britanniques (idéal informé par le point de vue des maîtres), qui nous donnerait à réfléchir sur la manière dont cette mise en scène d'un dévouement « à la gentleman » et d'une initiative retenue continuent d'influencer certaines perceptions de ce qu'étaient les relations anglo-indiennes avant 1947, et ce qu'elles pourraient encore être.

Mots-clés

Inde et Grande Bretagne, histoire par en bas, subalterne, agentivité, série télévisée, Upstairs Downstairs

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