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Democratic Performance with the Jana Natya Manch in India

In the winter of 2020, the Jana Natya Manch (People's Theatre Front), a political performance group and street-theatre pioneer in India, created a new kind of performance in response to current events. The Hindu-nationalist government was then implementing discriminatory laws targeting Muslims. The very constitution of India, a 'sovereign, socialist, secular, democratic republic' (Constitution Preamble) was under threat. Instead of a conventional street play, the Jana Natya Manch set up a participatory 'game' or 'interactive presentation' that brought together random and diverse audiences to act, or play, as a united people. The group put into place an inclusive experiment, rather than a didactic one, to counter exclusionary rules and address democratic deficits. Thus this Indian 'people's theatre' produced 'democratic performances' that questioned both artistic and political representations. This article, based on fieldwork with the Jana Natya Manch, offers a script translation and an analysis of a new kind of performance developed in active circumstances.

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Key terms: citizenship, democracy, discrimination, nation, people's theatre, political theatre.

THE JANA NATYA MANCH is a group of self-trained actors that has been involved in artistic and political activities for some fifty years in New Delhi and Northern India.¹ When a wave of protests ran throughout the subcontinent in the winter of 2020, the group supported demonstrators on various sites to oppose discriminatory citizenship laws targeting Muslims. After its re-election in 2019, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government led by Narendra Modi intensified its Hindu-nationalist agenda, causing a widespread outcry. The repression was fierce and widely condemned by foreign media, delivering a blow to the global reputation of the 'largest democracy in the world'.² In response to the BJP agenda, a number of initiatives emerged from the Indian civil society to address threats to democracy.

In this fraught context, the Jana Natya Manch created topical performances that took place on the streets, on protest sites, and busy corners, or else in industrial areas. Among these street performances was a new kind of experimental 'game' played by actors and audiences – *Ham Bharat Ke Log* (*We the People*

of India) – which tackled the burning issue of citizenship to counter Hindu nationalism. Already, after the mass killing of Muslims in Gujarat in 2002, the Jana Natya Manch had taken on Hindu nationalism and Hindutva politics in the satirical street play *Guruji*, where a megalomaniac guru and his sycophantic followers instrumentalize religion for nationalistic ends. Arjun Ghosh showed in his analysis of *Guruji* that the play evolved with current events, describing street theatre as an immediate art: 'The immediacy of the art of street theatre requires it to be alive to the political dimensions of the issues that evolve during the creation of the play, as well as through the occasional modifications as reality changes.'³ Over the years, *Guruji* focused less on the Gujarat events and more on the spectre of Hindutva politics. *Ham Bharat Ke Log* followed on from the same political commitment to peace and democracy, yet it gave the immediacy of Jana Natya Manch's performances a new dimension. The urgency of the political situation called for new kinds of performances, and the group, responding

to the current government's discriminatory laws, created inclusive, participatory, 'democratic performances' involving all citizens.

The game *Ham Bharat Ke Log* addressed the issue of citizenship through a guided interaction between group members and audiences composed of random people who happened to be on the site where and when it happened. While the form of conventional street plays like *Guruji* was explicitly didactic, *Ham Bharat Ke Log* was fundamentally participatory: every person, actor, or bystander present was to take part in it. The game's premiere took place at the end of a street play on 19 January in an industrial area. Due to the contentious subjects of these performances, their location was a secret, kept even from most group members (Figure 1).

On the day of the premiere, in the early morning, a member of the Jana Natya Manch joined me in the centre of Delhi and led me a

long way to the secret location of the event. He was informed about the steps to take on the journey by text messages as we were travelling. We first took the metro from central Delhi's Munirka station and went to the distant Kaushambi station in Ghaziabad, a city I had never heard of. After an hour and a half of travel, we finally arrived in the neighbouring province of Uttar Pradesh, where Ghaziabad is located, across the Yamuna river to the east of India's capital city. A van picked us up and drove to the nearby Sahibabad Industrial Area. There, another person took over and showed us the way. We walked past several factories and arrived, at last, at an almost empty sandlot surrounded by apartment blocks, utility poles, a few billboards, satellite dishes, and drying clothes hanging from balconies. Other group members had just arrived and were already unloading props from a car: some percussion instruments, a few placards with words and



Figure 1. A stage of the Jana Natya Manch, 2020. Photograph: Aurélien Bellucci.

pictures, and carpets, where children would sit. They arranged them in a circle close to the sandlot's main entrance. Several onlookers stopped by the improvised stage and quietly observed the scene. One of them dared to ask a busy organizer discreetly what was happening. The answer was laconic: '*Natak*' – a Hindi-Urdu word for 'theatre', 'drama', or 'play'.

In the spirit of the Indian People's Theatre Association (IPTA), the Jana Natya Manch team often takes productions to the audience, and not the other way around.⁴ They do not wait for spectators in a theatre as most troupes do, but go to the people. It is only in this way that they can reach a new public – people who cannot go to the theatre, or people who have never seen a play. Such a 'people's theatre' may well be an heir to such secular, vernacular folk theatres as *Nautanki* in Northern India or *Jatra* in Bengal, which developed against a religious, Sanskritic traditional performance background, becoming the architects of modern theatres in the nineteenth century. Professional troupes during the latter period went from one village to the other, and erected tents to show their productions. But the Jana Natya Manch is an amateur theatre group insofar as its members have a profession outside of the theatre, and they refuse any kind of corporate or state funding. Their street performances are free, public, and independent. They have also produced eighteen conventional proscenium plays to date, which have provided them with some revenue, but they are mostly well known for the more than eighty street plays performed everywhere in India since the 1970s.⁵

The Jana Natya Manch's performances belong to a tradition of protest plays which started with *Nil Darpan* (*The Indigo Mirror*) and other 'mirror' (*darpan*) plays that portrayed social issues under British colonialism. When it was first published in 1861, *Nil Darpan* was an audacious, subversive text denouncing the barbarity that led to the Indigo Revolt, a peasant uprising crushed by the colonizer in 1859. The play was produced, however, 'in the safety of urban limits and came long after the Indigo situation had eased'.⁶ By contrast, a century later, the Jana Natya Manch was able to develop a sort of idiosyncratic version of the Aristotelian Three Unities for an

immediate theatre: their street performances focus on a single issue, and they are performed when it happens, where it takes effect. These performances also fall within the lively tradition of street theatre that has flourished in the wake of Panu Pal's 'street-corner play' (*pathanatika*).⁷ In 1951, on a single day, this IPTA member created a play which protested the imprisonment of communist leaders and was performed in front of thousands of workers in Hazra Park in Kolkata.

A Definition of 'People's Theatre'

Since its foundation in 1973, the Jana Natya Manch has produced timely political arts in the same vein, seeking 'to take theatre to the people' – its key principle – and inspiring numerous people's theatre groups all over India in its wake.⁸ '*Jana Natya Manch*' (also abbreviated as '*Janam*') may translate as 'People's Theatre Front' or 'People's Theatre Platform'; and the word '*jana*' (जन), also translated as 'folk' and 'public', may refer to several characteristics of the group at once:⁹ actors are not professionals but amateurs: that is to say, ordinary people. They perform on the streets for everyone in the city and the suburbs; these performances address public issues, which concern all citizens; they are done in a common language; and they are free of charge, thus accessible to everybody. Last but not least, the group's work may lead to interactions with audiences, as is clear below in its last creation, *Ham Bharat Ke Log*, which means that it is not only the group of self-trained actors that performs, but that people who have not received any training at all also actively contribute to the show. Taken together or separately, these characteristics come to define a variety of performances as 'people's theatre' (*log natak*).¹⁰

When I joined the Jana Natya Manch at their rehearsal place on 14 January 2020, five days before *Ham Bharat Ke Log*'s premiere, I was expecting to learn about a new street play. In fact, without realizing it, I was being invited to take part in the rehearsal of another kind of performance. When I ingenuously asked about this 'new street play', I was immediately rebuffed: it was absolutely not a street play! It

would be produced by a theatre group, on the streets, after the end of a play but, allegedly, it was something else. The nature of this new performance was far from obvious. When I sought clarification in an interview later with Janam's secretary, I was told again:

Ham Bharat Ke Log is not a street play, it's a game, let's not confuse things, it's not a street play, it's a game and it has a purpose, and we will do many such things, but it's not theatre; we use a theatrical element in it, but it isn't a play.¹¹

What kind of game was it exactly?

Ham Bharat Ke Log's elaboration was still underway when I first joined the Jana Natya Manch on 14 January. In the rehearsal room, two rows of concrete surrounded a lower square stage. A young woman, apparently acting as a director, was perched on the

upper row while I was invited to stand with a dozen actors on the lower stage. The game's rule was quite elementary: she asked us a series of yes/no questions, and we had to walk to one side of the stage to answer affirmatively and to the other side to answer negatively; we just stood in the middle when we did not have an answer to her questions. She was reading from a list, and suggestions were coming from the actors. When they thought about a potentially relevant question, someone wrote it on a whiteboard. It could then be included in a final script. *Ham Bharat Ke Log* was conceived and performed collaboratively. When the game first took place outside in Ghaziabad on 19 January, right after a street play, the director asked questions that we answered, this time, along with other members of the audience (Figure 2).



Figure 2. An empty sandlot in Ghaziabad turns into an improvised stage, 2020. Photograph: Aurélien Bellucci.

Yet street performances in India have their contingencies. Since more than 300 people gathered on the sandlot, the director had to improvise, asking them to raise a hand to say yes, and refrain from doing so to say no, so as not to have them walk back and forth and confuse everyone. She used this same alternative rule in other circumstances when, in the next days, thousands of people played the game at political protests. In any case, at the game's start, inactive spectators turned into active players. This role change is probably the ultimate goal of a people's theatre and, in this case, it had serious political implications: voiceless individuals became active citizens. *Ham Bharat Ke Log* started with a question on citizenship. When the script was fixed, I learned that the group member who asked questions was actually called a 'conductor' (कंडक्टर) because she orchestrated the game. Like the *sutradhara* ('thread holder') in Sanskrit drama – or Epic theatre's narrator – the conductor opened the performance and addressed audience members. From the stage's centre, she asked them: 'So, let's see: who belongs to the people of India?'¹² Janam's members and the audience answered in unison: 'We are the people of India!' [*Ham bharat ke log*].¹³ This statement was not only the game's original title, but also the first four words of the Preamble to the Constitution of India.¹⁴ Thus all players proclaimed their belonging to the nation:

CONDUCTOR: So, let's see: who belongs to the people of India?

ALL: We are the people of India!

CONDUCTOR: Who?

ALL: We are!

CONDUCTOR: The people of which country?

ALL: The people of India!

CONDUCTOR: Good! Let's play a game with the people of India, then. The rules are very simple. When I ask you a question, you will answer by going from right to left or from left to right [or raise your hand to say yes and refrain from doing so to say no].¹⁵

This introductory proclamation of national belonging occurred at a time when protesters opposed, among other issues mentioned above, two related laws that could institute discrimination on the basis of

religion. Such discrimination had been prevented until then by the Constitution. The first law was the 'National Register of Citizens' (NRC), then implemented only in the province of Assam but which was about to be extended. The second law, the 'Citizenship Amendment Act' (CAA), was passed on 12 December 2019. In brief, the former would lead to the identification and deportation of illegal migrants, while the latter would allow the administration to grant citizenship to Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi, and Christian migrants fleeing religious persecution in neighbouring countries. Not only were Muslim migrants blatantly absent from the list, even though Muslims are the largest minority group in India, but also the mere fact that religious communities were explicitly named to the detriment of others was discriminatory in itself. Demonstrators accused the government of targeting Muslim residents through a 'new anti-Muslim law'.¹⁶ By asking a diverse audience 'who belongs to the people of India' in this fraught context, Janam expected everyone, Hindus and Muslims alike, to profess their unity and play as a single body.

A Participatory Game or 'Interactive Presentation'

This solemn introduction was followed by a series of lighter questions that solicited the players' goodwill. The conductor asked, for example, 'Who is wearing black socks?', 'Who takes the metro?', 'Who watches films?'¹⁷ Players got caught up in the game and jovially played by the rules. Progressively, questions became more specific: 'Who was born in Delhi?', 'Whose mother and father were born in Delhi?', and 'Who has been in Delhi for ten years?'¹⁸ These three successive questions alluded to the new law, and the last one on residency was particularly significant. For migrant workers, residency lengths determined their right to citizenship. After their arrival in India, every immigrant from a neighbouring country had to wait for more than ten years to apply for citizenship. With the CAA, however, only Muslim immigrants would have to wait for this long, whereas

other immigrants would wait for five years – half that length.¹⁹ In the Sahibabad Industrial Area, where the game’s premiere took place, many workers from various communities had recently come from other provinces and countries. If players had been there for less than ten years, did they belong to the people of India? If they were Muslim, did they not belong to the people of India?

Since questions on residency could sound unsettling to a diverse audience, they were interspersed with comical questions which counterbalanced the seriousness and urgency of the political context. The game *Ham Bharat Ke Log* was a generically mixed performance, at once serious and entertaining: ‘Who eats dhal? Who eats onions? Who eats biryani?’²⁰ Everybody did, whatever their religion, which was precisely the point: all would willingly say yes, as a united body, and show their common identity. After these playful questions, without a transition, the conductor asked: ‘Who’s got a friend from another religion? Who is married? Who is in an interfaith marriage? Who married someone from another caste?’²¹ This was obviously not the case for everyone, and only a few persons raised their hand. Yet, whatever the answer to some contentious questions, one – uttered four times – always brought everyone together: ‘Those who consider themselves to be citizens of India, raise your hand [instead of ‘go to the centre’]!’²² Despite potential differences, players always ended up acting as one. As the game progressed, questions dealt more explicitly with citizenship, and plunged them back into the serious political context:

- Who is able to sing the entire Jana Gana Mana [National Anthem]?
- Who is able to sing the entire Vande Mataram [National Song]?
- Those who consider themselves to be citizens of India, go to the centre!
- Who knows two fundamental rights?
- Who knows all six fundamental rights?
- Who knows the constitutional duties?
- Those who consider themselves to be citizens of India, go to the centre!²³

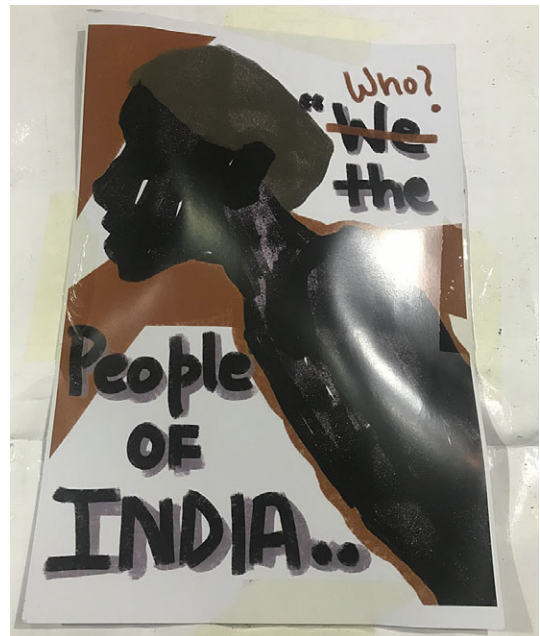


Figure 3. Placard at a protest against the Discriminatory Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and the National Register of Citizens Laws (NRC), 2020. Photograph: Aurélien Bellucci.

Players realized that they did not merely act with other individuals but with their peers, who abided by the same rules and had the same rights and duties. They professed common national belonging rather than diverging customs and faiths. Where the authorities fomented division, the Jana Natya Manch not only advocated unity but also carried out its implementation (Figure 3).

In a final series of questions dealing directly with the CAA and NRC, the conductor asked about a crucial document that was necessary to prove one’s citizenship: a birth certificate. Especially in the poorest castes and classes, many people did not have the document, and this was the case for children and elderly people, particularly those who were born before Independence.²⁴ In order to support fellow citizens who did not have the document, Janam openly recommended civil disobedience in a last, subversive question that prompted people to keep acting after the game:²⁵

Who was born in India after 1947?
 Whose parents were born in India before 1947?
 Those who consider themselves to be citizens of
 India, go to the centre!
 Who has their birth certificate?
 Whose parents have their birth certificate?
 Who, come what may, will not show their
 documents?
 Those who consider themselves to be citizens of
 India, go to the centre!²⁶

The game was, by nature, interactive. Significantly, the Hindi script had a subtitle in English indicating that it was 'An Interactive Presentation' (my emphasis). Not only was the audience not inactive, as it could have been in a traditional dramatic 'representation', but it was also composed of new players – that is, new actors – at each occurrence. This is precisely why the group's secretary insisted that *Ham Bharat Ke Log* was not a play. Everyone was acting themselves and for all. They made their voices heard and proclaimed their identity without any mediation or 'representation'. Janam's game was not 'a making [something] present again',²⁷ It was simply 'a making present', a 'presentation'. It made present 'the people of India', who were paradoxically absent from political discussions on citizenship at the Indian Parliament – in other words, they were absent from discussions about the making of the nation and their belonging to it.²⁸

Fully Fledged Democratic Performances

Whereas the House of the People (*Lok Sabha*) failed to represent the people of India and put their unity in jeopardy, the people's theatre (*log natak*) offered them a platform to play their own story. When together they showed their unity, players turned into a single body of citizens. The game's title and first proclamation '*Ham Bharat Ke Log*', were the first four words of the Constitution's Preamble, which the conductor read in its entirety as a conclusion to the game.²⁹ She read from both Hindi and Urdu scripts, the respective languages of Hindu and Muslim communities that the government was playing off against each other.

Ham Bharat Ke Log could be seen in equal measure as a political demonstration against national division and as a national celebration: it was a new kind of political performance for a new political situation, which took place outside both theatres and parliaments in public space. As a matter of fact, Janam enjoined a crowd of impromptu players to perform the national Constitution. As the government threatened the nation's fundamental principles, a theatre group turned a fictive democracy into a real democratic experiment, and it did this on many occasions. At a time when democracy suffered a blow, Janam and the people of India created fully fledged democratic performances.

Here is the draft script:

हम भारत के लोग
Ham Bharat Ke Log
 Jana Natya Manch, January 2020
We, the People of India:
An Interactive Presentation
 CAA/NRC³⁰ Game, Draft Script
 Translation from Hindi into English
 by Aurélien Bellucci

CONDUCTOR: So, let's see: who belongs to the people of India?

ALL: We are the people of India!

CONDUCTOR: Who?

ALL: We are!

CONDUCTOR: The people of which country?

ALL: The people of India!

CONDUCTOR: Good! Let's play a game with the people of India then. The rules are very simple. When I ask you a question, you will answer by going from right to left or from left to right.

Who is wearing black socks? [Ask for proof.]

Who has a handkerchief in their pocket? [Ask for proof.]

Who is wearing two sweaters? [Ask for proof.]

Who takes the metro? [Ask for proof.]

Who is left-handed? [Ask for proof.]

Who lives in a rented house?

Who watches films?

Who wears pajamas?

Who has two children?

Who has more than four children?
 Whose children were born in Delhi?
 Who was born in Delhi?
 Whose mother and father were born in Delhi?
 Who has been in Delhi for ten years?
 Apart from Hindi and English, who knows yet another language?
 Who eats dhal?
 Who eats onions?
 Who eats biryani?
 Who's got a friend from another religion?
 Who is married?
 Who is in an interfaith marriage?
 Who married someone from another caste?
 Who has at least one family member who is or has been in the armed forces?
 Who has ever been to any of the Indian borders?
 Who is able to sing the entire Jana Gana Mana?³¹
 Who is able to sing the entire Vande Mataram?³²
 Those who consider themselves to be citizens of India, go to the centre!
 Who knows two fundamental rights?
 Who knows all six fundamental rights?³³
 Who knows the constitutional duties?³⁴
 Those who consider themselves to be citizens of India, go to the centre!
 Who was born in India after 1947?
 Whose parents were born in India before 1947?
 Those who consider themselves to be citizens of India, go to the centre!
 Who has their birth certificate?
 Whose parents have their birth certificate?
 Who, come what may, will not show their documents?
 Those who consider themselves to be citizens of India, go to the centre!

At the end of the game, the Conductor reads the Preamble to the Constitution of India:

WE, THE PEOPLE OF INDIA, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a SOVEREIGN SOCIALIST SECULAR DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC and to secure to all its citizens: JUSTICE, social, economic and political; LIBERTY of thought, expression, belief, faith, and worship; EQUALITY of status and of opportunity; and to promote among them all FRATERNITY, assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the Nation;
 IN OUR CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY this 26th day of November 1949, do HEREBY ADOPT, ENACT, AND GIVE TO OURSELVES THIS CONSTITUTION.

Notes and References

1. 'Jana Natya Manch' (2017), <<https://www.studiosafdar.org/jana-natya-manch>> ('So far this group of self-trained actors has done over 8,500 performances of nearly 70 street plays and 15 proscenium plays in about 140 cities in India').
2. 'Behind Campus Attack in India, Some See a Far-Right Agenda', *New York Times* (10 January 2020), <<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/10/world/asia/india-jawaharlal-nehru-university-attack.html>>.
3. Arjun Ghosh, 'Performing Change/Changing Performance: An Exploration of the Life of a Street Play by Jana Natya Manch', *Asian Theatre Journal*, XXVII, No. 1 (Spring 2010), p. 76–99 (p. 78).
4. The 'Indian People's Theatre Association' was founded in 1943, in 'defence of culture against Fascism and Imperialism', to make art 'at once the expression and organizer of [the Indian] people's struggle for freedom, cultural progress and economic justice': *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Theatre and Performance* (2005), <<https://www.oxfordreference-com.ezp-prod1.hul.harvard.edu/view/10.1093/acref/9780198601746.001.0001/acref-9780198601746-e-1898?rskey=s3Chl7&result=1901>>.
5. Sudhanva Deshpande, *Theatre of the Streets: The Jana Natya Manch Experience* (New Delhi: Janam, 2013), p. 178.
6. Sudipto Chatterjee, 'Mise-En-(Colonial-)Scène: The Theatre of the Bengal Renaissance', in *Imperialism and Theatre: Essays on World Theatre, Drama, and Performance*, ed. J. Ellen Gainor, (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 19–37 (p. 29).
7. 'Purnendu Shekhar Pal Chaudhury (1919–1995), better known as Panu Pal, can most definitely be named as a pioneer in this field. The first ever street theatre squad of the IPTA was formed under his leadership in 1951 and their first presentation was *Chargesheet*': Bulbuli Biswas and Paramita Banerjee, 'Street Theatre in Bengal: A Glimpse', *Seagull Theatre Quarterly*, XVI (December 1997), pp. 34–5.
8. 'About Us', Jana Natya Manch's official website, <<https://www.jananatyamanch.org/aboutus.htm>>.
9. 'जन', *ShabdKosh: English–Hindi Dictionary*, <<https://www.shabdKosh.com/search-dictionary?lc=hi&sl=en&tl=hi&e=जन>>.
10. Indian 'people's theatre' finds interesting equivalents across Europe and Asia. In France, amateurs consistently made the 'popular theatre' (*théâtre populaire*) founded by Firmin Gémier in 1895. The IPTA was inspired by Romain Rolland's pioneering 1903 book, *Le Théâtre du peuple* (Bruxelles: Éditions Complexe, 2003); see *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Theatre and Performance*.
11. Interview with author, New Delhi, 22 January 2020.
12. 'तो देखते हैं कौन है भारत के लोग?': Jana Natya Manch, *Ham Bharat Ke Log* [हम भारत के लोग] (2020). All translations are by the author.
13. 'हम भारत के लोग', *ibid.* (लोग is another term for 'people', 'folk', 'public', that will also be commonly used to speak about 'people's theatre' [लोग नाटक] or 'log natak': लोग (*ShabdKosh*)).
14. Preamble to the Constitution of India, <<https://legislative.gov.in/sites/default/files/Hindi.pdf>>.
15. 'कंडक्टर: तो देखते हैं कौन है भारत के लोग? / सब: हम भारत के लोग . . . कंडक्टर: कौन? / सब: हम लोग . . . कंडक्टर: कहीं के लोग? / सब: हम भारत के लोग? / कंडक्टर: अच्छा!! तो आईय इन भारत के लोगों के साथ एक खेल खेलते हैं। खेल के नियम बहुत आसान हैं. मेरे सवाल पूछने

पे आप दाएं से-बाएं और बाए से दाएं जायेंगे': Jana Natya Manch, *Ham Bharat Ke Log*.

16. 'Citizenship Amendment Bill: India's new 'anti-Muslim' law explained', BBC News (11 December 2019), <<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-50670393>>.

17. 'जिन्होंने काले मोजे पहने हैं', 'जो मेट्रो में सफर करते हैं', 'जो फिल्म देखते हैं': Jana Natya Manch, *Ham Bharat Ke Log*.

18. 'जो खुद दिल्ली में पैदा हुए / जनिके माँ बाप दिल्ली में पैदा हुए / जो पछिल्ले 10 दिल्ली में हैं': *ibid*.

19. 'Provided that for the person belonging to Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi or Christian community [communities] in Afghanistan, Bangladesh or Pakistan, the aggregate period of residence or service of Government in India as required under this clause shall be read as "not less than five years" in place of "not less than eleven years"' in 'The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill', as introduced in Lok Sabha (House of the People) *PRS Legislative Research* (2019), <https://www.prsindia.org/sites/default/files/bill_files/Citizenship%202019%20Bill%20Text.pdf>.

20. 'जो दाल खाते हैं / जो प्याज़ खाते हैं / जो बरियानी खाते हैं': Jana Natya Manch, *Ham Bharat Ke Log*.

21. 'जिनक दूसर धर्म के दोस्त भी हैं / जो शादीशुदा हैं / जिन्होंने दूसर धर्म में शादी की है': *ibid*.

22. 'जो लोग खुदको भारत का नागरिक मानते हैं, वो बीच में जाएं': *ibid*.

23. 'जो जनगणन पूरा गा सकते हैं / जो बन्देमातरम गीत पूरा गा सकते हैं / जो लोग खुदको भारत का नागरिक मानते हैं, वो बीच में जाएं / 2 मौलिक अधिकार पता है / जिन्ह सारे 6 मौलिक अधिकार पता है / जिन्ह संवैधानिक कर्तव्य पता है / जो लोग खुद का भारत का नागरिक मानतेह, वो बीच में जाएं': *ibid*.

24. 'Birth Certificates Are Citizenship Proof, Govt says. But 38% Under-5 Children Don't Have One', *IndiaSpend* (3 January 2020), <<https://www.indiaspend.com/birth-certificates-are-citizenship-proof-govt-says-but-38-under-5-children-dont-have-one/>>.

25. This last, subversive question is analogous to Brecht's *Der gute Mensch von Sezuan's* final call-to-arms in which a 'player' invites spectators to find another ending to the play. Arvind Gaur's Indian production of the play led to debates among the audience. See Aurélien Bellucci, 'Politics of Dis-Estrangement: Brecht Is No Stranger in Asia Today', *The Brecht Yearbook*, XLV (November 2020), p. 304–20. Janam's people's theatre also shares Epic features with German political theatre.

26. 'जो लोग 1947 के बाद के भारत में पैदा हुए / जनि लोगों के माँ बाप 1947 से पहले भारत में पैदा हुए / जो लोग खुद को भारत का नागरिक मानते हैं, वो बीच में जाएं / जिनक पास बर्थ सर्टिफिकेट है /

जनिके माँ बाप के पास बर्थ सर्टिफिकेट है / जो लोग कुछ भी हो जायें कागज़ नहीं दिखाएंगे / जो लोग खुद को भारत का नागरिक मानते हैं, वो बीच में जाएं': Jana Natya Manch, *Ham Bharat Ke Log*.

27. Hanna Fenichel Pitkin, *The Concept of Representation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), p. 8.

28. 'Quoi qu'il en soit, à l'instant qu'un peuple se donne des représentants, il n'est plus libre; il n'est plus' ['In any case, the moment a people allows itself to be represented, it is no longer free: it no longer exists'] (Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Du Contrat social* (Paris: Éditions Flammarion, 2012), p. 132; my translation).

29. 'WE, THE PEOPLE OF INDIA, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a SOVEREIGN SOCIALIST SECULAR DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC and to secure to all its citizens . . .': Preamble to the *Constitution of India*, <<https://legislative.gov.in/sites/default/files/English.pdf>>.

30. CAA (Citizenship Amendment Act); NRC (National Register of Citizens).

31. The name of the National Anthem.

32. The name of the National Song.

33. Namely: the Right to Equality, Right to Freedom, Right against Exploitation, Right to Freedom of Religion, Right to Cultural and Educational Rights, and Right to Constitutional Remedies.

34. Namely: (a) to abide by the Constitution and respect its ideals and institutions, the National Flag, and the National Anthem; (b) to cherish and follow the noble ideals which inspired our national struggle for freedom; (c) to uphold and protect the sovereignty, unity, and integrity of India; (d) to defend the country and render national service when called upon to do so; (e) to promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India transcending religious, linguistic, and regional or sectional diversities; to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women; (f) to value and preserve the rich heritage of our composite culture; (g) to protect and improve the natural environment including forests, lakes, rivers, and wild life, and to have compassion for living creatures; (h) to develop the scientific temper, humanism, and the spirit of inquiry and reform; (i) to safeguard public property and to abjure violence; (j) to strive towards excellence in all spheres of individual and collective activity so that the nation constantly rises to higher levels of endeavour and achievement; (k) who is a parent or guardian to provide opportunities for education to his child or, as the case may be, ward, between the age of six and fourteen years.