

Performative Actions, Rights and Mediatization: the case of *Jóvenes Republicanos* (Argentina)

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ABSTRACT – Performative Actions, Rights and Mediatization: the case of *Jóvenes Republicanos* (Argentina)

– This article analyzes two actions carried out in 2021 by *Jóvenes Republicanos* (JR) – a right-wing Argentine political group – and their media coverage. The hypothesis is that JR adopts performative elements as a means to introduce themselves into the public sphere. Their first performance thematized the pandemic and, particularly, the vaccination process, while the second one, the high poverty rates. Both took over the streets, sparked controversy and allowed us to see the strong link between the right wings and online activism. The methodology used in this study is qualitative, based on the analysis of the discourses delivered by leaders and on the virtual ethnography of different social networks. The performances are also described, analyzed, and compared.

Keywords: **Performative Actions. Youths. Rights. Mediatization. Argentina.**

RÉSUMÉ – Actions Performatives, Droits et Médiatisation: le cas des *Jóvenes Republicanos* (Argentine)

– Cet article analyse deux actions menées en 2021 par le groupe politique argentin de droite *Jóvenes Republicanos* (JR) et leur médiatisation. L'hypothèse est que JR adopte des éléments performatifs comme forme d'apparition dans la sphère publique. La première thématique la pandémie et, en particulier, le processus de vaccination et la seconde les niveaux élevés de pauvreté. Tous deux occupent la rue, génèrent des polémiques et permettent de voir le lien fort entre la droite et le militantisme virtuel. La méthodologie est qualitative, basée sur l'analyse des discours des référents et sur une ethnographie virtuelle dans différents réseaux sociaux. De plus, les performances sont décrites, analysées et comparées.

Mots-clés: **Actions Performatives. Jeunes. Droits. Médiatisation. Argentine.**

RESUMEN – Acciones Performativas, Derechas y Mediatización: el caso de *Jóvenes Republicanos* (Argentina)

– Este artículo trata de dos performances realizadas en 2021 por la agrupación política argentina de derecha *Jóvenes Republicanos* (JR) y su retoma mediática. La hipótesis es que JR adopta elementos performativos como una forma de aparición en lo público. La primera performance tematizó la pandemia y, particularmente, el proceso de vacunación y la segunda, los altos niveles de pobreza. Ambas ocuparon la calle, generaron polémica y permitieron ver el fuerte vínculo entre las derechas y los activismos virtuales. La metodología de nuestro estudio es cualitativa, basada en el análisis de los discursos de los referentes y en una etnografía virtual en diferentes redes sociales. Además, se describen, analizan y comparan las performances.

Palabras-clave: **Acciones Performativas. Jóvenes. Derechas. Mediatización. Argentina.**

Introduction

This article analyzes two actions conducted by the group Jóvenes Republicanos (JR) in different urban public spaces between February and May 2021, which were disseminated through social media and also reported by traditional media. The first action was a performance that used extra-large black garbage bags to allude to the bodies of people who had died of COVID-19 and denounced the alleged relation between such deaths and the way vaccines had been allocated, a situation which at the time led to the public conflict called the “VIP vaccination facility”. The second action involved an exhibition of large packages of polenta, a cheap food consumed by the lower classes, to denounce the country’s high poverty rate. While the group has performed other actions and been part of other events, the two performances that we analyze here were the most famous and widespread. They were both carried out in the city of Buenos Aires (C.A.B.A.) during demonstrations against the federal administration.

JR is a political group established in 2020 in the context of the pandemic lockdown and one of its most noteworthy characteristics is its members’ ages, which range from 16 to 30. As defined on its webpage¹ (currently unavailable), they defend republican values and fight for the republic and freedom. The group’s various activities include discussion panels with political leaders and experts in various fields, as well as educational talks on Argentine history, in which they propose a revised view that is different from that adopted by the curricula of educational institutions after the Bicentennial celebrations, which some authors interpret as the discursive turn of the then Argentina President Cristina Fernández, regarding “the historic chance” (Gindin, 2019). Moreover, to create content and make it go viral, they use digital platforms, particularly *Instagram*² and *Twitter*³, which enable them to show the performances as they occur.

This article examines and compares the two performances that constitute our *corpus*, considering: theme-reason-purpose, materiality, location, image-text articulation and circulation. Our working hypothesis is that right-wing youths (specifically those belonging to JR) adopt performative elements as a means to appear in public. Although we cannot affirm with certainty that performances are JR’s preferred type of action, we can infer

that the group intends to explore forms of protest different from traditional demonstrations or spontaneous citizen protests, to mobilize within a context that – due to its very nature – forbids them. Moreover, the fact that on two occasions they chose performances as communication tools allows us to maintain that JR finds intentionality and specificity in this type of public event. This unique aspect encouraged the group to improve the esthetic quality between the performances; in fact, the actions became more sophisticated. We understand that their first performance using black bags was the group's controversial introduction to society, while the second performance sought to influence issues on the public agenda (particularly, poverty). Finally, we understand that these actions not only occur on the streets, but also on social media (Fuentes, 2020). We identified the management of events in both realms, at times simultaneously.

The methodology to be used in this study is qualitative in nature and based on virtual ethnography, which is why we can analyze social practices online (Méndez; Aguilar, 2015). This methodology included tracing information on JR's social networks (*Facebook*, *Instagram* and *Twitter*), as well as videos on their *YouTube* channel. Posts and stories were collected from such networks and *YouTube* channel between February and May 2021, and later communication moves were monitored as well. The time frame, then, ranges from the month when the first performance occurred (February, 2021) to the month when the second one was delivered (May, 2021). An analysis of each action was also made in order to describe the performances in detail. And, finally, other types of sources were resorted to, such as newspapers, webpages and interviews with JR leaders, among others.

Pandemic, youth and right wings

The context created by the pandemic and the public policies implemented in response to it by Argentina's national government – including the mandatory, preventive, social lockdown (ASPO by its acronym in Spanish) – were correlated with a series of demonstrations organized by the opposition⁴. An idea of right-wing disobedience thus hovered (Sánchez, 2021, p. 4), combining “a subjectivity which feels threatened by the State⁵” and the bodies on the street “from a rebellious, epic and complaining perspective”. As we will see later on, we can make a distinction between the strate-

gies that pick up on the idea of disobedience and those taking on a more conservative position. In both cases, actions are also intertwined with hate discourses. In this respect, it is necessary to point out that not all hate discourses are the same. Nor are they all necessarily antidemocratic. Giorgi and Kiffer (2020) maintain that hate is common to everyone and not just to “the other”, and that it is a mistake of our times to imagine a hate-free democratic subject. In the context of demonstrations, we find young people who roll into action and oppose both the lockdown and the socio-sanitary policies, which they see as going against their freedom; young people who denounce corruption and who utter reactionary speeches, criticizing political correctness.

For this work, we have chosen two JR’s demonstrations: one from February and another one from May 2021. On both occasions, we see young people who identify themselves as rightists and who gather in political education spaces that are hypermediated and that are available to other users. In their discourse and during a social media campaign, JR explicitly put forward that one can be both young and rightist, thus disputing certain preconceived ideas assigned to the youth. We believe this is one of the reasons why they make themselves well-known on the streets. A sense of pride emerges within JR as they introduce themselves as leaders and not as politicians. Thus, they try to push forward the idea that young people’s “apolitical” rebelliousness is now rightist. In this respect, we find it useful to adopt Stefanoni’s (2021, p. 23) concept of disputing indignation and rebelliousness associated to the right wings⁶. This author proposes that right-wing ideas should be taken seriously – despite being seemingly “despicable or ridiculous” – and analyzes this sector’s political incorrectness, irony, and provocation.

Although JR take public distance from any figures who may be considered leaders of parties opposing Peronism, upon analyzing their activities, it has been proved that they are indeed connected to Patricia Bullrich⁷, Eduardo Amadeo⁸ and Waldo Ezequiel Wolff⁹, among others. In order to establish this symbolic distance from the traditional political system, for instance, they ask for donations or financial contributions through a crowdfunding platform called *Cafecito*, very much in the same way as influencers and NGOs do on social media.

As regards their discourse, JR's focus is on current affairs: deaths by COVID-19, poverty, corruption, all topics which up until then were not categorically present in public discussions in such terms. Some of the other criticisms present in their networks include, to name just a few, Argentina's COVID-19 vaccination process and logistics, the National Program for Overall Sexual Education (ESI by its acronym in Spanish), which was understood as deriving from gender ideology, and the newly-created Ministry for Women, Gender and Diversity¹⁰. According to Stefanoni (2021, p. 65), transgression appears in right-wing discourse as a means of saying "things just the way they are" – a position opposing political correctness, which in turn is understood as "a corset on what people may think, say and do" (p. 66). There are groups then that engage in the game of "pushing the limits of what 'may be said' and providing solutions that are often demagogic but attractive because of how simple they are" (Stefanoni, 2022, p. 17). Thus, racism, sexism, homophobia and intolerance may become part of people's common sense, under the veil of a call for freedom of expression.

Esthetic-political performances

How have we come to understand JR's actions as performative? How can we separate these actions from other actions that are also carried out by civil society organizations or by people who do not identify themselves as artists? How do these groups appropriate performative repertoires as demonstration genres in order to challenge public opinion and subtly call into question its counterhegemonic "nature"?

In order to advance in our search for answers, first it is necessary to devise a definition for the term "performance" from a decisively transdisciplinary point of view, combining contributions from various fields, such as the arts, communication political theory, and the study of emotions. This will help us define a liminal action field which may be more in line with what actually occurs in practice, at least in Latin America. To this end, we will build on the concept presented by Fuentes (2020), who resumes and updates the work carried out by other performance study authors, such as Taylor (2012), focusing particularly on the changes effected by the so-called "access revolution" in the processes of sense production, by integrating into ordinary life Internet-based media in hypermediated societies (Carlón, 2020).

According to Fuentes (2020, p. 13), performances have become part of people's common sense, and bear both positive and negative connotations guiding assessment systems in which the artistic dimension seems to make the difference. This author suggests that the phrase was defined during the media coverage used to rate the political leaders' capacities to set up "visual montages" or to handle rhetoric efficacy in public appearances in which "art" would prove useful in order to represent the expertise with which sense is created in a context of post-truth and/or the spectacularization of social conflicts. Accordingly, Taylor (2012) had previously pointed out that political advisors saw performances more as a style than as a fulfilled action or achievement. Therefore, the repetition and training of the candidates' gestures, tones and speech habits were not considered contradictory in such context, since "they are not assessed in terms of being/seeming", but rather in terms of whether they can create an effective emotional ambiance (Taylor, 2012, p. 90). From this negative perspective, Fuentes (2020, p. 13) also mentions the so-called "performative activism" by means of which activists "driven by the desire to factor in media dialogs" make "empty" solidarity gestures towards various causes. This author retraces the concept and analyzes the different means of online participation entailed in all social transformations.

Conversely, there are also positive considerations to be made. One such consideration is that performances are seen as a demonstration genre providing an esthetic-political communication system that is supported by the situational "here and now", thus turning enthusiastic audiences into "co-performers". As a result, Fuentes claims that the difference between the political leaders' performances and counter-hegemonic performances probably lies on whoever takes the floor, the space and the media. In this respect, she also notes that it is impossible to make a linear assessment of the stylized actions based on the media used for the performance. She introduces the concept of "performative constellations" to examine the connection between appearances on digital media and joint on-site performances, taking advantage of what each has to offer, even "against the grain of their own terms" (Fuentes, 2020, p. 16), and turning dissenting moments into power relation instabilities. Then, "performance constellations are multi-platform patterns for collective actions that articulate asynchrony and multi-localized

performances” (Fuentes, 2020, p. 21). Thus, digital media enable activists and demonstrators to spread expressive, corporeal actions beyond the physical space and, in some cases, to coordinate the production of local meaning with global struggles.

Alongside the demonstration repertoire, performances constitute a body-to-body communication system between actors and audience members, which entails integrating fragmented and disperse participation modes through a live stylized action¹¹ that can disseminate emotions. The main aspect of a performance is the tactical work carried out regarding spatiality, temporality, corporality and participation. This implies knowing and expanding the expectations for social involvement and political efficacy, especially in circumstances in which change becomes “hard to visualize”. Fuentes (2020, p. 17) acknowledges that “social protests may be lodged with both progressive and reactionary goals in mind” and that both cases are, for their participants, an opportunity to develop political capabilities beyond delegated and representative political mechanisms. Seen as a form of expressive behavior, performances then become a type of practice that help realize what is latent, thereby contributing to crystallize disobedience alternatives as much as to denaturalize pre-established social behavior.

Finally, Fuentes notes that artistic performances are characterized by the idea of “powering something” and defines them as an ephemeral interdisciplinary practice mainly focused on actions and processes, and based on the body more than on what is material or on static objectuality¹². Relatedly, this author analyzes the various ways in which the concept of performance has been understood and offers a definition provided by Perán (2011), which sees performances as the “art of the event”. Leaving aside the discussion on the dematerialization processes that are specific to the visual arts, this definition highlights how actions enable ephemeral means of appropriating the public space in an attempt to create a critical meeting point between performers and audience members. At this point, performance is understood as a tactical, stylized action that defines, creates and organizes communities through an event that changes behavior protocols; it is a meeting that is spread through the digital web and that flows in an expanded and multi-situated manner, becoming a transmedia event that feeds the synergic relationship between environments on and off the Internet.

Disrupting the appearance sphere

In this section, we will analyze the two performances that constitute our corpus.

1 – The black bags on the doorstep of the Casa Rosada

During the week when a set of irregular actions and/or exceptions were discovered and informed regarding the scheduled application of vaccines established by the “Strategic Vaccination Plan against COVID-19 in the Republic of Argentina”,¹³ a call began to be made on social media for a demonstration on the following Saturday at Plaza de Mayo, the oldest square in city of Buenos Aires and a symbolic space for the most significant political, popular and/or citizenship events in the history of the country. This call was also publicized – almost at the same time – through national media, such as the daily newspaper *Clarín*¹⁴. In the process of prioritizing information, this newspaper highlighted the call for justice on account of the #VacunatorioVIP [#VIPVaccinationFacility] and for the “anguish suffered by the elderly”, over and above other demands (“on-site classes”, “republic”, “economy”, “corruption” - Image 1) associated by users to the demonstration with banners and flags (*banderazo*)¹⁵.



Image 1 – Image retweeted by national Congressman Waldo Ezequiel Wolf from the flyers created by users.
Source: @WolffWaldo.

As people began to gather for the *banderazo* that was held on February 27, 2021, some participants lay ten black bags, which resembled large garbage bags and were the size of a human being, on the grey sidewalk two meters away from the outer side of the wrought-iron railing surrounding the Casa Rosada¹⁶. In the photograph published by the newspaper *Página 12* (Image 2), which is reproduced below, as it is one of the few public records of the onset of the performance, we can see a young man dressed fully in white, including his facemask, holding one of the ends of JR's purple flag, which takes up almost four segments of the railing.



Image 2 – Photograph published by *Página 12*. Source: Kala Moreno Parra.

Once they succeeded in tying up the flag to the iron bars, the bags were moved closer to the flowerbed separating the sidewalk of the square from the railing around the seat of government. The flag was positioned centrally, thus crossing the main section of the building, and it remained by the side of the bags, which were placed exactly in the middle of the square's main corridor. Each bag was tied on one of its ends with brown duct tape and filled with papers in such a way that they gave the impression of an "inert body". The fact that the signs had been so neatly designed and made contrasted with the uneven distribution of the material used to fill up the bags and of the bundles themselves, caused by their movements and/or by the successive attempts to arrange them. The "bodies" bore identification tags either on the head or the sternum. These identification signs, printed on A4 sheets of paper, began with a first line written in light blue that consistently read as follows: "I was waiting for the vaccine, but it was applied

to”; and, in the middle of the page, centered and in block letters, certain specific people were mentioned, such as “Estela de Carlotto”¹⁷, “Martín Guzmán”¹⁸, and “Daniel Scioli”¹⁹, alongside other more generic ones, such as: “the Cámpora guys”²⁰, “Duhalde’s family”²¹, “Alberto (Fernández)’s friends”, “Zannini’s wife”²², “Moyano’s son”²³, “Massa’s parents-in-law”²⁴, and “Ginés’s nephew”²⁵. On the footer were the pictures of an eagle, the logo of the group Unión Republicana (UR), and of JR’s horse.

According to the program proposed for the performance, which was explained on several communication media, the bags represented the people who had died “or were going to die” of the virus. It was pointed out that “there is an Argentine person in the bag, because someone else got ahead”²⁶. Regardless of whether the provided information²⁷ was true, the way in which it was displayed attracted criticism, as it was interpreted as a threat to the people mentioned on the ID tags. Both from the passers-by and social media users’ perspectives, understanding the criticism or denunciation that JR members wanted to make and that they upheld during interviews entailed reading the “fine print” of the message. This level of interpretation requires a close relationship with the image (the dead bodies referred to), which does not necessarily replace prior readings made between the text written in capital letters (names) and the representation of the body. This is why the prevalent interpretation was that the bags “contained” the bodies of the people mentioned on the signs or that they “deserved” to die on account of their actions.

In this sense, the controversial dimension of such action goes beyond what was actually pointed out in later interviews as the conflict thematized at the time, thus causing further controversy around the appearance of the group, JR. That is to say, even though the action enables a conversation about the vaccination plan and the consequences of the pandemic, it also triggers a series of operations that establish a causal relation between different phenomena, presenting them as self-explanatory without the support of evidentiary proof, by just leaving them there to be “shown” to the public at large. Among the various conversations that are elicited through this performative action, the following “production confusions” are created:

– connecting the consequences of the pandemic (COVID-19-related deaths) to the measures taken by the national government to deal with the situation;

– “obscuring” communication as there were no images of the diseased, since no photographs showing their bodies were displayed on the streets (as opposed to what happened in Perú²⁸ or in Brazil, after the massive burials); thus, this ignored the fact Argentina’s public health system was expanded and that this may very well be related to the fact that such scenes were actually not recorded or “did not exist” in our country; and

– relativizing the role of activism in information production and dissemination – in this case, regarding the discretionary use of public resources –, by making categorical claims such as “the Cámpora guys” or “Alberto’s friends”, which neither are verifiable nor show any level of responsibility, etc.

Aside from the debate that took place afterwards, which we will analyze below, the performance as an event being part of the *banderazo* led more to “attraction” than caused “rejection”. The event was simultaneously photographed, filmed and circulated, which created an uncoordinated and home-made record that multiplied “the views” of the scenic proposal. The image continued to be reproduced as the days went by, regardless of the position adopted (pro or against it). In terms of the images displayed by most pictures, there is no direct correlation between the bodies of the young people who produced the performance and the bodies of those who recorded it by posing for or taking a selfie. On the contrary, the presence of the audience is mediated by a shadow. An anagram effect is caused in the photographic records (Image 3) between the people who stand at “the feet” of the bags and “the bodies” scattered on the sidewalk; and missing limbs, such as arms, or whole bodies are “projected”. Some pictures (Image 4) show some attempt at “signing” the act by sticking pin buttons of the groups below the signs. These, however, seem to have been taken away after the photographs were taken.



Image 3 – Direct shot of the *banderazo*. Source: Internet, by a participant.



Image 4 – Photograph of the act showing the groups' pin buttons. Source: Internet, by a participant.

Before the event was over, the bags were hung from the railing that separates the seat of government and the square (Image 5). As the bags are grouped together and somewhat beat-up, “the bodies” become exposed “for everyone to see” and, specially, for the police officers guarding the place to see. The last pictures are taken using flash and at night, which leads us to believe that the bags were not removed before the end of the demonstration.

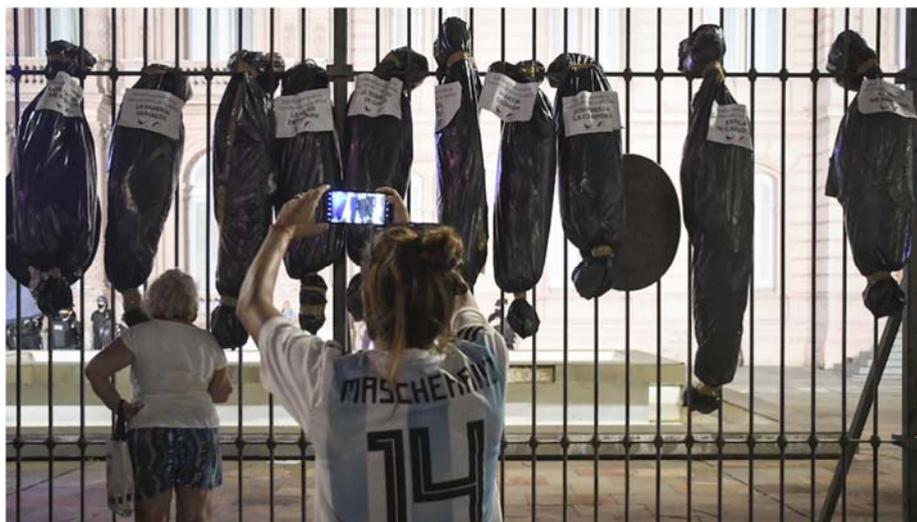


Image 5 – Photograph published on various Internet websites. Source: Internet.

As it can be checked in JR's official accounts, the first photo on *Twitter* was published at 05:07 pm. It shows the group's purple flag with a text that reads: "ACÁ ESTAMOS. Cada día somos más jóvenes dispuestos a luchar por el país que queremos! #27FYoVoy" ["HERE WE ARE. Every day there are more and more young people like us willing to fight for the country we want! #27Iattend"], thus reinforcing the call made for attendance at that time. Three minutes later, interpellations to the addressees who may be in their favor are interrupted to strike a direct conversation with the addressees who may be against them, by means of a "wink" that included all ordinary people not involved or interested in politics. This is how they began the performance, by "taking over" their own social networks and posting a series of tweets in which they tagged the President: "Hola @alferdez, los Jóvenes Republicanos te traemos un pequeño recordatorio de todas las vidas que se perdieron por culpa de tu inutilidad. #27FYoVoy" ["Hi, @alferdez. JR members bring to you a small reminder of the lives that were lost because of your uselessness"]. The series of tweets was accompanied by a video which showed the bags in the foreground and finished with an image of the group's flag. The writing on the signs was barely legible because of the speed with which the camera moved. Apart from the hands of the person making the record, no JR members or leaders could be seen near the bags.

Even though the general call had circulated throughout the week, in no way had the performance been anticipated. Three days before the event, a flyer was published on their *Instagram* account showing an image of Plaza

de Mayo almost fully-crowded and a simple text: “Este sábado 27 de Febrero salimos todos a la calle. BASTA DE ATROPELLOS” [On February 27 we will all take to the streets. NO MORE MISTREATMENTS]. No specific demands or instructions were mentioned, as there had been in previous showings. At the time, the truth and scope of the government’s actions was already being discussed in the media, in connection with journalist Horacio Verbitsky’s statement, who had informed on his radio program that he had received the first dose of the vaccine at the national Ministry of Health despite not being included in the established age group, adding that he was a “friend” of the highest-ranking official in that area, Ginés González García.

On the following days, media coverage focused on this event, which was described as a “scandal”, and strove to find the names of the people involved²⁹ and to establish a controversial discussion between panel members as to the *modus operandi* used in the “VIP Vaccination Facility”. In the meantime, the national government announced said Minister’s resignation on February 19 and, on February 20, appointed in his place Carla Vizzotti, who two days later published a list of all the people vaccinated at Hospital Posadas upon request of the Ministry of Health. On that occasion, it was highlighted that “the majority of the people included in the list submitted by Hospital Posadas were strategic personnel [...]. That is to say, they are of the utmost importance for the correct operation of the State”. The document, however, also included other individuals.

In spite of the actions taken, the demonstration called for February 27 was ratified a day before in all JR’s profiles though a banner that referred specifically to the “scandal” and presented the phrase “NO al vacunatorio VIP” [“Say NO to the VIP vaccination facility”] (Image 6), in pink and white letters, on top of a photograph of Ginés González García and President Alberto Fernández hugging and with their faces covered by the letters “N” and “O”. In the space between the letters, we can see a third party wearing a cap. We would like to mention this post, which received 4,403 “likes”, as we consider it relevant to our analysis, because it correlates the signifier “ATROPELLOS” [“MISTREATMENT”] with a specific event that was publicly known. This association enables us to “see” or exemplify other prior demands as relating to the damages caused to society at large:

“corruption”, Alberto Fernández’s “inability to fulfill his duties”, and the Justice system’s “lack of autonomy” to carry out an in-depth investigation.



Image 6 – Screenshot. Source: *Instagram @jovrepublicanos*, February 26, 2021.

In this respect, JR leader Ulises Chamorro stated in various interviews that the action was thought “on-the-go” and that it was “a success” precisely because of the repercussions and the attention received in relation to the “the famous body bags” both from their followers and otherwise. For instance, during a conversation with journalist Ari Paluch, the 22-year-old leader answered:

It was a success. Not only because he [Alberto Fernández] replied to us, because I believe that he has no power at all, but also so that people may understand how dangerous this is. We have a Minister of Health who knows the President and the former Vice-Minister today holding the position of Minister. They set up “an alternative vaccination facility” and took vaccines away from the people who really needed them so as to hand them out to their friends. It is important for the rest of the world to know about it (radio interview with *El Exprimidor*, *Concepto FM 95.5*, March 1, 2020).

Along the same line, JR leaders in their speeches described the President as “unable” to lead the ministers, as well as to respond to criticism and to “interpret” the performance, since – in their opinion – Fernández had not even understood “the text attached to the bags” or had not the goodwill to learn more about the topic: “if you zoomed in a little on the photos, you could easily understand”. Moreover, apart from the members of the audience, Chamorro established as recipients of the action all people who may gain access, whether this be in a mediated or hypermediated way on social media, aiming specifically at the repercussions this may have abroad. As a “resource”, in this young man’s words, the performance had been successful, not because of its communicative effectiveness, but rather because it

had enabled them “to gain access” to the public agenda through a scandal and “to come across” other more experienced political leaders.

In turn, designer Maia Ocampo took over the discussion which dealt specifically with how the action had been composed as a resource to “put reality on display” and “to awaken” society. In connection with their lines of action, Ocampo pointed out that the aim of this type of experiment was to give a symbolic dimension to the discussion:

LAA: Tell us what message you wanted to convey. What was the purpose of those bags?

MO: We, as a group, always want to fight this cultural fight that we need to start in society precisely regarding the latest hot topic, which is VIP vaccination. We wanted to do something symbolic, in a simple way, to represent the demonstration (Radio interview, *REALPOLITIK.FM*, March 3, 2020).

Lastly, in both cases, when questioned about the controversy around how the action could be understood, the group’s leaders answered that they “vindicated”, “are convinced of”, and “feel pride for” the action, as it interfered with their adversaries’ “victimization” processes:

LAA: How do you see everything that happened later? Is it possible for the message to have been diversified, so to speak? Retrospectively, do you think it was the right decision to put on the exhibition or do you feel you could have handled it differently?

MO: On the contrary, we regret nothing. It is people who burned Macri’s puppets, who are always insulting, who incite hatred, that actually victimize themselves. It was obvious, then, that they were going to misrepresent it. [...] Actually, saying that we put up body bags that represent the body bags of government officials’ is not true, it’s not real. We were not saying that the officials were in the bags; rather, we were saying that there is an Argentine person in that bag, because another person cut in (Radio interview, *REALPOLITIK.FM*, March 3, 2020).

At this point, we find it appropriate to touch upon the notion of “transgression” proposed by Stefanoni (2021), which is associated to certain forms of young rebellion – underlying in JR’s discourse – in the face of the complaints voiced by journalists, political leaders and other public figures as they saw the demonstration as “excessive”. Instead of apologizing or making a retraction on account of the consequences of the performance, these young activists vindicated their political “incorrectness” as “a way of saying things as they actually are, on behalf of the ordinary citizen, while the – cultured – Left would merely represent the establishment and the *status quo*”

(Stefanoni, 2021, p. 65). This is why JR members define the action as “a success”, since – apart from putting the bodies on show – it exposed a reaction of the “progressive elite” that attempted to force its views on others and “to go after”³⁰ other ways of understanding the world.

Finally, it is worth noting that this resource – the use of bags to make reference to the violence, suffering or precarious nature endured by the bodies – has been used on several occasions, both in demonstrations and in interventions in the public space, during various socio-political moments. For example, in the late 1980s, the group *Escombros* made use of this element to denounce corruption, drawing an analogy between the bag and the consequences of accumulating garbage in the work entitled “Mountain” (Image 7). This group also showed up with 500 large black garbage bags during the exhibition “Art on the Street” presented at the Buenos Aires’ Modern Art Museum (MAMBA by its acronym in Spanish), in the work entitled “Sea” (1993) (Image 8). And, finally, the photograph entitled “Sack Race” (Image 9) represents five moving bodies covered with black nylon bags in an unknown landscape. The image was one of the thirteen black and white photographs that constituted the work named “Banner I”, exhibited in November, 1988 under the highway in the intersection of the streets Paseo Colón and Cochabamba in one of Buenos Aires’ neighborhoods, San Telmo. The photographed bodies evoke expressive violence, that is,

[...] through their movement or by laying still, the limits of the struggle or resignation. The covered faces, some covered with bags, the wreck. If there is a figure, as in the iconic silhouettes made for the demonstrations for the disappeared, which bring back the memory of the tortures, it is that of the imprisoned body, crouched, blinded (de Rueda, 2005, p. 8 and 9).



Image 7 – Mountain – *Escombros* group. Source: Internet.



Image 8 – Sea – Escombros group (1993). Source: Internet.



Image 9 – Photograph entitled *Sack Race*, from the work *Banners I* (1988), by Escombros group.
Source: Walden art gallery.

Moreover, in recent exhibitions by street feminists, bags have been frequently used as a resource in the activists' performances and they have been present since the movement first interrupted the scene on June 3, 2015. Writer and journalist María Moreno already suggested a “political reading of the bag” in the text written for the *Not a single woman less* movement reading marathon which was held on March 26, 2015. At that time, Moreno explained that:

Activism using bags does not imply inviting a melancholic or sacrificial identification of the victims; occupying the place where the body was hidden and breaking it up so as to read and talk constitutes the evocation of what death has to say even in silence, because ‘the body talks’, drops hints as to its identity, leads you to the

killers, as shown by the political tradition of the Argentine Team of Forensic Anthropology (María Moreno..., January 14, 2020).

We can also mention other performances, such as the one by the physical theater group *Expresión Mole* (2018) entitled “Enough” (Image 10), presented in the intersection between Diagonal Norte and Florida (city of Buenos Aires) during a demonstration against patriarchal justice after the ruling on young Lucía Pérez’s case was released³¹. Or, more recently still, we can bring up the call to meet in front of Buenos Aires’ Court House to demand justice for Úrsula Bahillo’s femicide and for more effective public policies against gender-based violence. In this case, though, the resource is employed again but using transparent bags (Image 11) which display the activists’ practically naked bodies to express indignation. These are just two of the many other interventions designed by feminist groups during their demonstrations and strikes. However, within the movement itself, the use of bags remains a controversial issue. In response to Moreno’s text, for instance, Marta Dillon and Virginia Cano rejected the possibility of occupying “the patriarchal body garbage bag” and, instead, proposed to represent such feminist “bodies that feel pleasure and fuck and suffer and that are celebrated and fight, such sovereign bodies”³².



Image 10 – Action by *Expresión Mole*.
Source: photo by Tomás F. Cuesta.



Image 11 – Action in the demonstration related to Úrsula Bahillo’s femicide.
Source: photo by Franco Fafasuli.

2 – Polenta packages at the Obelisk

On May 25, 2021 – date on which Argentina commemorates the anniversary of the 1810 May Revolution – a protest was held against the government that convened crowds at the Obelisk, Plaza de Mayo and the President’s residence, Quinta de Olivos, prompted by the phrase “going out on the streets”. The demonstration was organized through hashtags, such as #25M, #25MTodosALasCalles [#25MEveryonetothestreets] and #25MRevolucionPorLaLIBERTAD [#25MRevolutionforFREEDOM] (May 25, 2021). It was under these circumstances that JR presented a performance at the Obelisk³³ that consisted in creating giant packages of polenta (about 1.5 meters high), a cheap type of food based on boiled cornmeal that is associated with lower-income consumers in various Latin American countries. As opposed to what happened with the black bags that, as seen above, directly referred to COVID-19-related deaths and the allegedly discretionary allocation of vaccines in our country, this second intervention was designed and implemented in a more sophisticated manner: it managed to connect an understanding of reality to a high-impact image that recalled both contemporary times and the past, as it referred to the Presidential campaign’s promise to regain a sense of well-being through another type of food, the *asado* [barbecue]. JR’s performance offered an iconic representation of what was inadmissible: poor eating habits and the impos-

sibility to choose. This “shows itself” (in the sense that it becomes visible) through an action that brought back a key aspect of the public political agenda: poverty, a topic that did not seem to be under discussion in the context of the pandemic and before the country’s mid-term elections (2021 legislative elections). It should also be pointed out that, during the last few years, the topic of poverty became central for various political and/or partisan groups. It has become a cross-cutting demand from all politicians and ideological positions. One such example is the 2015 presidential campaign: one of the central mottos of then candidate Mauricio Macri was “Zero Poverty”³⁴.

Resuming our analysis, JR’s giant polenta packages emulated Argentina’s classic brand *Presto Pronta* (Image 12), which, JR called *Presto Pobre. Polenta para todos* [Presto poor. Polenta for everyone] (Image 13).



Image 12 – Package of *Presto Pronta* polenta. Source: Internet.

Not only did the title refer to the topic that the performance wanted to expose, but with the phrase “for everyone” it also made a sarcastic reference to various inclusive public policies as well as slogans used both in elections and by the current president in office, Alberto Fernández. In fact, the political coalition that led Fernández to the President’s office in 2019 is called *Frente de Todos* [A front for everyone], which expressed the idea of including a wide array of social and political actors on the basis of a large sense of agreement. One of the government’s programs that can be mentioned in this respect is, for example, *Fútbol para todos*³⁵ [Football for every-

one], through which football games are broadcast without subscription and for free on free-to-air television channels. Thus, the phase *Presto Pobre. Polenta para todos* sought to denote the rise in poverty rates, given that polenta worked “precisely [as] a symbol of poverty, of the fact that people were not eating what they should” (Interview with Maia Ocampo, May 26, 2021). Not only did the construction of the visual action refer to the idea of being poor and to poverty, but the group also disseminated photographs through their social media accounts, such as *Instagram*, with captions that contributed to supporting such meanings. One of the photos was accompanied by a series of social indicators with which they sought to show the social deterioration that had occurred during the pandemic. According to the opposition, the government failed to acknowledge these rates (Image 13):

- 54% of poverty at national level
 - 63% of child poverty at national level
 - 72% of child poverty in the Buenos Aires Metropolitan Area. Kirchnerism equals hunger and poverty
- (Instagram, May 25, 2021)



Image 13 – Screenshot.

Source: *Instagram* @jovrepublicanos, May 25, 2021.

The same poverty figures were replicated on *Twitter* with the following addition: “It is YOU who LOVE poverty and HATE the poor” (*Twitter*, May 26, 2021). In this case, the sender of the message, Ulises Chaparro, a JR leader, marked a difference between us and them, from which he developed the idea that, despite the fact that the President had promised income and employment improvements during the presidential campaign, indexes were not only not improving, but in fact they had worsened.

Another photo shared in connection with the polenta action (Image 14) bore a caption that read “Hello, @alferdezok, we’ve brought you the *asado* you promised us during the campaign” (*Instagram*, May 25, 2021), the message being directly targeted at the President.

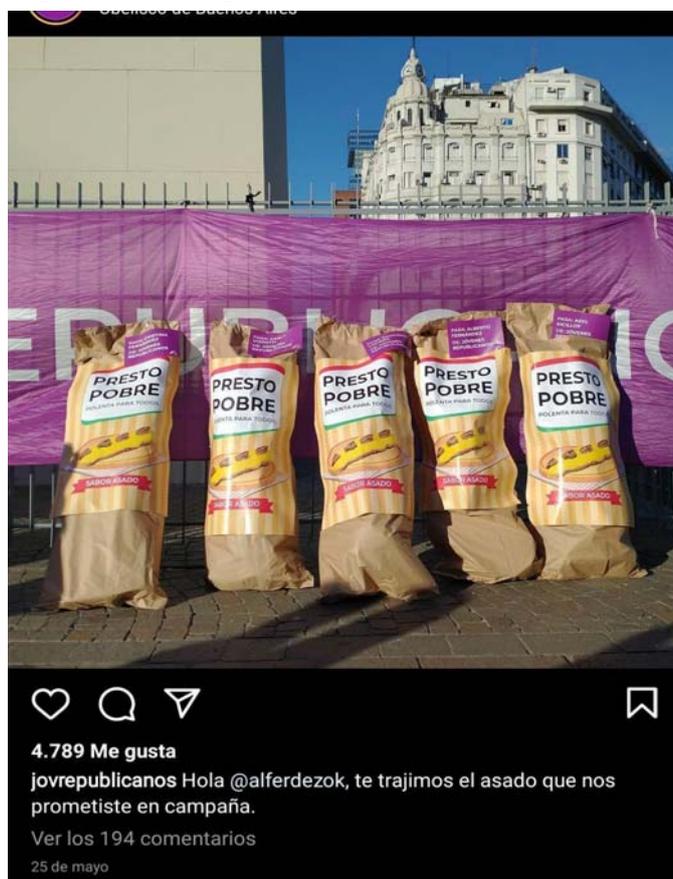


Image 14 – Screenshot. Source: *Instagram* @jovrepublicanos, May 25, 2021.

Furthermore, a similar reference was made on *Twitter* (May 25, 2021), but directed at the governor of the province of Buenos Aires, Axel Kicillof: “Dear @Kicillofok: We have brought the bags of polenta that represent the poverty and hunger brought on by your administration in our province. You promised *asado*, but people only have polenta” (Image 15).



Image 15 – Screenshot. Source: *Twitter* @JRepPBA, May 25, 2021.

Allow us to point out that this particular brand of polenta offered, apart from its classic version, two other flavors: bacon and cheese, and cream spinach. The group added its own version: “*asado*”. In this respect, Maia Ocampo (MO), one of JR’s leaders, told journalist María O’Donnell (MOD) the following:

MO: Below, it reads ‘*Asado*’. Why? Because the government, during the campaign, promised us that we would be able to afford *asado* again, they promised us that they would help us stand, and in truth poverty rates are rising every day. This is a complaint made to the politicians [...] (Radio interview, *Urbana Play 104.3 FM*, May 26, 2021).

References to the topic *asado* also appeared on *Twitter* (Image 16), such as the ones posted by Ulises Chaparro:

Retweeted by Ulises Chaparro (@ulichaparro12): Your government, Pablo³⁶, came to power promising that people would be able to afford *asado*, promising that retirement funds and salaries would be raised, promising that – if they won – the bbq grill would be used again. Well, now that everything is so expensive people can’t even afford minced meat (*Twitter*, May 26, 2021).



Image 16 – Screenshot. Source: *Twitter* @ulichaparro12, May 26, 2021.

The “*asado flavor*”, then, was represented on the giant packages with the image of a plate of polenta on which the typical Argentinean meat cut “sirloin steak with bone” was depicted. Under the picture, written in white font on red background, appeared the flavor. What was pointed out by Ocampo during the radio interview referred to an electoral campaign *spot* from July 2019, before the primaries in Argentina. On the video, which is less than a minute long, we can see a man in anguish, standing by the side of an unused grill, yearning to cook *asados* for his friends, which he can no longer do because of the economic crisis and the cost of meat. The video ends with the promise of improved circumstances: “The good thing is that, in just a little while, everything will be better”³⁷. JR’s criticism, then, claimed that inflation, the ongoing increase in prices and the poverty indexes – far from stimulating meat consumption, as promised during the cam-

paign – forced people to buy cheap food, such as polenta. Finally, the replica of the polenta packages included a purple tag with white letters on the top right-hand side corner, about which Ocampo clarifies the following:

MO: Precisely because the tags read: “for Alberto Fernández, for Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, for Santiago Cafiero”. They were for public officials, as a form of complaint for the rise of poverty.

MOD: The packages of polenta were intended for public officials?

MO: Yes, that’s why they bore the tags at the top. The tags that were hanging from them (Radio interview, *Urbana Play 104.3 FM*, May 26, 2021).

That is, the names and surnames of the intended recipients of the action appeared on the adhesive tags: several government officials, such as the President, the Vice-president and the Chief of Staff. It should be pointed out that these tags were only legible through a close-up. This information was otherwise missed, especially in the way the images were disseminated. At this point, it is worth highlighting that, as with the action performed with the bags, the public officials considered responsible were also tagged, both on the items of the performance on the street and on social media. Moreover, the choice to print the tags on adhesive paper showed that this was neither improvised nor home-made. In fact, these tags were quite costly. It would have been cheaper to use A4 paper, for example.

As we can see, each visual and textual fragment of the polenta packages found its due justification. This action was not improvised in the least. On the contrary, all details of the actions were carefully designed, from the choice of venue (which, on this occasion, did not point to the national level of government, but rather was held in the city of Buenos Aires) and the materials used to the phrases that were printed and appeared alongside the photos. Another aspect that raised attention was that, as opposed to what happened with the body bags analyzed above, one could see the bodies of the citizens participating in the demonstration (Image 13). In this respect, we stop to ponder about the bodies which were allowed to be seen and how they appeared. We believe that these were citizenship-style bodies, that is, bodies that bore no partisan ID, which did not display any exultant or in-your-face attitude, who could have easily been just passers-by, who did not appear to be violent. Furthermore, eight of them were wearing face masks,

which at the time was a mandatory precaution established by the COVID-19 protocol.

As was the case with the body bags, we also looked into other previous instances in which the same resource (polenta packages) had been used in various works and/or performances. This was a dead end, at least until the date of publication of this article. However, we find it pertinent to mention that a demonstration called “*Polentazo*” was held on March 18, 2021, organized by the groups *Movimiento Sin Trabajo* (MST-Teresa Vive) and *Frente de Izquierda y de los Trabajadores* (FIT) on the corner of the Ministry of Social Development (Belgrano Ave. and 9 de Julio Ave., City of Buenos Aires). As reported by the media and various news outlets, these leftist organizations and social movements demanded “food assistance for welfare kitchens” and “the creation of decent jobs” during the demonstration. However, they specifically criticized the fact that the government had sent polenta to the welfare centers. In this respect, one of the demonstrators states the following on a video³⁸ posted on *Twitter*:

At the Ministry of Development, carrying out the *polentazo*, because this Government, apart from not sending us the food the way they should, as they have only done it once this year, have sent a ton of polenta. We are asking officials if one can live on polenta (*Twitter*, May 18, 2021).

On the video, behind the interviewee, an installation can be seen that was made with *Brüning* instant polenta packages, which were still in the large clear bags used for sales in bulk (Image 17). Behind this, three people are holding a flag recreating the musical sting “you don’t win friends with salad” from one of the most famous episodes of *The Simpsons*, to which the image of the President at the end of the conga line made by the animated characters (Image 18) had been added using a montage, and on which the following phrases can be read: “*No vivimos de polenta*” [“We can’t live on polenta”] y “*Basta de polenta*” [“Enough of polenta”]. We do not assume that there is a direct connection between these actions, which were carried out by groups positioned on opposite ends of the political spectrum; however, the recurrent use of the resource (“polenta packages”) on the streets just a few months apart is indeed quite striking.



Image 17 – Close-up of *Brüning* polenta packages.
Source: Sent by the national government to welfare centers.



Image 18 – Flag used by demonstrators. Source: Screenshot from a video circulating on social media.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that both the polenta and the body bag actions have stirred continued public controversy. Interestingly, it is precisely this reaction that seems to have been sought by the young group: disrupting the public space. However, that is not all. Both proposals have produced attractive actions, both from a visual and from a symbolic perspective, to then be replicated by JR leaders and members as well as by their followers. In this sense, we claim that the impact that both the bags and the polenta packages had is a constitutive part of the actions, thus leading to

their success in terms of their reception and replication in mass and social media.

Final considerations

In today's world, the advance and the presence of rightist thought is quite apparent in politics. Bold and capable of saying "anything", rightists "set out to capture social discontent in favor of various anti-progressive political options" (Stefanoni, 2021, p. 14), thereby disputing the capacity to feel indignant at the state of the world. Moreover, this is carried out in the midst of discourses tinted with intolerance, sexism, homophobia and racism. Added to all this, the COVID-19 pandemic led to several rightist protests and demonstrations against the mandatory lockdowns, social isolation and vaccines, to name just a few. These positions challenge young people in particular.

In this context, we have analyzed two performances produced by the group *Jóvenes Republicanos*. We believe that, while the first performance (with black bags) was this group's controversial introduction to society, the second performance (with polenta packages) advances to set the tone for their public agenda, specifically about topics such as poverty. That is, the first performance addressed the pandemic and, particularly, the vaccination process, whereas the second performance enabled the group to tackle another topic that seemed to have been ignored and that was not being discussed by the rest of the political opposition in the country, in correlation with the media. Therefore, we can see that JR's actions build specific arguments based on sensitive items in the public agenda and through visual elements, creating signifiers such as "mistreatments", used in the citizens' demands linked to the Right in Argentina. Thus, for instance, the VIP vaccination facility is used to "materialize" the ideas of corruption, inefficiency and lack of an independent judicial branch, while the polenta performance addresses the high rate of poverty. What is interesting to note at this point is that both actions leverage the discomfort felt by certain groups in society, which find no solution in the current administration.

Conversely, there are two relevant features shared by both performances: first, the actions being on "the street" and, second, their controversial nature. As regards the first of these features, it is interesting to note how

JR speeches highlight the idea of going out and taking the streets, as a way of showing a correlation of forces surpassing the “prohibition state”, as the health protection measures adopted discouraged, at the time, all types of mass, public events. However, as opposed to what happened with the other social movements above, JR actions are not the result of “being in need”, but rather of certain temerity and the exercise of personal freedom, which become exemplary and embody a way of understanding rebelliousness. The streets were closed to all demonstrations supporting the government as a result of the restrictions, as they would necessarily have been a contradiction in terms. The streets then became the territory of “essential workers”, as – given the nature of their line of work – they never stopped working, and of opposing demonstrators.

Regarding the level of controversy raised by these actions, it is interesting to consider the extent to which the massive nature and the impact of these performances may lie in their dissemination on mass and social media, and not so much on the number of bodies that collectively constituted the actions. In this regard, it is worth mentioning that there is a strong association between the Right and online activism. Nowadays, the use of *Instagram* and *Twitter*, in particular, has become indispensable.

Finally and consistently with Stefanoni (2022, p. 15-17), the issue posed by rightist demonstrations is that they “show a small fraction of reality covered by great mischaracterizations”, and it is this dose of reality that “connects with the ‘anger’ felt by certain portions of the population”. Therefore, by carrying out a serious analysis of the efficacy of such ideas – as morally distant as they may be from ours –, in this article we have attempted “to capture their novelty” so as to design political responses that, stemming from a different discourse, advance towards real horizons of equality and social justice.

Notes

- ¹ See: <https://www.jovenesrepublicanos.com.ar>. Last access: June 30, 2022.
- ² See: <https://www.instagram.com/jovrepublicanos/>. Last access: June 30, 2022. In it they define themselves with the following phrases: *Life, freedom and private property, Capitalism or povertism*.

- ³ See: <https://twitter.com/JoRepublicanos>. Last access: June 30, 2022.
- ⁴ It is important to mention that the oppositions' street demonstrations were a worldwide phenomenon; however, depending on each case, they had had different characteristics and demands. In Argentina, their heterogeneous nature clearly shows a lack of individual or political leadership. Another relevant piece of information is that demonstration dates usually coincide with public holidays, such as May 25, July 9, or August 17, among others. In these demonstrations, different actions were conducted: *banderazos* (demonstrations with banners and flags), *cacerolazos* (pot-banging protests), street cuts, etc.
- ⁵ All translations are ours.
- ⁶ The purpose of this article does not include researching the genealogy of the right wing in Argentina. For this, see Gómez (2020).
- ⁷ Argentine politician, leader of the political party *Propuesta Republicana* (PRO). Former Minister of Security, between 2015 and 2019, during Mauricio Macri's administration.
- ⁸ Argentine Congressman for the Province of Buenos Aires between 2015 and 2019, during Mauricio Macri's administration. Political militant in *Propuesta Republicana* (PRO).
- ⁹ Argentine Congressman for the Province of Buenos Aires since 2015 representing *Cambiamos*.
- ¹⁰ National Ministry created in 2019.
- ¹¹ It is worth mentioning that the historical difference between the live act and its mediation is altered from the author's perspective, who, as a result of the new media studies, understands what is "live" as an effect of the mediation processes and not as an *a priori* action.
- ¹² As an emergence period – a first period within the European avant-garde movements, such as futurism, dadaism and surrealism – is usually identified at the beginning of the 20th Century, later revised by such groups as Gutai and the Viennese actionists at the end of World War II. In Spanish-speaking countries, the translation of the term enabled various narratives regarding its origin, genealogy and asymmetric relations invisibilized in the euro-centric narrative. Although the various positions regarding such practice also differ in terms of what aspects are considered key, for example; the term "art action" highlights the ephemeral and temporary aspects of the artistic form (Fusco, 2000). Ho-

wever, when understood as a one of the many ways in which the relational can be thought, what becomes vital is the strategy of reappropriating the “reality” that each action adopts when creating appearance acts in “contextual art” (Ardenne, 2006). The performance can also be understood as the art of I (Alcázar, 2014) to the extent that we analyze particularly the way in which the reflexivity an expansion of the autobiographical space in contemporary societies is promoted, the body of the artist constituting the space of contention. Now then, if framed within Latin American conceptualist paths (Camnitzer, 2008), what is specifically taken into consideration is the way in which politics is actively amalgamated to artistic events.

- ¹³ The appertaining documentation may be accessed at:
<https://www.argentina.gob.ar/sites/default/files/coronavirus-vacuna-plan-estrategico-vacunacion-covid-19-diciembre-2020.pdf> or
<https://www.argentina.gob.ar/coronavirus/vacuna>. Last access: June 30, 2022
- ¹⁴ As an example, we would like to suggest the following news item:
https://www.clarin.com/politica/-27f-oposicion-llama-marchar-plaza-mayo-gobierno-vacunatorio-vip_0_-rgde4__K.html. Last access: June 30, 2022.
- ¹⁵ “*Banderazo*” refers to a specific type of collective action performed in public spaces, in which participants are required to attend bearing some sort of textile fabric which may represent the flag of a club, an organization, and/or the country.
- ¹⁶ Casa Rosada is the seat of the federal Executive branch of government in Argentina. The building is located at Balcarce 50, in the neighborhood named Monserrat, in the city of Buenos Aires, across the street from the historical square Plaza de Mayo.
- ¹⁷ President of the Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo Association.
- ¹⁸ Then Argentina’s Ministry of the Economy.
- ¹⁹ Former Vice-President of Argentina, presidential candidate in 2015, and current Argentine Ambassador in Brasil.
- ²⁰ La Cámpora is a Kirchnerist association.
- ²¹ Duhalde is a Peronist politician and former Argentine President.
- ²² Reference to Argentina’s Treasury Attorney’s wife.
- ²³ Reference to trade union leader Hugo Moyano’s son.

- ²⁴ Massa was the president of Argentina's Chamber of Deputies, congressman representing the coalition Frente de Todos.
- ²⁵ Ginés was the national Minister of Health (2019-2020).
- ²⁶ As explained by Maia Ocampo, activist of Jóvenes Republicanos and designer of the performative actions produced by the group. Interview with REALPOLITIK.FM. Jóvenes Republicanos: "The ones who twisted the intervention are always the same". March 3, 2021.
- ²⁷ At this point, we would like to mention that some of the people mentioned on the bags had received the first dose of the vaccine, because of their age or because they had concurrent disorders which put them at greater health risk if they did not receive the vaccine. Moreover, it was later proven that some of those people had not had access to the "VIP vaccination facility".
- ²⁸ Based on the images, national health authorities confirmed that 12% of the people who had died of coronavirus in Perú had died at home or on the streets. Information retrieved from <https://www.telam.com.ar/notas/202007/493899-peru-muertos-nuevos-casos-coronavirus.html>. Last access: June 30, 2022.
- ²⁹ This excerpt is included as an example:
<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=267936784767748>. Last access: June 30, 2022.
- ³⁰ We would also like to mention that there were explicit requests, such as the one made by journalist Mempo Giardinelli in his opinion piece, so that punishments be set for people "to legally answer" for such situations. See:
<https://www.pagina12.com.ar/358799-parar-el-odio>. Last access: June 30, 2022.
- ³¹ Adolescent Lucía Pérez was raped and murdered on October 8, 2016 in the city of Mar del Plata (Buenos Aires, Argentina). This court case received much media and social attention, since the offenders were sentenced to eight years in prison but were later acquitted.
- ³² This quote was taken from the chronicle of the day published by María Moreno in newspaper *Página 12*. Available at: <https://www.pagina12.com.ar/diario/contratapa/13-301412-2016-06-10.html>. Last access: June 30, 2022.
- ³³ The Obelisk, considered an icon of the City of Buenos Aires, is located at the intersection of 9 de Julio avenue and Corrientes avenue, right downtown.
- ³⁴ We do not believe that there is, *a priori*, a direct link between a person's ideological position and their social class. That is why, even though it would be interesting to analyze the link between JR and their ascribed social status, this is beyond the scope

of this article as it would require an in-depth study of each member's background (obtaining not only their incomes, but also other criteria).

- ³⁵ The program was created in 2009 by Cristina Fernández de Kirchner's administration, cancelled in 2017 by then President Mauricio Macri and partially reinstated in 2021 by Alberto Fernández.
- ³⁶ The person referred to here is journalist Pablo Duggan, who has worked both on radio and television for several years.
- ³⁷ See the "Spot 'The asado that has been lost' of Alberto Fernández and Cristina Kirchner" at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3VKLXbF_bQQ&ab_channel=franciscaval. Last access: June 30, 2022.
- ³⁸ See: <https://twitter.com/i/status/1372580840333586436>. Last access: June 30, 2022.

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This original paper, translated by Julieta Beatriz Amorebieta y Vera and edited by Roberto Candido, is also published in Spanish in this issue of the journal.

Received on July 07, 2022

Accepted on October 31, 2022

Editor-in-charge: Ana Sabrina Mora

