

Bonner Querschnitte

Bonn Profiles – Press Reports

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Schirmmacher visits the anti-corruption monument in Buenos Aires

(Bonn, 02.09.2023) Thomas Paul Schirmmacher, author of the book ‘Corruption’, visited the only monument to bribery that exists in the world. The “El monumento a la coima” is a statue created in 1936 on the wall of the headquarters of the Ministry of Health, in the middle of 9 de Julio Avenue in Buenos Aires (Argentina). Although it is visible to everyone, very few know of its existence.

A sculpture located on the façade of the former Ministry of Public Works of Buenos Aires, today the Ministry of Public Works, on Avenida 9 de Julio, is known as the monument to the bribe. The work was designed by the architect Alberto Belgrano Blanco and materialized by José Hortal, at that time national director of architecture. It is a work that falls within the rationalist style popular in the 1930s. Its construction began in 1933, and it was the first skyscraper in Buenos Aires. Although for many years it has gone unnoticed, in recent years its existence has come to light in connection with cases of corruption and clientelism in government contracts, both in Argentina and abroad.

The statue, frozen, made of stone, is surprisingly located in the vortexes of the building. It depicts a person carrying a box in one hand, while holding the other hand in pronation and with the palm of the hand turned, in an attitude of collecting a tip. The person is looking down, distracted or ashamed, with a hint of guilt.

As for the sculpture, although the official version does not confirm it (since it does not appear in the project of the building, nor in the plans, nor in any file), several historians and architects believe that its creation was a spontaneous denunciation of the bribes that abounded in the concessions of public works in Argentina in the 1930s. Nowadays taken for granted that the sculpture was made by the artist Troiano Troiani.

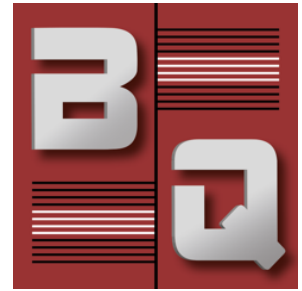


Ministry of Public Works Building with the “El monumento a la coima” © Felipe Restrepo Acosta (CC BY-SA 4.0)

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theology.worlddea.org/evangelical-review-of-theology

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gebende-haende.de

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islaminstiute.net

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iirf.eu

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journal.iirf.eu

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Theological Commission of the European Evangelical Alliance
europeanea.org

Theological Commission of the World Evangelical Alliance
worldevangelicals.org/tc/

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vkwonline.com

WEA Global Issues Series (Bonn, Manila, New York)
global-issues-series.iirf.eu

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wea-sc.org

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An icon of Buenos Aires, the first skyscraper in the city, 93 meters high and 22 stories high, the Ministry of Public Works was the place, where in 1951 the first television broadcast in Argentina took place as well as Eva Duarte de Perón's "Renunciation Speech" in the same year. Today, the building is mainly known for the image of Eva Perón, which was installed in 2010 at the initiative of Peronist President Cristina Fernández de Kirchner.



Ministry of Public Works Building with the "El monumento a la coima" © Felipe Restrepo Acosta (CC BY-SA 4.0)

Downloads and Links:

- Photo 1 and photo 2: Ministry of Public Works Building © Felipe Restrepo Acosta (CC BY-SA 4.0): https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:2019_Buenos_Aires_-_Ministerio_de_Obras_Públicas.jpg
- Photo 3: Close up of the image of Eva Perón image at the Ministry of Public Works Building © Leandro Kibisz (CC BY-SA 3.0): https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:CABA_-_Montserrat_-_Edificio_del_ex_Ministerio_de_Obras.jpg
- YouTube video: 'Misterios de Buenos Aires: el "monumento a la coima" del Ministerio de Obras Públicas': <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZiBTgDF8syU>
- TikTok video: <https://www.tiktok.com/@morganmirabal/video/7132540701488942382>
- 'La historia del desconocido "monumento a la coima", único en el mundo y en plena 9 de Julio': <https://www.infobae.com/politica/2017/03/08/la-historia-del-desconocido-monumento-a-la-coima-unico-en-el-mundo-y-en-plena-9-de-julio/>
- The book 'Corruption: When Self-Interest Comes before the Common Good': <https://www.thomasschirmacher.net/gesellschaft/corruption/>

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