

In 1968, after a military dictatorship assumed power of Greece, a 28-story building known as the Piraeus Tower was erected in the city of Piraeus. Located at the very front of the harbour of Piraeus, one of the largest maritime transit stations in Eastern Europe, it was planned out to be a trade centre, symbolizing economic growth during the time.

The dictatorship ruled the country from 1967-74. Their political practice was the climax of a two-decade period that followed the Greek Civil War: a period of political instability and polarization on the one hand, while on the other, a period of rapid economic growth.

The Piraeus tower was initially intended to become a landmark of economic and urban development, while also aiming to promote the city's image as a shipping and commercial centre. Among other initiatives, this building was supposed to put forward a positive image of the new state of affairs in the country. In the early 1980s, the building's exterior was finished and the first couple of floors were brought into use for alternating purposes, leaving the main part of the building unused. There have been various attempts to finish the construction and determine its purpose, but the state of the Piraeus Tower remains the same: unfinished and unoccupied.





What Slips Into an Image

I search for the building within different archives of moving images. I navigate within the logic of the specific archives.

Ex: Append -- to words for approximate search. Use "" around the phrase for exact match:

"Piraeus Tower"

Via the archive, I search the past for traces of the structure that I have just seen by the harbour of Piraeus, near Athens. I uphold the idea of memoric images and their potential of appearing in the future (old imagery can be used as a way of addressing the present state of this building). Abstracting new narratives within existing material.

0 search results.

At some point (as a symptom of no result) systematic and logical searching techniques are replaced by random flipping through the images of the archives: This is when the building appears. It reveals itself in the background when one abandons the logic of the archive. Present, yet never the intention of the image. It is in the frame, but has evaded the logic of sorting the events within a certain representation of the past.

It rests somewhere in the gap between what is simultaneously portrayed and not portrayed, archived and not archived; both documented and neglected.

A building supposed to be a landmark remained instead in the state of an unfinished ruin. A Ghost. Silently telling the stories of the society that surrounds it.

It precedes itself as something one does not want to document. The image becomes not only a representation of historic events, but also acts like a mirror in relation to a ghost, revealing the withdrawal of what we think is still there. As a way of reading history from the backgrounds of the images, which conduct it.

If the Piraeus Tower could speak, it would say: "I access the image through my volume and size. I slip into the frame as the camera moves or pans to the side to capture life around me. The image does not take me - I take the image".



Film stills; Water's blessing ceremony in Piraeus. 06/01/1972 Hellenic National AudioVisual Archive