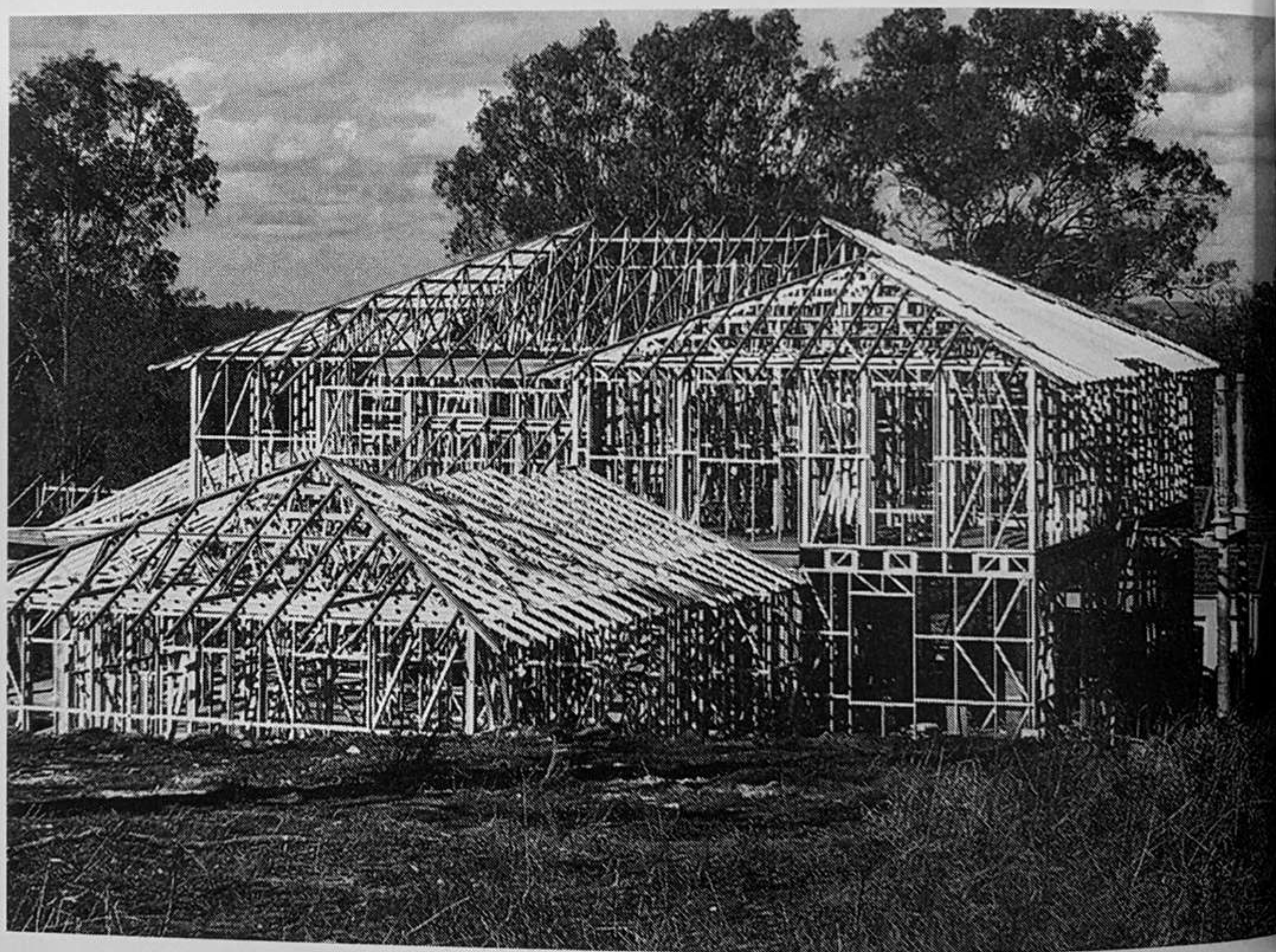


Gabriel Blue Cira

Mixed Metaphors



A pre-linguistic subject is conceivable but inaccessible, language always already having been there. Like rats. It's simple to tear down and rebuild, to expunge the rats, so to speak, no more rats, once and for all. "But in order to do that, as a mason I must work without sleeping, without turning my back, without leaving for a moment, without eating. But at night, the rats return to the foundation. I was thinking yesterday, What did you do in the meantime? You slept, if you please, you ate, dreamt, made love, and so forth. Well, the rats came back. They are, as the saying goes, always already there. Part of the building."¹ The most recent recitation always being as being defined by being the most recent repetition, that's the sinews of our present. An incidental present. Inconceivable but accessible, its absurd unlikeliness obviated by the trivial existence of being as being able to be accessed, always-already-been-there, otherwise you wouldn't be here, ha. Nobody ever tried to tell you that "language is the house of being"²? It is the house, the house itself, the lathing and the plumbing and the wires and the rats.

¹ Michel Serres, *The Parasite*

² Martin Heidegger, *Letter on Humanism*

In building the building, word by word, reconstructively, yes, nevertheless, we still need scaffolding first. Scaffolding is pre-building, holding a building's weight before it can hold its own, but is not-building. "The scaffolding is not required at all for the dwelling; it is made of cheaper material, is put up only temporarily, and is scrapped for firewood as soon as the shell of the structure is completed. As for the building of revolutionary organizations, experience shows that sometimes they

may be built without scaffolding, as the seventies showed. But at the present time we cannot even imagine the possibility of erecting the building we require without scaffolding."¹ Revolutionary history needs a revolutionary pre-history, a staging for its actors, a cradle to support and to confine. "In the same way, the historian today has only to erect a slender but sturdy scaffolding—a philosophic structure—in order to draw the most vital aspects of the past into his net. But just as the magnificent vistas of the city provided by the new construction in iron for a long time were reserved exclusively for the workers and engineers, so too the philosopher who wishes here to garner fresh perspectives must be someone immune to vertigo..."¹.

¹ Vladimir Lenin, *What Is to Be Done?*

¹ Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*

In noticing, without astonishment, that these entities are abbreviated by their membranes, their conditions of exclusion, or conditions of conditioning, an opposition between spheres and valences is drawn. "Spheres are air conditioning systems in whose construction and calibration, for those living in real coexistence, it is out of the question not to participate. The symbolic air conditioning of the shared space is the primal production of every society."² Air conditioning, not structure, provides stability, stability from fluctuations and extremes, relying on feedback data gathered by the thermostat. "In this way the temperature of the house is kept approximately at a steady level. Note that the constancy of this level depends on the good design of the thermostat, and that a badly designed thermostat may send the temperature of the house into violent oscillations not unlike the motions of a man suffering from cerebellar tremor."¹ A lapse into malfunction is caused by overcompensation, not by deficiency.

² Peter Sloterdijk, *Spheres vol. 1*

¹ Norbert Wiener, *Cybernetics*

To spatialize memory is to preserve memory, synthetically but solidly, so artifice is edifice, and vice versa. "Constitutive instances are: order or distribution of COMMON PLACES in the artificial memory, which may be

either PLACES in the proper sense of the word, as a door, angle, window, and the like; or familiar and known persons; or anything we choose (provided they are arranged in a certain order), as animals, herbs; also words, letters, characters, historical personages, and the like.”† Angles play object; they are distributed fondly and mnemonically amongst, and woe to the wise if a clodhopper befalls an unsavory specimen or sunders a flimsy screen-memory. “Smatterafact, Angles aftanon browsing there thought not Edam reeked more rare. Mywud! The warped flooring of the lair and soundconducting walls thereof, to say nothing of the uprights and imposts, were persianly literatured with burst loveletters, telltale stories, stickyback snaps, doubtful eggshells, bouchers, flints, borers, puffers, amygdaloid almonds, rindless raisins, alphybettyformed verbage, vivlical viasses, om-piter dictas, visus umbique, ahems and ahahs, imeffible tries at speech unasyllabled...”‡

† Francis Bacon, *Novum Organum*

‡ James Joyce, *Finnegan's Wake*

“Covered by the curtain of appearances, the connection of the various primal images or primal melodies is consummated according to an inclusive meaning plan. [...] Instinct is only a provisional supposition that must stand in if people deny the supraindividual plan. And people deny them because they have no real idea of what a plan is, since it is neither a force nor a material substance.”§ Not, also, either is it a drive; nor is it an object of one. ““A plan as such is something unsatisfied.” (Like a wish, an expectation, a suspicion, and so on.) By this I mean: expectation is unsatisfied, because it is the expectation of something; belief, opinion, is unsatisfied, because it is the opinion that something is the case, something real, something outside the process of believing.”¶

§ Jakob von Uexküll, *A Foray Into the Worlds of Animals and Humans*

¶ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*