In Building, Dwelling, Thinking, Heidegger proposes that the truth of being emanates from dwelling. He states that human beings are unique in that we seek to dwell. He analyses the etymology of building, or *Bauen*, implying that man is as he dwells, but as time as passed, building’s meaning of being and dwelling is lost in a new definition of cultivation and construction. He further states that man does not master language, but rather, language masters man. It is because of our limited perspicacity that meanings of words and the truth of a concept falls into silence.

In Phenomenon of Place, Christian Norberg-Schulz discusses the phenomenology as a method of interpreting architecture. He states that the world is composed of multiple concrete “phenomena,” such as people, trees, rocks, towns, clothes and all material objects. Norberg-Schulz essentially promotes a “return to things” and an appreciation of their tactile qualities as opposed to a more existentialist approach which creates space within the mind’s eye. However, the author also refers to the intangible qualities of “things,” such as emotions and feeling; “this is what is given, this is the content of our existence.”

Norberg-Schulz stresses that places cannot be described as analytic, scientific concepts, and that life of the everyday world becomes lost in analysis and objectivity. It is because of this that he proposes the method of phenomenology. Looking to Heidegger and poetry as an initial platform, he describes how the poem eventually emotes the meaning of places and things, reflecting the man as a wanderer on the path of life. Continuing with Heidegger’s philosophies, the author analyses the meaning of building between the earth and the sky, a differentiation that implies man should create dwelling on the surface of the world, crafting an interior in the earth’s vast expanse. A dwelling is defined as a place of peace in a protected place, and enclosure, or architecture, is able to delineate a place within space. The archetypal elements of walls, floors and roofs are experienced as horizons, boundaries and frames of nature, and this way of building is the origin of architecture. Norberg-Schulz identifies the power of phenomenology in architecture in generating meaning through the creation of specific places.

The term genius loci is also explained as denoting the essence of a place, and provides an opposite to which humanity must deal with. From here, theories of place have arisen, such as Lynch’s implications that “elements which constitute the spatial structure are concrete things with character and meaning.” Objects of identification are experienced by man from childhood, and therefore man is able to acquaint himself with a particular environment. To further his argument, Norberg-Schulz then says that “every human being has to possess schemata of orientation as well as identification.”

Norberg-Schulz concludes with a relation of architecture with literature, as most theorists have the ability to skew the written word to their advantage. Architecture is a difficult art, belonging to the world of poetry, and functions as giving man a place to dwell. Man must belong to a place, and herein lays the essence of architecture.