

- 52 Norberg-Schulz, *Intentions*, op. cit., 41ff.  
53 Heidegger, *Poetry*, op. cit., 181. "We are the be-thinged," the conditioned ones.  
54 Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking," in *Poetry*, op. cit., 146ff.  
55 *Ibid.*, 147.  
56 Norberg-Schulz, *Intentions*, op. cit., 61ff, 68.  
57 *Ibid.*, 168ff.  
58 Heidegger, *Poetry*, op. cit., 218.  
59 S. Langer, *Feeling and Form* (New York: 1953).  
60 *Genesis*, chapter 4, verse 12.

## INTRODUCTION

Heidegger's Thinking on Architecture  
*Christian Norberg-Schulz*

This lucid explication of "Heidegger's Thinking on Architecture" closely analyzes several of the philosopher's writings linguistically, following Martin Heidegger's own interest in the etymology of words in current usage. Broadly speaking, it develops Christian Norberg-Schulz's critique of modern architecture, which, he claims, has created a crisis of meaning by creating a diagrammatic, functionalist environment that does not allow for *dwelling*. Pointing to "a moment of confusion and crisis," Norberg-Schulz acknowledges that the problem of meaning in architecture has been approached by others, some using semiology (studying architecture as a system of conventional signs), a method he finds inadequate to explain architecture. His alternative is to understand architecture through a reading of Heideggerian phenomenology.

The purpose of architecture, he states, is to provide an "existential foothold," one which provides "orientation" in space and "identification" with the specific character of a place. The opposite of alienation, the concept of an "existential foothold" suggests that the environment is experienced as meaningful. (Very different approaches to the problem of alienation are taken by Peter Eisenman and Anthony Vidler in their essays on the grotesque and the uncanny in chapter 14.) He demonstrates an understanding of the significance of difference in the production of meaning: "a boundary may also be understood as a threshold, i.e., as an embodiment of a difference." In "The Phenomenon of Place," Norberg-Schulz cites the influence of Kevin Lynch's *Image of the City* (1960), in which he describes the elements that make the city "legible." Lynch's elements—node, landmark, path, edge, district—are thus orienting features of the city, functioning like Norberg-Schulz's *place*.

For Norberg-Schulz, architecture makes the world visible and spatial, gathering its presence in a *thing*. In other words, the work of architecture presents, or "brings something into presence"; it is not representational. Phenomenological positions are taken by writers in this and the following three chapters, including Kenneth Frampton, Juhani Pallasmaa, Tadao Ando, Raimund Abraham, Vittorio Gregotti, and Marco Frascari. In addition, Karsten Harries speaks as a phenomenologist on ethical issues in chapter eight.