ABSTRACT

This dissertation attempts to comprehend the changes in cultural and material production that are occurring in contemporary society and the implications this has on architectural production.

It traces the development of architecture in the Modern movement that was characterized by the imperatives of rationalized production. Through the techniques of standardization and mass production, Modernism was eventually reduced to a form of reductive architecture that boost a sterile economy of efficiency. Consequently, such reductive rationalization resulted in the reproduction and homogenization of architecture that threatened diversity and creativity. In resisting against such reproduction and homogenization in architecture, two contradicting architectural movements are discussed, namely Postmodernism and Deconstruction.

As a resistance to the Modernist drive towards universalism, Postmodernism proposed the virtues of pluralism by pillaging the forms and styles of the past in order to provide 'cultural varieties' for the poverty of modernism. Deconstruction proposed the way to resist architectural reproduction by challenging the percepts of tradition and convention. Although both stemmed from the same objective to create architecture of diversity, Postmodernism is ultimately subsumed by commercialism resorting to reproduction. On the other hand, Deconstruction offered an
alternative attitude to resist against such mindless reproduction of architecture by transgressing the limits of architecture. Through the study of these two techiques, the essay attempts to show that creativity in architecture should not be limited to the prescription of rigid rules but of reformulating beyond such conventions.

Furthermore, the essay serves to warn us of the consequences of continual reproductions that have already resulted in many undesirable environments to our local practices. Through understanding the development of architecture that has resulted to such crisis, it is hoped that one could transgress beyond the limits of present practices and strive towards the ultimate reach of architecture.

Due to the broad scope of the topic at hand, this essay could only outline the general issues related to the crisis of reproduction and homogenization in architecture and supports them through studies of specific architectural works.