The Transferability of Sustainable Design Concepts, the Case of Masdar

In response to the call for papers, corresponding to:

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Abstract:

The main contribution of the study is to provide an understanding of the transferability of sustainable design and the role of and the effect on technology in achieving such transfer between the developed and developing parts of the world demonstrating different contexts and circumstances. The research will be conducted at the residential units of Masdar Institute Campus within the eco-city of Masdar in Abu-Dhabi; a collaboration between Foster + Partners office in London and the government of Abu Dhabi. Masdar's design integrates intelligent and passive design technologies that emphasize efficiency with exclusive reliance on renewable energy, a zero carbon policy, recycling of all waste and as much as 80% of used water, and a pedestrian, car free environment.

What I want to understand about Masdar is how technologies within sustainable design are intended to be in the designer's office, how they differ from the users' interpretations, and how all of this connects to the interpretations of other actors such as the government, the design managers, and the engineers. I am also interested in how such sustainable designs affect the users' interpretations, behaviors, life styles, comfort, satisfaction, and wellbeing and how it is affected in turn by the users who adapt to it, reshape it, or even recreate it.

This dialog of interaction emphasizes the blurred boundaries between the technical and the social. This gains further interest when acknowledging that neither the sustainable designs nor the society, in addition to the other involved actors are the same as the ones that were planned and anticipated at the beginning of the design project. They go under continuous change as a result of their relations with other actors and relevant aspects.