

# Codes of cities and anthropology: Digital Landscapes of Post-Socialist Cities

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# From RuNet to Post-Soviet Digital Landscapes

- The “global” trend – mobile revolution, networked individualism
- The local trends - the dissolution of RuNet community, the state penetration into Russian language net, numerous state regulations of recent years



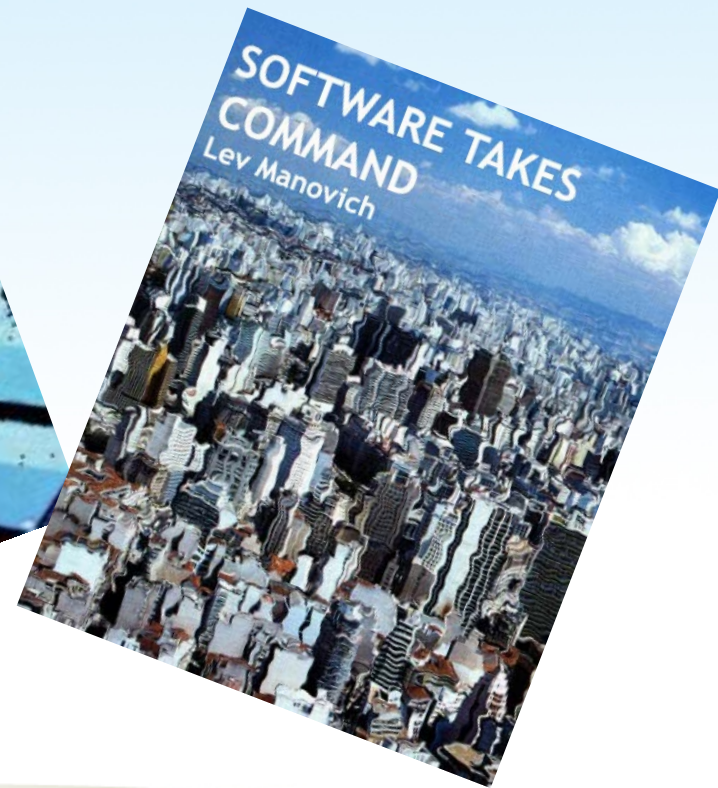
# Digitalization of Russian Cities

- *Aim*: to transfer the theoretical concepts of digital urbanism into the practices of field research.
- *Methodology*: (New) Media Studies + Digital Humanities + Urban Studies = Urban (New) Media Studies

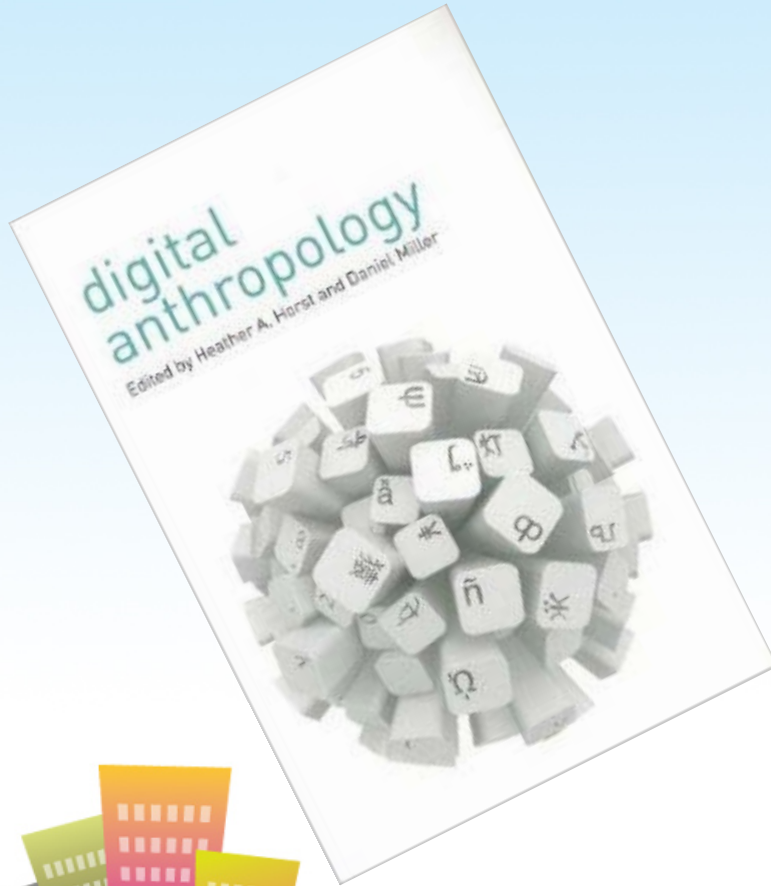


# Technologically orientated approaches

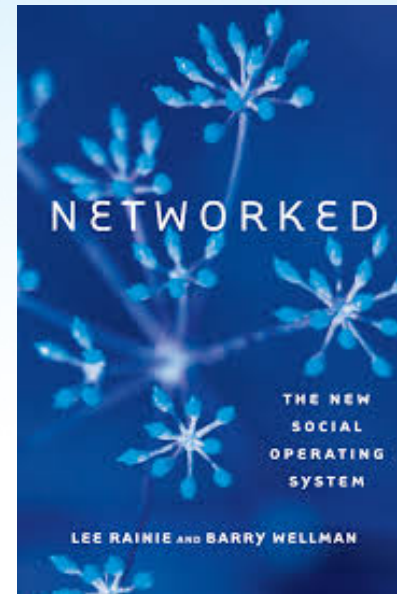
## Software Studies



# Digital Anthropology



## Networked Individualism

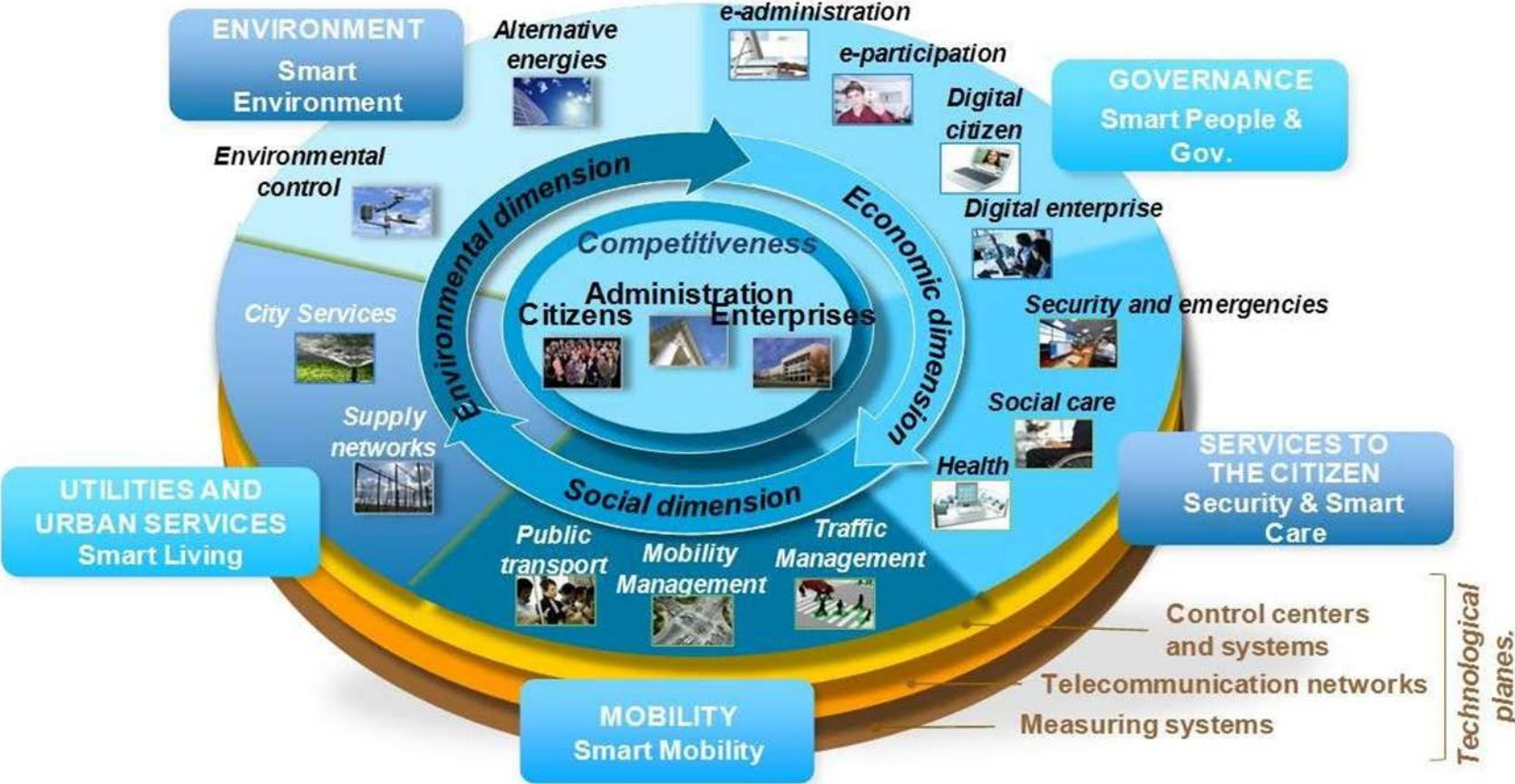


# Why digital anthropology?

- 1. The limits of urban big data and smart city concept
- ‘Urban data are never raw but are always already cooked to a particular recipe for a particular purpose’ (Kitchin, 2015).



# Holistic View of Smart Cities



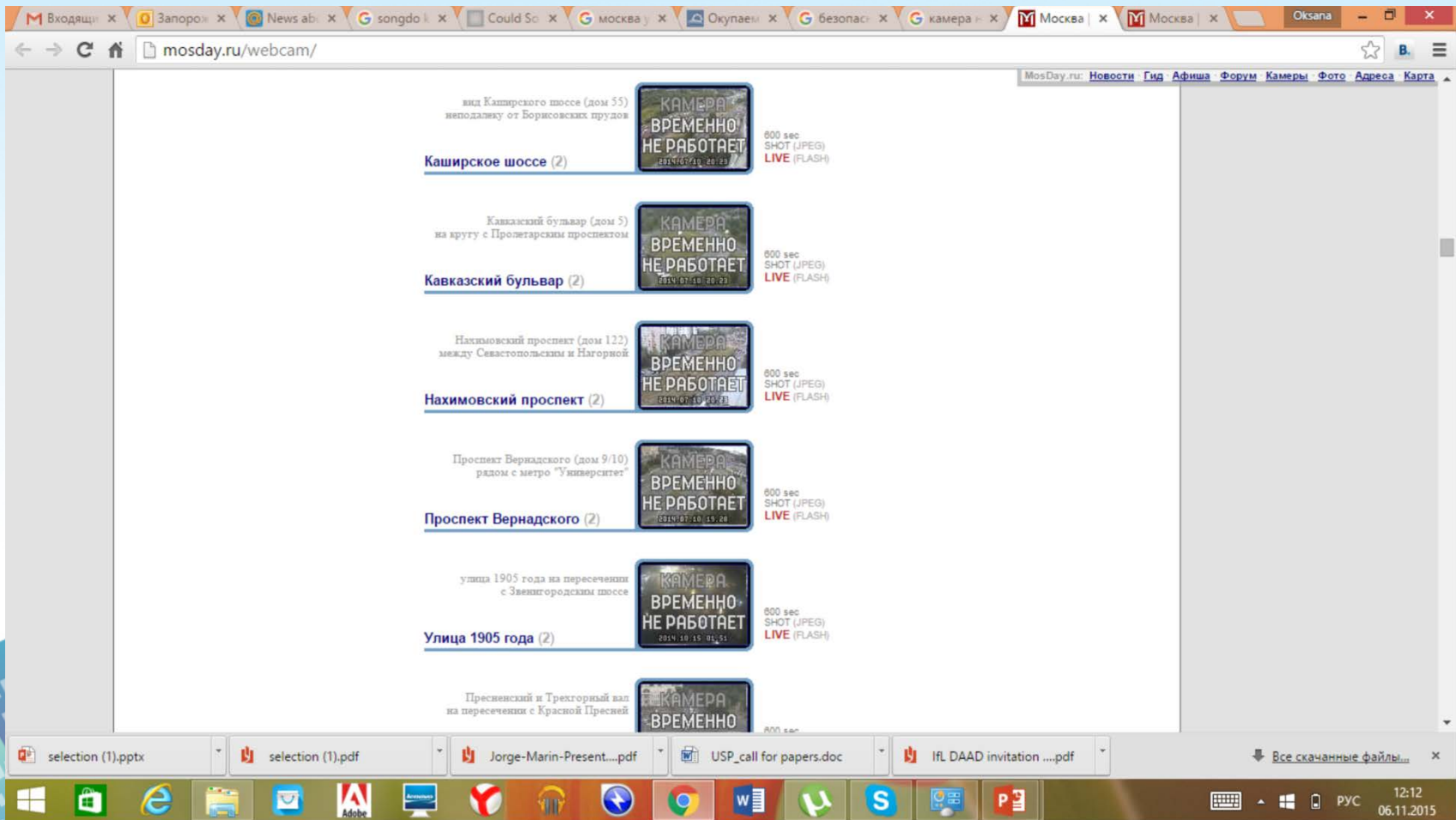
## 2. Technological risks.

Urban control rooms (Rio de Janeiro, Sydney, Glasgow and London)





# 2. Technological risks. The reality of “smart city”



# 3. Digital Mass Culture

- Big data and social modelling
- Back to “mass culture” base on computation and data as a contradiction to participatory culture and networked individualism (Rainie, Wellman, 2012)
- Surveillance and control



# Features of Digital Anthropology

- Discontinuity of digital
- Focus on personality of user (subjectivity)
- Permanent updating of objects of study;
- Materiality of digital culture

## Hybrid spaces and city's extensions

- **De Souza e Silva A.** (2006) From cyber to hybrid: mobile technologies as interfaces of hybrid spaces
- **De Souza e Silva A., Frith J.** (2012) Mobile Interfaces in Public Spaces: Locational Privacy, Control, and Urban Sociability.
- **Duarte F., de Souza e Silva** (2014) Arte.mov, Mobilefest and the emergence of a mobile culture in Brazil



John Stanmeyer. African migrants in Djibouti attempting to catch a cellphone signal from Somalia.  
World Press Award 2014.



# Topics of research

- E-government, the usability of mobile apps and urban activists grass roots initiatives
- Electronic neighborhoods and community management
- Digitalization of city transport communications: passengers' time and experiences
- Mobile connectivity of counter cultural groups
- Digitalization of public and cultural spaces (museums etc)



# Preliminary results

- Mapping of discontinuity of Russian cities' digitalization: the most digitalized are transport and transit spaces, civic engagement (and e-government), navigation in physical and social spaces
- Contemporary Russian city is “city in motion”





# WiFi and METRO (underground)

## Authorities

- symbolic capital of metropolis (“being modern”);
- Connectivity as compensation of technological shabbiness of infrastructure;
- New profits: mobile advertising, higher fare etc.

## Users:

- “We stay connected” (business and psychological support)
- “Digital shelter”
- “Digital Holes”





# Conclusions for further work

- «Bureaucratization» of RuNet slows communication between cities' authorities and citizens.
- “Decoupling” of the most active citizens in their search for solving of cities' problems.
- De – motivation and excluding citizens from decision making process

