Check in/check out has many authors. As Gérald Santucci states in the foreword to this book “We do not only surf on the net, with our PCs and mobile phones – we are actually *living* in the net” (p. 8). From this perspective, the title is less focused on technology but more on changes in contemporary life. When people are online all the time, they do not need to log off from the net. They are becoming digital natives, but not only as a metaphor of people that were raised while using different technological tools. They could rather be called natives of an online city. I can give up using a cell phone, laptop, netbook, smartphone and other devices, but the city will be constantly online. This existential view is very important to not confuse the society of control (Burroughs’ term, then used by Deleuze) with the society of unlimited freedom provided by the net (Rheingold and other new media discourses focused on liberating human beings from their constraints). What is the proposition for solving this problem? Santucci speaks of Identity Management, but only on one condition: “The Internet of Things will realize its full potential only if it is, first of all, an Internet of People” (s. 9). Technology cannot replace humanity – that is the main idea behind *Check in/check out*. The Internet of Things is a variety of methods of linking the real world with the internet and connecting the internet to real world objects.

The book is divided into 6 parts. They do not follow each other in successive numbers but are written in binary language instead. Zeros and ones replace the analog way of ordering material in the table of contents. This is a book written for digital natives who could instantly focus on the digitalism present in this book. The
main points of analysis focus on the Dutch technological systems build into cities, but the authors on several occasions also provide examples from China and other locations, which is crucial for estimating the global relevance of this subject.

In the introduction, Christian van’t Hof and Rinie van Est say that the “digitalization of public sphere signifies a new phase in the information society” (p. 13). Without the discourse concerning the society of control, the authors try to find new way for people to interact with their identity through technological mediation: “Identity Management brings together two important social preconditions for the application of Information Technology: enablement of individual and collective action (frequently referred to as empowerment) and the need for a safeguard for personal privacy” (p. 13). Between describing the relevance of privacy and the importance of creating space for a freed people, the authors posit several principles according to which data storage would be useful and could be exploited for the benefit of users of the net.

This book is very well written when it comes to its conclusions and they way it shows different phenomena of the technologization of the city through the prism of the technologization of the user.

It is conceptual book, a digital conceptual book. In many places there are conceptual codes. All of this shows that the form of the book had been given serious consideration. The cover also fits with the whole concept of this book, which for me is to show the lines of technological mediation interweaving the public sphere. Our identity lies within the data used by governments and corporations. Ethical postulates signal that when data is concerned, people are removed from view. Special acts guarantee the right to not be treated as a databank. It is important to know that people are not data – this relates to the main thesis of this book: through identity management, the Internet of Things could be at the same time the Internet of People. The authors see the danger of people becoming less important than connections between nodes of the net. Protection is provided by Identity Management that consists of systems of authentication, identification and authorization).

But is this possible? When the author speak about the digitalization of public transport then citizens do not have many opportunities to opt out of from being controlled. Even when someone gives up from travelling, then this person can be identified by other means of control. But even if we use an anonymous ticket, we cannot know if someone is recording our behavior. Data acts and licenses are forms of protection of our privacy but they do not guarantee privacy. If there were a system crash, hacker attack, system malfunction. The problem here is the marketing. If someone has one ticket for the whole transport system then it is probably run by one company or a union of companies that form a syndicate. This leads to commer-
cialization and growing dependence of users on the prices dictated by the market. People are not opposing different firms but are a Leviathan that is the body of marketing. “Digitalisation is about efficiency and convenience” (p. 46). Media rhetoric “all in one” device could mean “no privacy in any of the spheres of public life”. The authors show how what is considered convenient is not necessarily cheaper because people forget to pay and must pay additional fees. Christian van’t Hof, Rinie van Est and Selene Kolman write about networked cars. They are showing the importance of GPS systems.

Wouter Schilpzand, Christian van’t Hof and Bart Schermer write about money mobiles. They describe Near Field Communication (NFC): “NFC is a technology that can transform a mobile phone into a wallet, a key or even a mouse with which one can click in public space for information” (p63). This is an example where space itself is a key to the transformation of interfaces. Interface convergence is based on possibilities that are programmed into the city. When someone is standing in front of the bank then his mobile phone could be used as a wallet, and when walking in museum – as a mouse. The authors do not see that users can only interact the way that these tools were programmed. Hacking is not possible or it is a crime (to get money, use something).

Ad Schreijenberg, Christian van ’t Hof and Jolanada Koffijberg write about street images. They use the example of Dutch Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) to show how it is becoming Shared Circuit Television. They raise an important subject for discussion, revealing the relevance of not only who is being watched but who is watching. “The new passport as a biometric data gatherer” (p. 88) poses great risks for society because people are identified. There is always the possibility of cracking protection and getting news. It was less empowering than other technologies. It is easier to empower citizens when they have to pay, but when they want to watch it is prohibited (only the police have access). Users should have access to the police – that would be symmetrical. People should see the actions that the police are taking. Policeman should be also tagged if regular people are being watched, recorded and broadcast outside of their will and knowledge. There are always those who are viewing and those being viewed.

Christian van t’Hof, Floortje Daemen and Rinie van Est put forward the thesis that Google actions have twofold consequences. The first is the democratization of geo-data and the second one is its commercialization. They identify a lack of awareness among people using geo-data. I think that it is necessary to propose some educational projects that will promote data awareness.

When presenting the subject of living maps, Christian van ‘t Hof and Floortje Daemen say: “Big Brother, once a warning against totalitarianism, now has become
a symbol of the importance of being known” (p.112). Assuming this, people are willing to reject their privacy being known. This gesture focuses on the imperative of being present everywhere on the net and being able to be localized from every medium. When someone is not represented by profile or user generated content, or just an email, then they are invisible to others – they do not exist because he cannot be found. The authors are proceeding with a thought experiment: “What if all live data coming from smart cards, mobiles, navigation devices, cameras and the like, would be plotted on a digital, geographical platform?”. They are exploring different locative games to know if such a possibility is plausible for them. All the participants answered yes. But is it not a living map that are we living in right now? Social media offer real time tagging – people tend to locate their friends by statuses not by some objective geographical data but on living maps constructed by social media and mobile phones.

Rinie van Est and Christian van ‘t Hof gave the conclusion of this book the title Identity Management in the Net. They summarize the key transformation: from being on the net to living in the net. Issues of privacy, access, relation between institutional and individual identity are handled. The authors ask whether we could check out? The answer rising from their analysis is that we cannot check out, escape. Checking out means always checking in somewhere else. Their strategy relies on the necessity of making data more human and humans more adaptable to data.

The book is written mainly from the standpoint of technology usage. Although the ideas presented are relevant, the book lacks a wider scope within discourses about power, identity and society. This is an interesting presentation of current trends in creating the Internet of Things out of public space. I would be not so optimistic about these predictions, but there is very good emphasis placed on the subject of media usage, policies and the difficulties that are emerging from these perspectives. This empirical standpoint opens new philosophical question about human communication and interaction in the public sphere.