

# **Online Social Networks in a Post-Soviet State: How Hungarians Protect and Share on Facebook**



**Blase Ur and Yang Wang  
Carnegie Mellon University**

How (and why) do  
**culture,**  
**socio-political history,**  
**and region-specific**  
**influences** affect  
social networking  
privacy behaviors?

# Related Work

- There is a cultural element to the Internet  
[Miller/Slater01]
- Cultures differ in their privacy concerns  
[Bellman04, Cho09, Kumaraguru05]
- Different cultures have different social  
networking privacy concerns  
[Krasnova10, Wang11]
- Limited work employing interviews  
[Chapman08]

# Background- Hungary

- Population of ~10 million



# Background- Hungary

- Occupied by Nazis (1944-1945) and Soviets (1945-1991)
- Communism till 1989
- Joined E.U. in 2004
- Political protests in 2006, 2011-2012



# Background- Hungarian SNS

- iWiW- Launched in 2002

- Monolingual
- Invitation only
- Limited privacy controls

Úr Balázs (Blase)

Adatlap Képek Hírfolyam Ismerősök Klubok Alkalmazások Vélemények

Adatlap megtekintése ismerősként / Adatlap megtekintése ismeretlenként

**Alapadatok**

|                 |                        |
|-----------------|------------------------|
| Születésnap     | 1985.                  |
| Életkor         | 27                     |
| Nem             | Férfi                  |
| Anyanyelv       | angol                  |
| Beszélt nyelvek | angol, magyar, spanyol |

**Bemutakozás**

|                                  |                     |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|
| Ezt csinálom, mikor dolgozom     | Informatika Kutatás |
| Ezt csinálom, mikor nem dolgozom | Fényképészet, Zene  |

IWiW ismerősök száma 6

IWiW város, ország Debrecen, Magyarország

Korábbi lakóhelyek

Elérhetőség

Lecserélem a profilképem

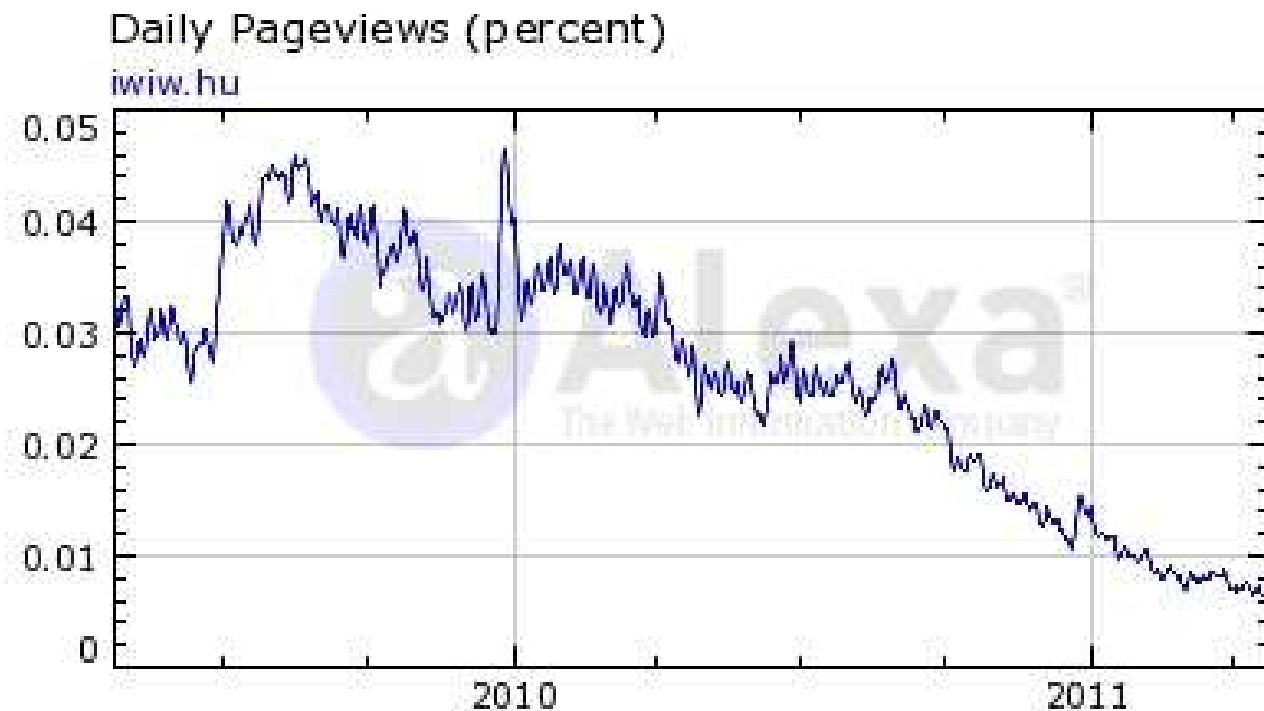
Összes kép (2)

**Ismerősök**

Alkalmazásaim Kedvenceim

# Background- Hungarian SNS

- Facebook's Hungarian translation- 2008
- iWiW traffic has fallen



## 8



# 2011 Class Photo

**facebook** Keresés Kezdőlap Adatlap Profilom

**Nagyfejeő Kálmán (osztályfőnök) · Ismerősök**

Keresés iskola alapján Baross Gábor Középiskola, Szakiskola és Kollégium 12/C

**12/C 2007–2011 · Visszabökés**

**Hirdetés**  
Baross Gábor Középiskola, Szakiskola és Kollégium

**Események**  
Találkozó!  
Találkozunk 2016-ban

**Nekik tetszik:**

**Ismerősök (33)**

Nagyfejeő Kálmán (osztályfőnök)

Szondi Jenő (szülő)

Ungváriné Darányi Mária (osztályfőnökhelyettes)

Rajtik János (osztályfőnökhelyettes)

Boros Zsolt (osztályfőnökhelyettes)

Molnár Márk

Lőrincz László

Miskolczi Viktor

Mészáros Norbert

Völgyi László

Molnár Zsolt

Karap Sándor

Balogh Ferenc Levente

Szmir Attila

Kompár Zsolt

Dunó Gergő Dávid

Novák Szabolcs

Bordás Tamás

Antal Bence

Szűcs István

Hevesi Dániel József

Tajti Ádám

Czövek Tamás

Nagy Krisztián Máté

Simon Csaba

Zádori Zsolt

**Anthony Robbins**  
„Nem az számít honnan indulsz, hanem az, hogy milyen döntéseket hozol arról, hogy hová akarsz végül eljutni.”

Anthony Robbins

Baross Gábor

(21) Chatpartner

**Bezárás**

# Why Do We Care About Hungary?

- SNS research heavily focused on North America and Western Europe
- Case study for Post-Soviet Central and Eastern Europe
- Transition from a localized social network to Facebook

# Methodology

- 19 semi-structured interviews in Spring 2011
  - Debrecen, a city of ~200,000 people
  - Interviewer lived there for 9 months



# Methodology

- Recruitment: citywide email lists, Facebook groups, snowball sampling
- Interviews audio recorded
  - Detailed notes, transcription → Themes
- Participants chose Hungarian or English
  - Majority chose Hungarian
  - Interviewer- Native English, Fluent Hungarian

# Demographics

- 9 female, 10 male
- Ages 18 – 43
  - Six were age 30+
- 9 in workforce
- 10 were students



# Research Questions

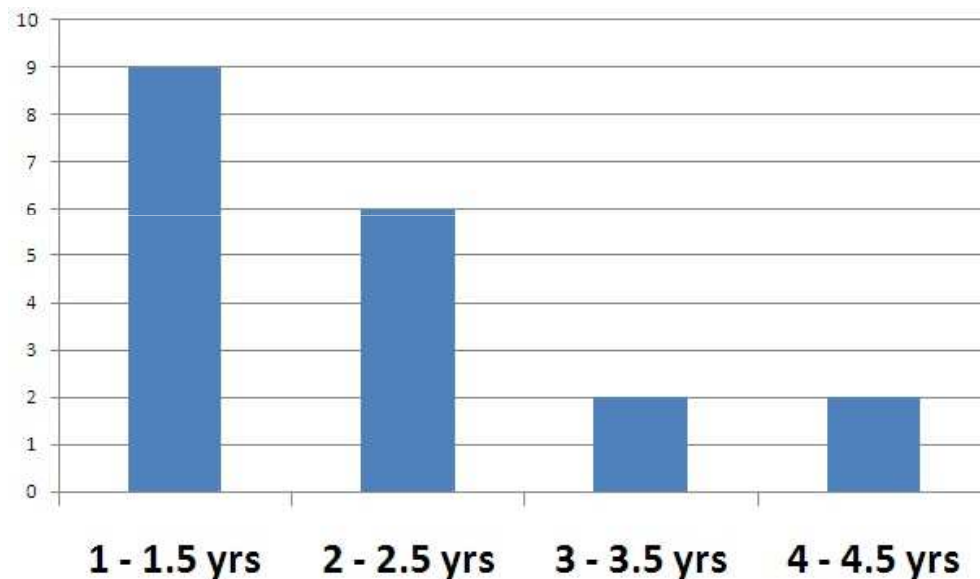
- How do Hungary's history and culture affect social networking privacy behaviors?
- What's too personal to share?
- What caused iWiW's fall and Facebook's rise?
- Does a shared "cultural identity" encourage Hungarians to share more freely with other Hungarians?

# Research Questions

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# Participants' SN Usage

- 17/19 use Facebook daily
- Histogram of Facebook account age:



- 17/19 have used iWiW
  - 1 uses iWiW more than FB; 4 have deleted iWiW

# “Younger generation” shares openly, uses privacy settings

- 18/19 - “Younger generation” shares more
- 18/19 - Familiar with privacy controls
  - “Friends only” setting
- Similar to Americans [boyd/Marwick 2011]



# There is a generational divide of not sharing information

(19,M)- “My father never posts really personal pictures about himself or personal information. **He actually never posts anything....** He only uses it for chat and to see pictures about his friends and send friend requests and stuff.”

# Why?

(43,F)- “[Older people] are perhaps frightened about information about themselves. [Interviewer: Why?] It's possible that they **feel the impact of the old era** more strongly.”



# Norm against documentation

(43,F)- “There were Úttörők and Kisdobosok, there was one party in the country... So as we grew up, **you couldn't say what you thought**. We had to think about who we were talking in front of, and what we were saying... [Today's youth] put their opinions regarding **politics, child-rearing, and school** in public on Facebook... In what country did they grow up?”

# The past is a major influence

(30,M)- “In Hungary, it’s common not to share very much... It has been always part of Hungarian culture, **maybe because of the history that when the Russians were here and the communism...** Your neighbor could write a note about yourself and you could end up in the prison, so I think this **comes from [our] parents’ mind.**”

# Older users consider photos particularly private

- The purpose of photos is to **uniquely identify** the account holder to his or her friends.

(31,M)- People share “at most one photo, from which their friends or acquaintances can recognize them... Previously I didn't have any photos up on Facebook, but now I uploaded one. **But just one, not a lot.**”

# Older users expect their friends to ask before tagging

(35,M)- “I have two pictures on Facebook so that people can know it's me.... If someone [tagged me] without asking me, **I'd be disgusted. This would violate my rights.**”



# Political views are sensitive

(20,F)- “I was on [a right-wing political blog] where I either commented or ‘liked’ a picture I found pretty. I later realized that searching Google for me would reveal my comment, that I visited that site... which I regretted a bit since [the site] is fairly **radical and nationalist**, which would be seen **negatively**.”



# iWiW is amateur

- Interviewees switched to Facebook because of speed, features, and layout
- Facebook enjoys a great deal of trust
  - Participants felt that Facebook had not violated their privacy



# Take-aways for the “older generation” (>30)

- Older users are reluctant to document life
  - Comes from socio-political history
- Photos are used for identification and should be posted by the user, not tagged



# Take-aways regarding politics

- Political posts are sensitive for **everyone**
- Younger generation- regrets



# Future Directions

- Expand to a large-scale survey, potentially across Eastern Europe.
- Interviews globally → global survey



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**Blase Ur, [bur@cmu.edu](mailto:bur@cmu.edu)**

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