

Subject name/code:	Philosophy of History / BTÖ-DK-003A
Subject coordinator:	Doktori programvezető
Lecturer(s) of the subject:	Dr. Kovács Bálint – PPCU, assistant professor
Credits:	10 credits
Lesson type:	Lecture
Brief subject description:	<p>The aim of the course is for doctoral students to develop a comprehensive and critical perspective on the theoretical foundations of historical scholarship, as well as on the historical development of thinking about historiography, from antiquity to postmodern historiography. The primary focus of the course is not the presentation of abstract philosophical systems, but rather the examination of how thinkers and historians of different eras interpreted historical phenomena, how they defined historical fact, causality, historical time, change, and the methods of historical explanation.</p> <p>The objective of the course is, therefore, for doctoral students to acquire theoretical and methodological knowledge that enables them to interpret the historiographical basis of their own research more consciously, to recognize the modes of thought underlying different historiographical traditions, and to situate their work within the long-term development of historical understanding.</p>
Theoretical knowledge to be acquired:	<p>The aim of the course is for doctoral students to gain a comprehensive, theoretically grounded, and critical perspective on the grand historical development of the philosophy of history, from its origins in antiquity to postmodern theories. The course is structured to present, within a single semester, all the key movements and authors that define the fundamental questions of historical thought: the interpretation of historical time, change, and causality; the nature of historical knowledge; the structure of historical narratives; and the theoretical frameworks of historical explanation.</p> <p>Students will explore the foundations of ancient and medieval approaches to history, followed by the paradigmatic shifts of the early modern period through the work of Giovanni Battista Vico. The course covers in detail Hegel's philosophy of history, the theoretical implications of positivism and the professionalization of historical scholarship, as well as Karl Lamprecht's methodological innovations. Special emphasis is placed on Karl Marx's philosophy as one of the most influential approaches to the structural explanation of social change. The course examines the major 20th-century historiographical movement, the Annales School, through the lenses of historical time, structure, mentalities, and interdisciplinarity. The final part of the semester focuses on postmodern theories of history, particularly the work of Michel Foucault, Hayden White, and Reinhart Koselleck, who reconceptualize modern issues of historical representation, power, discourse, and temporal experience.</p> <p>The course aims to enable students to understand the transformations in historical thinking, recognize the connections and points of debate among different movements, and consciously situate their own doctoral research within these theoretical frameworks.</p>

<p>Practical knowledge to be acquired:</p>	<p>The practical aim of the course is to enable doctoral students to apply the theoretical and methodological issues of historical scholarship reflectively and consciously in their own research. The focus of the course is on understanding how different historiographical traditions, schools of thought, and approaches to history can be employed in the professional practice of the historian. Students will become familiar with conceptual analysis (historical fact, causality, time, narrative, structure, discourse, <i>longue durée</i>, genealogy, conceptual history) and comparative studies of different approaches to historical scholarship, providing them with tools for theoretically positioning their own doctoral research.</p> <p>An important aspect of the practical knowledge is for students to recognize which historiographical traditions underlie the interpretation of a given historical phenomenon, to make conscious choices regarding the theoretical and methodological framework of their research, and to understand how historical argumentation is constructed based on the ways of thinking developed in different periods. The course therefore aims to foster a reflective historiographical approach that enables doctoral students to conduct research that is theoretically grounded, methodologically conscious, and historiographically informed.</p> <p>Accordingly, the semester's syllabus guides students through the main stages of historical thinking from a historiographical perspective:</p> <p>In the first weeks, the focus is on ancient and medieval approaches to history: the methodological precedents of Herodotus and Thucydides, issues of rationality and narrative construction, and the temporal perspective and eschatological structures of medieval Christian historical interpretation. This is followed by the exploration of the emergence of modern historical consciousness through the work of Giovanni Battista Vico, and then the practical historiographical interpretation of Hegel's theory of historical development, with particular attention to the critique of teleological models.</p> <p>The middle part of the semester examines the historiographical shifts of the 19th century: the methodological norms of positivism (source criticism, objectivity, causal explanation), Karl Lamprecht's cultural-historical innovations, and Marx's theory of history, which emphasizes the historical role of social and economic relations. The course then presents the major 20th-century historiographical movement, the Annales School, with particular attention to the <i>longue durée</i> perspective, the history of mentalities, and the practical application of interdisciplinary methods.</p> <p>The final section of the semester focuses on the historiographical significance of postmodern approaches. Michel Foucault's theory of power-knowledge, his study of genealogy and discontinuity, offers new methodological sensitivity to the historian; Hayden White's theory of narrativity highlights the</p>

	rhetorical functioning of historical texts; and Reinhart Koselleck's conceptual-historical and temporal analyses facilitate a deeper understanding of historical change.	
List of the most important required literature (2–4 pieces) with bibliographical details (author, title, edition or specific pages, ISBN)	<p>GYURGYÁK János, KISANTAL Tamás (szerk.), <i>Történetelmélet I–II.</i>, Budapest, Osiris, 2006, ISBN 963-389-869-2</p> <p>SZIJÁRTÓ M. István: <i>A történelem diskurzusa. Bevezetés a 20. századi történetírás történetébe és elméletébe.</i> Budapest, 2021. ISBN 9786155675614</p> <p>KOSELLECK, Reinhard: <i>Historia [est] magistra vitae. A toposz felbomlása a mozgásba lendült történelem újkori horizontján.</i> In: <i>uő: Elmúlt jövő. A történeti idők szemantikája.</i> 41-75., ISBN: 963-9165-68-9</p> <p>Lemon, Michael C. (2003). <i>Philosophy of History: A Guide for Students.</i> New York: Routledge. ISBN 978-0415307701. pp. 14-73; 107-168; 390-426.</p> <p>Bentley, Michael. (1999). <i>Modern Historiography: An Introduction.</i> London & New York: Routledge. ISBN 978-0415202671.</p>	
List of the most important recommended literature (2–4 pieces) with bibliographical details (author, title, edition or specific pages, ISBN)	<p>ASSMANN, Jan, <i>A kulturális emlékezet - Írás, emlékezés és politikai identitás a korai magaskultúrákban.</i> Budapest, 2018. ISBN 9789639777309</p> <p>GYÁNI Gábor, <i>Emlékezés, emlékezet és a történelem elbeszélése,</i> Budapest, Napvilág, 2000, ISBN 963-9082-57-0</p> <p>HOBBSAWN, Eric: <i>A történelemről és a történetírásról.</i> Budapest 2006. ISBN 9789639350489</p> <p>Braw, J. D. (2007). <i>Vision as Revision: Ranke and the Beginning of Modern History.</i> <i>History and Theory</i>, 46(4), pp. 45-60.</p> <p>Schorn-Schütte, Luise. (1993). <i>Karl Lamprecht: Pioneer of Historical Sociology.</i> <i>Journal of Historical Sociology</i>, 6(3), pp. 269–289. Zendy</p> <p>Tendler, Joseph. (2013). <i>The Annales School: Variations on Realism, Methods, and Time.</i> In N. Partner & S. Foot (eds.), <i>The SAGE Handbook of Historical Theory</i> (pp. 93–110). London: SAGE. ISBN 978-1-4129-3114-4.</p>	
Theory to practice ratio:	Theory lessons: 2	Practice lessons:
Applied teaching methods:	<p>In the course, the acquisition of theoretical knowledge in historical scholarship takes place through the use of multiple, complementary methods, which enable students to participate actively, develop critical thinking, and cultivate the ability to apply their knowledge in practice. Traditional, lecture-based teaching is employed, during which the main stages, movements, and schools of historical scholarship are presented in a structured manner, highlighting key concepts, theoretical frameworks, and methodological issues. As a complementary method, interactive elements are incorporated, allowing for the critical analysis of various philosophies of history and historiographical approaches, as well as the presentation of subtopics from different perspectives.</p>	

	<p>Visual aids, such as diagrams, charts, and chronologies, are also employed.</p> <p>Overall, the combination of methodological approaches ensures that doctoral students are not only passive recipients but also active analysts and interpreters of both theoretical and practical issues in historical scholarship, enabling them to situate their own research within a historiographical and theoretical context.</p>
Method of assessment:	three-grade (or three-level) colloquium grade
Assessment criteria:	<p>The completion of the course is based on the knowledge of the lecture material and the required and recommended literature, on which students must be examined in a written exam. The purpose of the assessment is to measure the students' knowledge and familiarity with the relevant literature in a historical scholarship context and to ensure that the acquired knowledge provides a solid foundation for doctoral research.</p> <p>To pass the exam, students must demonstrate knowledge of at least 50% of the lecture material and literature for a "satisfactory" grade, while achieving an "excellent" grade requires knowledge of 80% or more. The assessment is conducted in accordance with the principles set out in Section 33 of the TVSz and the regulations of the Doctoral School: the course is evaluated using a three-grade system (excellent, satisfactory, fail).</p> <p>Students are expected to actively follow the lecture material, independently study the required literature, complete assigned preparatory tasks to a high standard, and actively participate in lectures. The evaluation of the exam also considers the student's active contribution during the course, the independent and professional completion of tasks, and the demonstration of theoretical and methodological knowledge.</p> <p>The performance required for each grade is as follows:</p> <p>Satisfactory (3): the student knows at least 50% of the course content and fundamental elements of the literature and completes the assigned tasks to an acceptable standard.</p> <p>Excellent (5): the student knows at least 80% of the lecture material and literature, demonstrates outstanding preparedness, independent thinking, questions, and analytical skills, and completes tasks thoroughly and to a high standard.</p> <p>Fail (1): the student does not attend lectures, participates passively, does not demonstrate independent thought, and cannot answer at least 50% of the written exam questions correctly.</p> <p>Attendance in the course is mandatory.</p>

<p>How the subject contributes to the achievement of the learning outcomes at level 8 of the MKKR, as identified as learning outcomes in the doctoral school's training programme?</p> <p>Elaborate on the way in which competence elements specified in the Training and Outcome Requirements are/may be achieved <i>(Note: do not simply copy the competence elements from the Training and Outcome Requirements)</i></p>	<p>The course, within the framework of the doctoral program, is aimed at deepening knowledge of historical scholarship and developing theoretical and methodological competencies, thereby contributing to the achievement of the MKKR Level 8 learning outcomes. During the course, students acquire comprehensive historiographical and philosophy-of-history knowledge, understand the complex interrelations of historical phenomena, and explore the possibilities for interpreting historical time, causality, and narrative. Accordingly, the course primarily contributes to the development of deep, professional knowledge (knowledge descriptor).</p> <p>The course methods—such as lectures, theoretical presentations, interactive discussions, and source and work analysis—enable students to practice and enhance their critical thinking and analytical skills (skills descriptor) in a practical context. Active participation and independent completion of tasks foster the development of a scientific attitude, that is, a reflective, autonomous, and responsible research approach (attitude and autonomy descriptor), which is essential for doctoral research.</p> <p>Overall, the course consciously integrates knowledge acquisition, analysis, and independent research thinking, enabling students to plan and conduct their own research independently and responsibly within a historiographical and historical scholarship context, thus fulfilling the MKKR Level 8 learning outcomes specified in the doctoral school's curriculum.</p>
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