

DH for Breakfast

Wednesday Lectures in Digital Humanities



22

April 2026

9.00–10.00 am

DEPARTMENT OF
DIGITAL HUMANITIES

Elisabethstraße 59/III,
Lehrsaal SR 81.31

“More for Show than for Use?”

Reconstructing the Libraries
of 18th-Century German Princesses

Joëlle Weis

Digital Humanities Department
University of Graz

This presentation introduces a long-term research project on the private libraries of 18th-century German princesses. More than one hundred of these collections have survived in various forms, offering valuable insights into historical practices of knowledge acquisition, organization, and display.

The project aims to develop a digital platform that serves as a repository for women’s libraries of the 18th century, enabling the virtual reconstruction of dispersed or partially preserved collections. By employing Linked Open Data within a Wikibase environment, the project connects these libraries and facilitates comparative analysis across collections.

Through this approach, the project seeks to better understand how these libraries were used and to explore their social, epistemic, and dynastic-representational functions. The presentation will address key methodological challenges and highlight the potential of digital reconstruction for advancing the still under-researched field of women’s book history.

Joëlle Weis is currently a temporary professor of Digital Humanities at the University of Graz. She is also head of the "Digital Literature and Cultural Studies" research area at the Trier Center for Digital Humanities. Her research focuses on digital collection research, the use of Linked Open Data in the humanities, and early modern knowledge cultures.



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