MANIPULATING SOCIAL CAPITAL IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY PRUSSIA: THE USE AND CONCEPTUALIZATION OF HONOR IN THE MEMOIRS OF JOHANN DIETZ AND HANS LUDWIG NEHRICH

by

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the ways in which honor was used by artisans in eighteenth-century Prussia. Using the cases of three early modern Germans from artisan backgrounds; the Halloran barber Johann Dietz, his wife Elisabeth, and the cooper Hans Ludwig Nehrlich from the village of Sülzenbrücken, the paper investigates how artisans conceived of and used the concept of honor. As members of the urban artisanal milieu, Dietz, Elisabeth and Nehrlich were part of a culture in which honor and reputation were of utmost importance, and all three made use of the language of honor to explain and justify their actions when they were drawn into conflicts with other artisans or their social superiors. In their efforts to defend themselves from charges of dishonorable conduct, the three artisans demonstrate the surprising malleability of honor as an ordering concept in the early modern city. The dictates of the honorable guild-based community regulated the behavior of artisans and could potentially punish transgressive individuals with complete social, economic and political exclusion. However, the extent to which issues of honor permeated almost every facet of early modern artisan life and transcended the theoretically closed boundaries of the urban community allowed individuals such as Dietz, Elisabeth and Nehrlich, all of whom were accused of dishonorable conduct, to draw on the overlapping meanings and jurisdictions regulating honor to defend their actions. The discourse of honor in the early modern German city simultaneously served as a form of group social capital, which allowed the artisan community both to negotiate with urban authorities and to regulate the conduct of their individual members, and as a form of individual social capital which allowed certain artisans to defend or actively improve their social status, at times in the face of direct opposition from artisan peers or urban authorities.
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Introduction

In the Prussian city of Halle in the first decade of the eighteenth century, the master barber Johann Dietz found himself the subject of a defamatory public placard. At issue was the fate of a large black dog caught in Dietz’s yard. Taking the dog for a stray that wouldn’t be missed, Dietz elected to have the dog killed and dissected by his apprentices and by two medical students who were lodging with him at the time, for the purpose of teaching them anatomy. The unfortunate hound proved not to be a stray however, but rather the property of the salt-panner Meister Ditrich, who, discovering Dietz’s apprentices removing the animal for burial, angrily demanded to know who had killed his dog. While the apprentices did not implicate Dietz when questioned by Ditrich, a public placard soon appeared detailing Dietz’s role in the dog’s dissection. Ditrich took this placard to Rathmeister Möschels and Rathmeister Picks, whose salt-pans he tended, denounced Dietz as a Schwein and a thief, and sought to have Dietz held not only financially liable for forty thalers, but morally responsible for the death of the dog.

1 Johann Dietz, Meister Johann Dietz: Des grofien Kurfürsten Feldscher und königlicher Hofbarbier (Mein Lebenslauf), Ernst Consentius, ed. (Ebenhausen bei München: Wilhelm Langewiesche-Brandt, 1915), p. 263. Dietz gives no exact date for this incident, but comments that it happened around the same time as Halle took in refugees fleeing the 1706 Swedish invasion of Saxony.

2 The incident is covered in Dietz, pp. 260-262.

3 Rathmeister: City Councilor or Alderman. Dietz’s account of the Ditrich’s complaint runs in part “Hierauf wurde Termin angestellet und erkannt: würde Kläger erweisen, daß der Hund questionis vierzig Thaler wert gewesen und er von mir entwandt, so erginge in der ferner, was Recht war . . . Auch führte er Beweis durch den Zeittel und trieb mich aufs Gewissen.” Dietz, pp. 261-262.
Faced with this public attack, which constituted a clear affront to his honor and personal reputation, Dietz turned to the courts and civil authorities to defend his name. As Dietz recounted years later in his memoirs, “because honorable people had taken an interest in the matter, saying that it was not right to expend so much money and sworn testimony because of a dog, the worthy councillor König at last brought the matter to an end and gave the master salt-panner a severe reprimand.” 4 In the end, with his reputation thus reaffirmed by the city’s “respectable people,” Dietz settled with Ditrich for the token sum of two thalers. For Dietz, however, vindication came not simply from the judgment of the town council, but also from Ditrich’s fate after the trial: “things did not go well for the man’s whole family, for he was a blusterer and a blasphemer, and became impoverished and died.” 5 While the town council legally reaffirmed Dietz’s honor by reprimanding Ditrich and formally clearing Dietz of the charge of moral culpability for the dog’s death, Dietz also saw Ditrich’s dishonorable fate as providing indisputable moral proof of his own rectitude.

This incident between Dietz and the salt-panner Ditrich was by no means an isolated one. In the memoirs Dietz wrote at the end of his life, he recounted a wide variety of instances in which he had found himself in conflict with his neighbors and peers in Halle. And, much as in his suit against Ditrich, Dietz’s description of these conflicts was often infused with the language of personal honor and honor defense. This use of honor as a way of conceptualizing conflict was by no means limited to Dietz’s narration of events for his presumed readers.

4 “und weil sich verständige Leute der Sache annahmen: daß’s nicht recht, umb einen Hund so viel Eid und Geld aufzuwenden, fuhr endlich der seelige Rath König in der Sache durch und gab dem Hallmeister eine starke Reprimande.” Dietz, p. 263.

5 “es ging dem Mann nicht wohl mit seiner ganzen Familie. Denn er war ein Prahlhans und Flucher, verarmete ganz und starb.” Dietz, p. 263.
Throughout his life, Dietz made use of the language of honor to defend his actions to the authorities arbitrating his conflicts. In his dealings with city councilmen, Prussian bureaucrats, pastors and advocates, Dietz utilized honor defense as a strategic tool, a method of influencing the decisions of those in positions of authority. Nor was the invocation of honor in legal or social disputes a strategy unique to Dietz. In fact, honor was a central component of the artisanal milieu in which Dietz lived. Examining Dietz's description of the conflicts between himself and his wife Elisabeth, for example, it is possible to see the extent to which Elisabeth also used personal honor, both to defend her actions and to pursue social gain. A similar deployment of honor to actively assert social status is evident in the memoirs of the cooper Hans Ludwig Nehrlich, a contemporary of Dietz who lived in the village of Sülzenbrücken not far from Halle. This paper will investigate the ways in which Johann Dietz, his wife Elisabeth, and Hans Ludwig Nehrlich each represented notions of honor and utilized the defense of honor. Honor, as defined by early modern German artisans such as Dietz and Nehrlich and as it will be defined in this paper, was a construct which both encompassed and went far beyond personal reputation or conduct. Maintenance of personal and group honor was of critical importance to early modern Germans, especially members of the urban artisanal milieu such as Dietz. Honor permeated every facet of life within the German city. Without a claim to honorable standing

6 Throughout the text, Johann Dietz’s wife is generally referred to only as “Frau” or, on a few occasions, as “Watzlauen” to place emphasis on her status as the widow of the master barber August Watzlau. Her birth name was Elisabeth Schober, but to situate her as an actor outside her marital status to either August Watzlau or Johann Dietz, in this paper she shall be referred to as Elisabeth.

7 While Dietz and Nehrlich would certainly never have met, they were both artisans of moderately questionable backgrounds who had quite similar life spans (Dietz 1665-1738, and Nehrlich 1653-ca.1730) and wrote their memoirs at roughly the same time. (Dietz ca. 1635-1637 at age 70-72, Nehrlich in 1723 at 70) Biographical info from editor's introduction, Dietz, p. 8 and from Hans Ludwig Nehrlich, Erlebnisse eines frommen Handwerkers im späten 17. Jahrhundert, Rainer Lachele, ed. (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1997), p. 1.
within a craft, an artisan had no formal place within the city itself and could sink into the ranks of casual laborers, vagabonds, or mercenaries, rootless outsiders excluded from the protections afforded to the citizenry.

Nor was honor simply an affirmation of a political or economic reality. It encompassed an entire system of moral and social expectations, of establishing and protecting a *Ruf*, a reputation. These expectations were promulgated and codified by a number of different social groups: city authorities, the churches, the state. But the most important group for defining and enforcing honor in early modern Germany was the guilds. While honor and reputation preoccupied almost every group within early modern German society to some degree, it was the artisans, particular the urban artisans, for whom honor served as the primary signifier of their identity. As Rudolf Wissell recounts in summarizing the philosophy of the early modern German guild system, “the trades should be as pure as if picked by a dove. The corporations will suffer nothing dishonorable. That which is dishonorable cannot be allowed by the guilds.”

For artisans, to act against the regulations of the guild or the city authorities was to risk losing honorable status. And the loss of honorable status meant not only to face economic ruin and political exclusion, but also an effective social death, to be forced out of an entire community.

Still, as critical as honor was to the life of the early modern artisan, it proved remarkably difficult to adequately define honor as a concept, much less to isolate its source. Honor was of preeminent value among the denizens of Halle and Sülzenbrücken but the exact sources from which honor could be derived remained overlapping and ill-defined. As is evident in the

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memoirs of Johann Dietz and Hans Ludwig Nehrlich, employing the language and terminology of honor often provided a method of justifying actions which otherwise could be viewed as essentially transgressive or disorderly. The discourse of honor thus acted not only as way for guilds and civic authorities to control the conduct of artisans, but also as a method for individuals to defend their status within the community even when their actions seemingly stood in contrast to defined standards of honorable conduct. Nor was the use of honor purely defensive. The discourse of honor could be utilized as a way to make active social gains, to make claims to power or privilege beyond those willingly granted by established authorities. If honor acted as an ordering concept for the population of early modern German cities, it was an ordering concept that managed to be so large and unwieldy as to practically defy coherent definition. As such, its primary quality was, in the end, its mutability.

This is not to say that the language of honor by any means permitted unbounded space for defense of personal conduct. Johann Dietz, as a master barber and eventually a guildmaster with personal and professional ties to local and state bureaucrats, a position as Warden of the Church of St. Moritz and the financial wherewithal to pursue court cases, could defend his honor by employing a seemingly limitless number of legal, cultural and social justifications, each of which would be given serious consideration and weight by town and guild authorities. In contrast, however, the number of legitimate defenses available to someone like Dietz’s wife Elisabeth were considerably more circumscribed. As a woman, a widow and an artisan’s wife with little or no independent financial standing, many of the social channels through which Dietz asserted his honor, such as formal appeals to the guild masters, the town council or the Brandenburg court, were all but unavailable to Elisabeth. Still, even Elisabeth possessed
multiple, albeit more legally vague, claims to honorable status, through her family, the church, and her status as a mother and wife. As for Nehrlich, while he occupied the same general social milieu as Dietz and thus had access to many of the same sources of personal honor, he consistently situated honor as a religious and moral quality, rather than one coming from family or occupational background. Thus Nehrlich made little if any use of the legal and guild regulated definitions of honor theoretically available to him. Still, while Nehrlich adhered to a rather singular conception of what honor was, he nevertheless used the discourse of honor in much the same way as Dietz or Elisabeth, to defend his actions against claims of impropriety and to actively assert his social status. Although notions of honor acted to restrict the possibilities of acceptable behavior, they simultaneously provided enough space to allow the justification of behaviors seemingly outside the very order they imposed, to permit a certain amount of casuistry in the social relationships described by Dietz, Elisabeth and Nehrlich.

**Source Materials**

To examine Dietz’s, Elisabeth’s, and Nehrlich’s use of honor, this paper will look at a number of incidents described in Johann Dietz’s memoir, *Meister Johann Dietz: Des großen Kurfürsten Feldscher und königlicher Hofbarbier (Mein Lebenslauf)* and Nehrlich’s memoir *Erlebnisse eines frommen Handwerkers im späten 17. Jahrhundert.*

9 For example Dietz, pp. 238-239, in which Elizabeth’s needs and desires during pregnancy are used to counter Dietz’s arguments that the time she spends with her siblings has made her neglectful of her spousal duties.

10 *Meister Johann Dietz: Des großen Kurfürsten Feldscher und Königslicher Hofbarbier (Mein Lebenslauf)*: Master Johann Dietz: Field-Surgeon of the Great Elector and Royal Court Barber (My Life Story); *Erlebnisse eines frommen Handwerkers im späten 17. Jahrhundert*: Experiences of a Pious Craftsman in the late Seventeenth Century. The term memoir is used here in lieu of autobiography to distinguish between works like Dietz, which maintain a primary focus on events and occurrences external to and witnessed by the author, and works of autobiography proper, which contain a more direct focus on the internal or personal development of the author. Nehrlich’s memoir, as will be discussed below, contains a good deal about of personal spiritual development, but still falls more into the specific category of *Heilsgeschichte* than autobiography. A relatively concise overview delineating these terms can be
Shortly before Dietz’s death, at the ostensible prodding of family and friends who wished for a written account of his *Wanderjahre*, Dietz described his travels as a journeyman as well as his contentious relationship with the Halle Barbers’ Guild and his troubled first marriage. A copy of the manuscript ended up in the possession of Friedrich Nicolai and through him made its way to the Royal Library in Berlin. The manuscript resurfaced in 1915, when it was published as part of a series of books on *Abenteuer und Schicksal* in early modern Germany. In spite of a strong slant towards the direction of travel narrative, a significant portion of the memoir dealt with the Dietz’s legal and social travails in Halle, disputes in which Dietz frequently referenced the concepts and language of honor defense.

Johann Dietz’s writing fell well within the purview of the didactic memoir. Dietz distorted or altered the chronology of events, contradicted himself at numerous points, and more generally shaped his stories and characters to provide tidy lessons dispensed with an ubiquitous

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11 *Wanderjahre* refers to the period after an artisan attained journeyman status, in which journeymen in a number of professions were expected to find employment with masters in cities other than the one in which they apprenticed.

12 *Abenteuer und Schicksal*: Adventure and Destiny. Information on the history and publication of the Dietz manuscript from Amelang, p. 282. The Dietz memoir was also translated into English by Bernard Miall as Johann Dietz, *Master Johann Dietz: Surgeon in the Army of the Great Elector and Barber to the Royal Court* (New York: E.P. Dutton and Company, 1923). The translations of the German Dietz text presented in this paper are the author’s own, rather than those of Miall.

Given that the memoir reveals an often profoundly antagonistic response to Dietz on the part of the Barbers’ Guild and Halle’s civic authorities, Dietz’s own assertions about his solid standing within the community and the widespread infamy of his detractors must be met with a healthy degree of scepticism. Dietz, after all, expressly writes to “first of all praise God for his gracious and wonderful preservation” and as a “service, education and warning to truly fear and trust in God, instead of idle fame”\(^\text{15}\) rather than an assessment of his reputation amongst the artisans of Halle. Indeed, given the vitriolic nature of Dietz’s disputes with the Barbers’ Guild, it is entirely possible that the artisans’s of Halle perceived and treated Dietz as fundamentally dishonorable. However, while the memoir is ultimately ill-suited to providing definitive information on how Dietz came to be perceived among his peers, the text can nevertheless provide invaluable information about both the strategies Dietz employed to construct his personal honor and the way these strategies were received by those who served as the ostensible arbiters of honor. If we can not use the memoir to establish with certainty Dietz’s perceived *Ruf*, we can see the extent to which Dietz could use the language of honor to make enforceable legal and social claims. The barbers of Halle may indeed have thought Dietz a dishonorable interloper, but they could not translate this opinion into a revocation of Dietz’s legal honorable status.

Dealing with Elisabeth’s use of honor, a further note of caution must be sounded given that Elisabeth generally found herself in honor disputes with her husband and the only available

\(^{14}\) See for instance Dietz’s argument about his status as a Halle master based on passing the barber’s exam below, or compare Dietz’s account of the resolution of the dispute over his forged indenture letters with the report to Minister Christoph von Katsch provided in Dietz, appendix 2, pp. 349-350.

source to judge the outcome of these disputes is the writings of her adversary. For much of the memoir, Dietz presented Elisabeth as an exemplar of iniquity and specifically denied her claims to honorable status. However, in this case the critical element of inquiry lies not so much in Dietz’s own judgments on his wife’s honor, but in how other authorities reacted to her contested claims. Dietz himself vociferously proclaimed that a wide variety of Halle’s notables, from the town’s advocates and pastors to his own children and his son-in-law, had aligned themselves with his wife in her suits against him. Whether or not these claims were significantly embellished to garner Dietz the sympathy of his readers, it is not too much to suggest that Elisabeth’s petitions for redress against her husband found an audience willing to hear them and give them serious consideration.

If Dietz’s memoir fits well within the didactic memoir genre, Nehrlich’s memoir follows the similarly regimented form of the pietist *Heilsgeschichte*. Nehrlich wrote his life story at the urging of the pietist leader August Hermann Francke, with the specific intent of creating a document which would act as a testimony his religious rebirth and the active role of faith in his life. While Nehrlich’s memoir was not published until 1997, life-writing formed an important part of the pietist movement. By 1720, for instance, Johann Heinrich Reich collected 161 pietists’ biographical sketches, which were published in seven volumes. The biographical

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16 In Dietz’s case, the 1915 version of his memoir contains an appendix of documents from Halle and Berlin archives which at very least confirm the substance of the judgements in many of Dietz’s lawsuits. The appendix does not, however, include the records of the consistory trials between Elisabeth and Dietz.

17 *Heilsgeschichte*: sacred history.

18 Editor’s introduction to Nehrlich, p. 2.

sketches assembled by pietists such as Reich, as well as longer manuscripts like the Nehrlich memoir, unsurprisingly concentrate on the authors' spiritual lives.  

Nehrlich's memoir, following standard pietist practice, provides some overview of his childhood, occupation and married life, but for the most part addresses his religious convictions. In particular, the memoir focuses on Nehrlich's *Wiedergeburt* and the subsequent impact made by Nehrlich's spiritual beliefs on his daily life. Nehrlich also gives considerable space to his struggles with orthodox Lutheran authorities, another popular trope in pietist writing. Since almost all of the honor conflicts Nehrlich describes occur within this stylized field of conflicts with orthodox ministers, a dilemma parallel to that of the Dietz's memoir arises—the extent to which the source can be trusted to report on outcomes of honor conflicts when the structural integrity of the narrative seemingly requires a resolution favorable to the author. Much as in Dietz's memoir, the question of whether Nehrlich was perceived as honorable by the Lutheran authorities of Sülzenbrücken can not be answered with any certainty by looking at the memoir. In the end there is only Nehrlich's word that his social peers thought of him as honorable. But also like Dietz, Nehrlich's cases show the extent to which the authorities weighing matters of honor took the arguments made by Nehrlich seriously and the extent to which these arguments had a tangible effect on his social and legal status. However well or ill Nehrlich's community thought

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21 *Wiedergeburt*: rebirth.

of him, by taking recourse to the language of honor, Nehrlich effectively prevented any formal
judgment of dishonor and thus forestalled the very real social consequences such as exclusion
from communion or excommunication which would come with a formal censure.

**Honor in Early Modern Germany: Historiography and Approaches**

_Ehre_, or honor, as the term was used by Johann Dietz and other early modern Germans,
carried with it a number of different connotations.\(^23\) In the form used in Dietz’s memoir and in
this paper, _Ehre_ was specifically associated with the artisan. Certainly, other social groups also
used and invoked the language of honor and were seen as possessing honor. And in many cases
the distinctions between honor and dishonor made among these groups followed roughly similar
lines as the honor distinctions made by artisans.\(^24\) However, in its full range of meanings found
in the Dietz memoir, honor retained a distinctly artisanal and urban character. To some extent,
honor among artisans was a tangible legal quantity. The guilds of early modern German cities
set down regulations to define who was and who was not honorable in order to determine
eligibility for guild membership and the authorities of the Holy Roman Empire set down formal
edicts which specified which professions and persons were to be considered honorable.\(^25\)

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\(^23\) While _Ehre_ is the most often used term for honor in Dietz’s memoir, in a number of places he uses words such as
_Ruf_ or _Redlichkeit_, which translate as reputation and decency, as synonymous with honor. Similarly, when dealing
with dishonor, _Böse_, _Schimpf_, _Schaden_ and _Unrecht_ (evil, insult, shame and injustice, respectively) are also used. For
the specific terms used, see the German Dietz text in the footnotes.

\(^24\) For instance, James Farr, _Authority and Sexuality in Early Modern Burgundy (1550-1730)_ (New York: Oxford
University Press, 1995) contains a useful overview of the place of honor among nobles, clergy and _robin_ in early
modern France, particularly in section I, “The Order of Morality, the Morality of Order”, pp. 13-60. The honor of
urban elites in seventeenth century Augsburg also figures in Kathy Stuart, _Defiled Trades and Social Outcasts: Honor
and Ritual Pollution in Early Modern Germany_ (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), chapter 2, “Honor,
Status, and Pollution,” pp. 33-68.

\(^25\) The most notable of these imperial efforts was the Imperial Trades Edict of 1731, which is reprinted in translation
in Mack Walker, _German Home Towns: Community, State and General Estate 1648-1871_ (Ithaca: Cornell University
However, while innumerable attempts were made to legally inscribe the meaning of honor, the idea of *Ehre* extended to concerns far beyond these formal criteria. As Mack Walker points out, honor "could not be clearly defined or objectively ascertained, like wealth, skill or performance; it was something sensed as it was displayed and received within a community," it was the irreducible sum of the artisan's personal behavior and his place within the guild and the city at large.²⁶

The historiography of early modern Germany offers a variety of conceptual frameworks for understanding the meaning of honor and dishonor among urban artisans. Traditional approaches in the literature generally place an emphasis on honor as a feudal holdover, a series of medieval taboos and strictures which define the exact place of the artisan within the corporate hierarchy of the city.²⁷ Rudolf Wissell's magisterial *Des Alten Handwerks Recht und Gewohnheit* typifies this view, compiling an exhaustive list of guilds and social groups within the "dishonorable" milieu and tracing the origins of their legal status back to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.²⁸ These accounts tend to view honor as an economic concept, as "feudal" in the Marxist sense, a part of an implicit or explicit narrative that sees honor as fading with a nineteenth-century transition to a "modern" economy. In these accounts, honor becomes either a false consciousness to be replaced by true class consciousness in a later period, or an anachronism, a cynical ploy by conservative craftsmen to preserve their status in the face of

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²⁶ Walker, p. 102.

²⁷ See among others, Wissell, which offers a six volume treatment of artisans in early modern Germany and covers honor extensively in vol. 1, or Wolfram Fischer, ed., *Quellen zur Geschichte des deutschen Handwerks* (Göttingen: Musterschmidt Verlag, 1957), particularly pp. 7-24.

economic rationalization.\textsuperscript{29}

Starting in the 1960s, social historical approaches increasingly rejected this strictly economic teleology, and presented honor as an integrated component of the social order of early modern German cities.\textsuperscript{30} Mack Walker’s \textit{German Home Towns} eschews the vaguely conspiratorial notions of honor as a legally enshrined form of the artisans’ economic obstructionism but does not detach honor from economics by any means. Honor, as a key component of “guild moralism,” becomes implicated in every aspect of the social and political life of the artisan, and by extension, the entire city. In this conception, honor is ultimately a communal value, a way of distinguishing the citizen from the outsider: “the guilds in their connective function—between citizen and community, and among compartments of life we incline to treat separately—were vital institutions of communal defense and also main determiners of what it was that would be defended, and against whom.”\textsuperscript{31}

Andreas Grießinger further develops this notion of honor as an interconnected set of social, political and economic ideologies. Where Walker contends that honor and guild moralism ultimately “led the guildsmen into absurdities of prurience and persecutions when they tried to judge and act upon it,” an approach which largely preserves the conception of honor as irrational and conservative even as it asserts its importance to urban early modern Germany,

\textsuperscript{29} Wissell provides a good example of both of these viewpoints.


\textsuperscript{31} Quote from Walker, p. 107, for a Walker’s full definition of guild moralism, see pp. 102-107.
Grießinger argues that honor offered an immensely useful tool for the guilds to pursue their economic and political interests. Following Bourdieu, Grießinger considers honor and its defense as the lynchpin of the early modern artisans' strategy for accumulating “symbolic capital,” capital which was eminently useful both for developing political and economic capital and for defending the artisan against the dictates of urban elites. For Grießinger, understanding honor requires navigating between “the Scylla of economic-teleological concepts and the Charybdis of static-functionalist approaches,” taking instead a middle path which views honor as an adaptable and powerful set of strategies through which artisans as a group could realize a variety of political and economic goals. Still, while they differ in their assessment of the dynamism of honor as a system of social ordering, both Grießinger and Walker portray honor as fundamentally local and restricted to male guild members. And while they acknowledge the extent to which honor is defined not only through a set of legal proscriptions but also through the totality of cultural and social practices, both authors argue for understanding honor as an essentially monolithic entity, a series of standards set by the tacit or explicit consensus of a coherent social group and stringently enforced to assure collective cohesion.

This assertion of artisanal cohesion has been increasingly undermined by recent scholarship which problematizes the view of honor as a singular coherent system. Works such as


34 “der Scylla ökonomisch-teleologischer Konzepte und der Charybdis statisch-funktionalistischer Ansätze” Grießinger, p. 18.
Kathy Stuart’s *Defiled Trades and Social Outcasts*, which examines the experience of men and women who worked in legally dishonorable trades like skinners or executioners, or Elizabeth Foyster’s *Manhood in Early Modern England: Honour, Sex and Marriage*, which details how men’s social and economic honor was tied to women’s sexual honor, argue for a more nuanced understanding of honor, an understanding which takes into account the cultural variations in honor roles and expectations among different members of the artisanal milieu.\(^{35}\) As in Grießinger, these authors present honor as a deeply embedded social and cultural system which, while it has economic and political consequences, possesses a life and logic outside those structures. Kathy Stuart, for instance, echoes Grießinger in her use of Bourdieu’s notion of symbolic capital as a method of understanding honor and dishonor, although she advocates the more expansive term “social capital” to stress the extent to which this capital stems from being an acknowledged part of the community, rather than from an assigned level of social status.\(^{36}\)

But where Grießinger views guilds as coherent units bound together by shared ritual and social status, the cultural approaches demonstrate the extent to which social categories such as artisan and magistrate are themselves riven with an array of divisions, between male and female, citizen


\(^{36}\) Stuart, pp. 133, 257.
and outsider, pure and impure.

Sheilagh Ogilvie’s article “How Does Social Capital Affect Women? Guilds and Communities in Early Modern Germany” takes the approach of Stuart even further, arguing that for the most part social capital was so unevenly distributed as to effectively exclude women and other outsiders, that it “enabled individual men to coordinate their actions to create and disseminate shared norms about female behavior” and served more as a bulwark of the patriarchy than a tool for all within the artisanal milieu to negotiate their status with city authorities. What remains constant in all of these approaches, whether they consider artisans’ social capital as a device with which to negotiate with social elites or as a device for social control, is their conceptualization of honor as a system which functions on a distinct, communal level. Labels of honor and dishonor can be used to exclude people from an economic system, reinforce patriarchal values, or define an individual as a member of the political body of a city, but in each of these scenarios the actors remain the individual artisan, the guild, and the city authorities. Each actor is in some way a stakeholder in the culture of honor, and in the case of honor conflicts, the outcome reflects which group or individual is best able to articulate or defend their interests, to muster the resources of symbolic or social capital most effectively.

This paper will build on these conceptions of honor as a type of social capital. The definition of social capital used in this paper largely follows the conception which Stuart and Grießinger in turn take from Bourdieu, a conception of social capital as the sum total of economic, cultural and social power available to a certain individual or group as a tool to

negotiate not only with those higher in the city hierarchy, but also with those who were equal or lower in status. Certainly, as Ogilvie points out, the exercise of social capital was by no means universally beneficial to the early modern city.\textsuperscript{38} In the end, honor, and the social capital it accrued for the artisan was a way of negotiating conflicts and regulating power relations rather than a way for artisans to defy oppressive authority. And while it is useful to view honor as a particularly critical component of early modern social capital, the approaches advocated by Stuart and Grießinger tend to overstate the extent to which the social capital of honor operated within a closed community system. As seen in the memoirs of Dietz and Nehrlich, the discourse of honor allowed artisans to draw on resources of social capital from outside their particular community, resources which allowed sharp challenges to the use of honor as mechanism for social regulation, but also opportunistic manipulation of legal and social norms to gain a personal advantage.

\textbf{Johann Dietz}\textsuperscript{39}

The master barber Johann Dietz was born in 1665 in Halle an der Salle, a middle-sized city in south-eastern Germany then controlled by the principality of Magdeburg. The son of a rope-maker, Dietz apprenticed as a barber-surgeon, completing his apprenticeship in 1684. As

\textsuperscript{38} Ogilvie's critique of social capital is for the most part directed at the idea that the use social capital is in some way inherently beneficial to society, an idea put forward in works by Francis Fukuyama and James Coleman. Neither Stuart nor Grießinger follow this definition of social capital or make a case for social capital being either an ill or a boon and portray it simply as a way in which power is exercised.

\textsuperscript{39} Dietz's memoir is divided into two main sections. The first half of the book covers his apprenticeship and his travels as a journeyman, ca. 1684 to 1694, with a few small initial chapters on his childhood. The second half of the book deals primarily with his life in Halle 1694 to 1726, with a primary emphasis on his legal struggles with the Barbers' Guild and a number of his neighbors and his marriage to Elisabeth Watzlau. A smaller section is added at the end covering his less contentious second marriage and his life after stepping down as guildmaster in 1726. While Dietz does make some reference to honor and honor conflicts as a journeyman, this paper will focus on his much more extensive writings about his time as a master barber in Halle.
Halle had been annexed by Brandenburg in 1680, Dietz began his *Wanderjahre* in Berlin and eventually joined the Prussian army as a field-surgeon during the 1686 campaign against the Ottoman fortresses at Ofen and Pest. After further employment in a variety of positions, ranging from service as a ship’s surgeon in the Dutch North Sea whaling fleet to a position as a regimental barber for the Danish army, Dietz returned to Halle in 1692 intent on purchasing a barber’s shop and joining the guild as a master. However, when the guild refused him membership in favor of a journeyman barber from Leipzig, Dietz once again left Halle, first taking a position as an assistant court barber in Merseburg and eventually, in 1694, successfully petitioning the Elector of Brandenburg to be granted the title of a royal court barber, a title which allowed him to open a shop in Halle. Dietz’s rejection by the Halle barbers, and his subsequent circumvention of the guild with a royal patent, served as the prelude to a series of legal battles in which Dietz’s status as a guild member and a citizen of Halle continually came into question, battles which for the most part remained unresolved up to his death in 1738.

While Dietz describes a number of other honor defenses in his memoir, this paper will focus on three in particular: Dietz’s defense of his honor after an assault by his captain in the city militia, his protest against the punishment given to him by the Halle town council for assaulting his maid, and the attempt by the Halle Barbers’ Guild to remove him from his position as the head of the guild. In each of these cases, Dietz made recourse to different sources and forms of honor both to refute charges made against him and to actively pursue a claim to honorable social status.

One of the most clear cut challenges to Dietz’s honor came in 1708 when, in his capacity as a Lance Corporal in the city militia, Dietz joined a procession to escort Maria Anna of
Austria, recently married to King João V of Portugal, through Halle. As Dietz recounts, his participation in this civic ritual ended prematurely when three of his fellow militiamen, led by his neighbor and commanding officer, Captain Hoffmann, took the opportunity to extract revenge on Dietz over a prior property dispute. Hoffmann and his party accosted Dietz by the town gate, and defamed him to all within earshot, calling out “Attack him! Attack the dog’s meat! The rebel! The mameluke!” While warding off the attacks, Dietz still found time to rebut these scurrilous slanders to the assembled crowd, proclaiming that all present were witnesses to the false accusations.

Like so many other events in Dietz’s life, the incident ended in litigation. In fact, it was the barber’s third legal action against Hoffmann alone. In taking Hoffmann to court, Dietz was not solely concerned with gaining redress for the injuries suffered in the attack, but also with reaffirming his honor as a citizen. In his defense, Hoffmann argued that as Dietz’s superior officer in the militia, his actions fell within the purview of disciplining a subordinate for improper behavior. Dietz, however, claimed that Hoffmann’s actions fell outside the scope of military discipline and comprised an attack on his dignity as a citizen of Halle. As he recalls with evident satisfaction, Dietz won the verdict in spite of ill will on the part of much of the city council.

König, the mining director, at last pronounced his decision: the citizens were not mercenary soldiers, and on that account were not very strictly disciplined; much less were they to be treated with insults and blows; for which reason those persons against whom I had brought my accusation had behaved to me in an unseemly and excessive fashion, and would be fined the sum of five marks and ordered to pay all costs, and to make to me a clarification of honor and to convey

40 See Dietz, pp. 247-248 for his full account of the incident.

to me an expression of their esteem.

While the financial restitution might have been a token amount compared to the court fees inherent in pursuing such a lawsuit, the judgment reaffirmed Dietz's place as a member of the Halle polity, to whom a legally definable measure of honor and respect was due, even from his militia captain and the Hauptleute of the city. To receive less would have grouped Dietz with outsiders like besoldete Soldaten.

If his conflict with Captain Hoffmann shows Dietz vigorously using the courts to assert his status as an honorable citizen and master-barber of Halle, in a number of other conflicts Dietz's honorable status came even more directly into question. In one particularly vivid instance, Dietz again found himself before the magistrates after an assault, but this time as the accused. Having determined to dismiss his wife's maid on the grounds that she was a leichtfertige Hure who encouraged his wife to be disputatious and who failed to show proper deference, Dietz became enraged when the maid refused the bag of coins he offered as back wages and declared her intention to continue to serve Dietz's wife. In his typically bellicose manner, Dietz responded first with what he euphemistically refers to as grobe Rede, and then by beating the unfortunate maid with the aforementioned sack of coins. Dietz's wife and the maid promptly took their grievance to the town council. In spite of Dietz's voluminous and continued


43 Hauptleute: elites; besoldete Soldaten: mercenary soldiers.


45 Grobe Rede: uncivil words. Dietz, p. 258.
protestations that the maid had overplayed her injuries and was a *vollblütige Hure* pregnant with the bastard child of a local cleric, the magistrates took up the maid’s case.\textsuperscript{46} 

In this case, even Dietz’ seemingly boundless enthusiasm for litigation could not forestall a negative outcome. Summoned to the Council Chamber, Dietz protested that he was entitled to leniency on grounds of his profession, but he nevertheless found himself physically dragged away by the *Stockmeister* and his assistant.\textsuperscript{47} As Dietz recalled, “I was forced to go to prison then and there, and was locked in as though I had been the basest thief.”\textsuperscript{48} Nor was this the end of Dietz’s punishment. The night of imprisonment was followed by a night and a full day in the stocks and a reprimand from the town council concerning the need for more ruly comportment.

If Dietz’s lawsuit against Hoffmann played out like a prototypical honor defense from an established master artisan, his punishment for assaulting his servant appears the neat inverse, a ritual of dishonor for one who had transgressed the rules of the city. As Kathy Stuart details in *Defiled Trades and Social Outcasts*, in early modern German legal proceedings “dishonor came to affect anyone and anything involved in the process of punishment, polluting both persons and objects connected with criminal punishment.”\textsuperscript{49} Rough treatment or even basic physical contact from the *Stockmeister*, being placed under lock and key in the same place as common thieves, and public exposure on the infamous stocks each carried the strong taint of dishonor.

However, even in this situation, which seemingly presented an unambiguous affront to

\textsuperscript{46} *Vollblütige Hure*: full-blooded whore. Dietz, p. 258.

\textsuperscript{47} *Stockmeister*: stockmaster. Dietz, p. 260.

\textsuperscript{48} “*Ich musste fort ins Gerhorsam. Und verschlossen mich, als wenn ich der är gsteste Dieb!*” Dietz, p. 260.

\textsuperscript{49} Stuart, p. 146.
the honor of the disciplined, Dietz made the case that due to the unfairness of the proceedings against him, he actually retained his honor throughout the entire process. To be sure, Dietz calls himself *gekränket* by the experience, but he steadfastly insisted that the punishments meted out against him were in fact unjustified. Dietz took his complaints to the local Prussian authorities, who sided with him and reprimanded the town council, allowing Dietz to avoid making the sort of formal *Ehrenerklärung* which ended the Hoffmann case. While Dietz was unable to escape censure for his actions, by appealing beyond the community to state authorities he regained a legal basis for claiming unblemished honor. Both the rebuke of the town council’s verdict and Dietz’s ability to avoid making a formal apology testified to the effectiveness of exploiting the jurisdictional overlap between the city and national authorities in honor disputes.

Beyond simply exploiting the complexities of bureaucratic boundaries of eighteenth-century Prussia, Dietz also defended his claim to honor in this case by referencing a conception of honor based in gender mores. In fact, Dietz went as far as to suggest that the true stigma in this case fell upon his wife Elisabeth, who had once again falsely tarred her husband as an “evil, godless man.” Dietz’s conflict with the maid was precipitated less by the maid’s own actions than by Dietz’s belief that she was encouraging his wife to disobey him, a belief reinforced by the maid’s refusal to accept Dietz’s termination of her employment on the grounds that she was actually employed by his wife. The argument Dietz made to the *Rathmeister* and later to the town council rested not simply his professional standing, but also his prerogative to correct the

51 *Ehrenerklärung*: clarification of honor.
insolence of his wife and servant.\textsuperscript{53}

The wide scope of options available to Dietz to defend his honor becomes further apparent in a series of conflicts which arose during Dietz's tenure from 1710 to 1726 as the Obermeister of the Halle Barbers' Guild.\textsuperscript{54} Dietz's pending appointment to the Obermeister position was itself a matter of honor defense.

The first quarrel I had was in respect to the position of Guildmaster. After the death of several holders my time to fill the position came round; yet they elected Master Schwender and passed me over. They said, or thought, that I was a free master.—In order to undeceive them, and to protect myself from the insult (for I had passed my examination, no less than they), I petitioned the Court, which decided that I must by all means be their Guildmaster, because I was the King's Court barber, while they were only self-appointed—they had to let matters take their course.\textsuperscript{55}

By labeling Dietz a Freimeister, the barbers of Halle challenged not only Dietz's formal membership in the Halle guild, but his honorable status in its entirety. As Mack Walker points out, the guilds considered the Freimeister as unlawful interlopers infringing on the guilds' rightful monopolies. As Freimeister, "in the community's eyes they were outside invaders and disturbers of the peace; Pfuscher, Storer, in direct proportion to the economic productivity the state presumably expected of them."\textsuperscript{56} Successfully branding Dietz a Freimeister would have allowed the barbers not only to bar Dietz from taking the office Obermeister, but also to banish

\textsuperscript{53} Dietz, pp. 258-260.

\textsuperscript{54} Obermeister: guildmaster. Dietz, p. 287.

\textsuperscript{55} "Der erste Kampf war noch umb die Obermeister Stelle. Da nach Absterben mich die Reihe traf, da wählten sie Herrn Schwender und gingen mich vorbei. Sagten, oder meineten: ich war ein Frei-Meister.—Ihnen das zu benehmen und dem Schimpf zu wehren (weil ich mein Examen so wohl, als sie, ausgestanden), kam ich bei Hofe ein, welcher deciderete: daß ich schlechterdings ihr Obermeister sein müßte, weil ein Hofbarbier vom König, sie aber von sich dependireten.—Mußten's also geschehen lassen." Dietz, p. 287.

\textsuperscript{56} Walker, p. 87. Pfuscher: bungler, Storer: troublemaker.
him from the ranks of the honorable barbers entirely.

Faced with this assault on his honorable status, Dietz employed multiple strategies to deflect the specific Schimpf that he was a Freimeister and thus ineligible to become Obermeister of the Barbers’ Guild. To disprove the insult, Dietz once again drew on a notion of honor as stemming from state authority: as an appointee of the King, he was, if anything, more qualified to head the guild than the other barbers, whose authority was merely self-proclaimed. However, at the same time that Dietz set himself apart from the barbers of Halle and asserted his superiority as a Hofbarbier, he defended himself from the insulting term Freimeister by stressing that he had passed the same examination, and thus had the same qualifications, as the other Halle guild members. This claim to commonality is all the more notable given that earlier in his memoirs Dietz detailed how he never, in fact, took that examination, as the Barbers’ Guild refused outright to examine him and Dietz prevailed upon the town council to grant him his license without taking the test.57

While the appeal to the court proved enough to force the guild into accepting Dietz as Obermeister, he soon enough faced new and considerably more serious accusations of impropriety.58 During his tenure as Obermeister Dietz granted Lehrbriefe to two apprentices without consulting the co-Guildmaster, Werneroth.59 One of the two was an apprentice of Master Stecheysen whose affair with a soldier’s wife had become publically known. The apprentice thus wished to leave quickly for his Wanderjahre as a journeyman to protect his reputation. In

57 Dietz, pp. 222-223.

58 See Dietz, pp. 288-296 for his rather convoluted account of the incident, as well as pp. 347-351 of the appended Urkunden for petitions relating to the trial.

59 Lehrbriefe: letter of indenture.
the other case, an apprentice’s mother paid Dietz to secure a *Lehrbrief* and compel her son to return from Halle to his home in Gera. In return for a modest personal compensation, Dietz forged Werneroth’s signature on the *Lehrbrief* and agreed to conceal both apprentices’ motivations for seeking early release from their training, a move he justified as allowing apprentices in difficult situations to avoid the expense and difficulty of obtaining investiture through proper channels. When the members of the guild discovered this subterfuge, they forced Dietz to resign his position and sought to have him banished from Halle as a forger.  

When the City Council voted to support the barbers in their suit against Dietz, he once again faced a sharp challenge to both his personal honor and his status as a citizen of Halle:

> When I discovered all of this I was easily calculate how things would go with me, and to what insult and shame this subjected me. This distressed me greatly, for they proclaimed it to be a *crimen falsi* which would be punished by banishment; and made it much larger than it was.

Just as in the conflict which resulted from Dietz’s assault of his maid, if Dietz never admitted specifically to dishonor, he least acknowledged the extent to which the censure of both the town authorities and his fellow citizens “severely offended” him. But unlike previous conflicts, in this instance Dietz found himself unable to make a direct appeal to the Prussian state to affirm his honorable status. Due to ill-advised financial dealings with a merchant who had since gone

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60 The move to declare Dietz a forger and thus eligible for banishment was led by a *Bornmeister* Schwarz, whom Dietz claimed owed him a substantial sum of money. Dietz, p. 290.

61 “*Als ich das alles erfuhr, konnte ich mir die Rechnung leicht machen, wie mir’s gehen, und was vor Schimpf und Schaden ich leiden würde. Es machte mir große Angst, denn sie es vor ein crimen falsi, so mit der Landesverweisung bestraft würde, ausgaben und übergroß machten!*” Dietz, p. 290.

62 “*kränkte mich sehr.*” Dietz, p. 289.
bankrupt, Dietz faced nearly as many potential legal problems in Berlin as he did in Halle.\footnote{63} Consequently, unlike in previous conflicts where petitions to Berlin could override the decisions made in Halle, in this case all legal solutions would involve punishment. Even if Dietz persuaded state officials to overrule the Halle barbers and reinstate him as Obermeister, he would have to submit to the punishment as an errant debtor in Berlin. To extricate himself from this quandary, Dietz drew the distinction between a dishonorable punishment and a simple acceptance of guilt and elected “to choose the lesser of two evils, and to preferably submit myself to a merciful sentence in Berlin than to be torn at and abused by my enemies (in Halle).” \footnote{64} By paying off his Berlin creditors and submitting himself to judgment there, Dietz managed to emerge with a formal restoration of his honor in Halle. And as the punishment in Berlin involved only a financial penalty to which he voluntarily submitted, Dietz could simultaneously make the claim that he had not been exposed to the same dishonor inherent in imprisonment or arrest.\footnote{65} Moreover, Dietz also emerged with what he saw as tangible evidence of his enemies’ ill motives:

Everything which was connected to my case had to be sealed and sent to eternal oblivion in Berlin. Two members of the council, namely Dr. Reimers and Redel, had to be there while my accounts were handed over and distributed to the assembled Barbers’ Guild, about which I had to supplicate myself to the Guild to permit their attendance. They had to grant me an absolute acquittal and clarification that they had nothing further to say of me save all honor and respect. But the barbers had not expected this: that by meddling with my affairs they were attaching shame and calamity to their own hides; and they who had thought to

\footnote{63} A full account of Dietz’s dealings with the merchant Nebelthau, and the subsequent legal ramifications see Dietz, pp. 251, 291, 299, 302 and the note p. 329.

\footnote{64} “aus zwei Bösen eins zu wählen und mich lieber in Berlin unter gnädige Strafe zu submittieren, als hier (in Halle) mich unter meinen Feinden zerren und beschimpfen zu lassen.” Dietz, p. 291.

\footnote{65} See Stuart, pp. 121-147 for an overview of the dishonor inherent in arrest and imprisonment vs. financial penalty.
destroy me had themselves fallen into the pit. For they irritated the Court greatly by their innumerable writings and presentations concerning my state, and through this the King discovered all that an apprentice has to give for his indenture and certificate of birth . . . So that now they had to take all their patents, which they had previously given and sealed themselves, either from the council or from Berlin.66

In his description of the trial’s outcome, Dietz not only emphasized how his honor had been formally acknowledged, but took the government’s seizure of the barbers’ investiture revenue as an indication of both the barbers’ iniquity and as a vindication of his motivations for having forged indenture letters in the first place.

In his case against Hoffmann, Dietz stuck rather stringently to a conception of honor which operated within the closed system of the local civic hierarchy. When a dispute erupted over the ownership of a property, Dietz was accosted and maligned as a rebel and a hypocrite. In response he sought legal recourse and was satisfied only by a formal and public Ehrenerklärung to reestablish his reputation. Yet when defending himself against the potential honor loss caused by his punishments for abusing the maid, Dietz negated this conception, defending his honor both as a private virtue unassailable by his wife’s accusations and as a public quantity guaranteed by state authorities who superceded the judgment of the same council that, in the Hoffmann incident, had restored his honor. And when dealing with the repercussions of falsely affixing Werneroth’s name to a Lehrbrief, Dietz altered his justifications yet again, locating the

66 "Alles, was in der Sache hier ergangen, mußte versiegelte nach Berlin in die ewige Vergessenheit gesandt werden. Zwei aus dem Rath, nämlich Herr Doktor Reimers und Redel, mußten bei Ablegung und Übergabe meiner Rechnung bei versammelter Barbierinnung mit sein; als worumb ich selbst suppilliziert. Mußten mich überhaupt quittieren und erklären: daß sie ferner nichts als Ehre und Gutes zu sagen wüßten an mir. Die Barbier aber hatten das nicht vermeint: daß sie sich durch meine Sache Schaden und Unglück in'n Pelz feßen, und da sie meineten, mich zu stürzen, selbst in die Grube gefallen. Denn sie irritierten durch ihr vieles Schreiben und Vorstellungen wegen meiner den Hof so sehr, und kam der König hinter alles dadurch, was ein Junge einzuschreiben, loszusprechen, vor die Lehrbriefe und Geburtsbriefe geben mußte; . . . daß sie nun alle ihre Briefe, so sie sonst selbst gaben und besiegelten, entweder vom Rath, oder von Berlin nehmen müssen." Dietz, pp. 294-296.
source of his honor in his humble acceptance of guilt in Berlin, coupled with the unmasking of
the Halle guild’s iniquitous practices concerning indenture. Over the course of his recollections,
Dietz consistently asserted his honor, but continually changed that honor’s ostensible source.
Each of these various conceptions of honor was used as best fit the situation. When he was
initially denied membership to the guild of barber-surgeons in Halle, Dietz moved outside the
communal framework, proclaiming that his honor as a Hofbarbier came from being licensed by
both the Duke of Merseburg and the Elector of Brandenburg. However, when the guild
temporarily won a ruling voiding these concessions, Dietz asserted that his place as a barber-
surgeon in fact rested on his professional competence, competence established by his extensive
experience as a military barber, his completion of the Halle Barber’s Guild’s qualifying exam,
and his theoretical knowledge of his profession, which he claimed to be superior to the barbers
of Halle who remained in the thrall of Paracelsus.67 Dietz also referred to himself as honorable
in his general patriarchal authority as head of household, but when this honor was called into
question by an unending series of legal, physical and social skirmishes with his wife, the
specific, community-based rulings of the Halle courts again stood in to confer legitimacy.
Honor, while integral and omnipresent in Dietz’s self-representation, was never entirely invested
in any one social, cultural or economic determinant. Each factor was used to the extent it could
best provide the rationalization for Dietz’s continued honorable self-perception in the face of
numerous potentially dishonorable facts and occurrences.

In Dietz’s case, honor served as a way of justifying a life which often did not square with
more formal conceptions of right conduct. As a barber by trade and the occasional recipient of

official punishment, Dietz arguably existed at the edge of the dishonorable milieu. Certainly, Dietz’s interactions with his fellow burghers often seemed at odds with his vigorous assertions of his unimpeachable honor and professional reputation. It is doubtless questionable whether his fellow townsmen would have considered Dietz honorable at all. Dietz was, after all, a man who proudly noted that he once successfully pursued seven simultaneous lawsuits against various neighbors. And the Halle Barbers’ Guild, faced with the prospect of having Dietz installed as Hofbarbier, attempted to remove him from the corporation altogether on the grounds of his dishonorable position. However, whatever Dietz’s success in convincing others of his honorable Ruf, in all these examples Dietz’s honor defenses were at least taken as legitimate enough to be given serious review and often approval by the ostensible arbiters of honor and dishonor, city and state authorities. Even if Dietz could not entirely escape the stigma of dishonor for his actions, his dealings with the various guardians of honor show the extent to which appealing to honor served as a powerful tool for practical negotiation.

Yet in spite of the power of honor as a tool for social and cultural negotiation, Dietz was simultaneously forced into making choices in which each course of action carried dishonorable consequences. This was particularly true of his dealings with his first wife, Elisabeth. In the lengthy and labyrinthine legal contests with Elisabeth and his in-laws, Dietz defended the frequent physical conflagrations with his spouse as necessary to maintain his honor, and postulated that his honor in these scenarios came not from his place in civic or state society, but from his broader place as a pious Lutheran and a head of household. At one point, Dietz argued that his willingness to beat his wife was indicative of mercy, since many of his peers had

68 Stuart, pp. 105-111, 131-135.
encouraged him to simply poison or murder his wife, and thus be rid of her once and for all.69

This investment of honor within personal, patriarchal authority remained strong enough that Dietz balked at offering a formal apology for his treatment of his wife and her maid, even after being subjected to the expressly dishonorable punishment of a night in the stocks. But by maintaining his right to violence, Dietz exposed himself to castigation for the continued inability to control his wife, even with brute force.70 By assuming the stance of the authoritarian head of household Dietz put his professed honor and dignity at odds with his increasingly public quarreling. After a decade and half of complaints the pastor of the St. Moritz Kirche decided that Elisabeth’s continued protestations against Dietz had merit and referred the separation suit she had launched against Dietz years earlier to the Consistorium in Magdeburg, allowing her to move out of her home and forcing Dietz to pay her an allowance.

Elisabeth

If Dietz’s memoir reveals the relative efficacy and mutability of appeals to honor as a way to contest perceived encroachments from both town authorities and fellow citizens, the question then arises of the extent to which Hallorans with fewer economic and social resources at their disposal could make use of these same strategies. Dietz, after all, while open to charges of dishonor as a court appointee and a barber, nevertheless had access to the significant financial resources necessary to pursue lengthy court cases. Dietz also cultivated the friendship of a number of sympathetic political figures who interceded on his behalf, including Bergrath König on the town council and Privy Councillor von Fuchs in Berlin. In the end, Dietz’s

69 Dietz, p. 242.

multiple claims to honor and his network of social contacts provided him a ideal medium in
which to use honor to protect his social and legal interests.

However, a sense of how those outside the formal political spectrum were able to employ
multiple strategies of honor defense can be found in the actions of Dietz’s first wife Elisabeth.
Ten years Johann Dietz’s senior, Elisabeth was already the widow of a master barber and the
sister of another barber when she married Dietz. Although Elisabeth brought less wealth to her
marriage than Dietz, her dowry included the barber shop of her former husband, August
Watzlau, which allowed Dietz to gain admission to the Halle Barbers’ Guild and temporarily
quell his dispute with the barbers concerning his status as a court barber rather than a native
guildsman. 71  

Elisabeth also had three children from her previous marriage, which proved to be
an ongoing source of contention between her and Dietz—so much so that Dietz initially refused
to financially support the children in any way and later pursued legal action against his step-
daughter and son-in-law over the ownership of the family’s barber shop. 72

While Dietz’s honor defenses centered on his relationship with civic authorities and
fellow guildsmen, the accusations of dishonorable conduct made against Elisabeth came
primarily from Dietz himself. In particular, on multiple occasions Dietz made public two
accusations which directly reflected on Elisabeth’s honor: that she was a drunkard, and that she
was indifferent to the well-being of her children, both those from her previous marriage and

72 Dietz, p. 292.
those she had with Johann Dietz. Dietz first made these claims almost as soon as the marriage was finalized. When Elisabeth allowed her father to care for the three children from her previous marriage, Dietz charged that “because they received no care they became infected with lice and vicious scabs. Although they were cured with a salve, one of the children died.” Dietz also argued that after the louse-ridden child’s death, Elisabeth’s primary concern was to insure that Dietz would receive no part of the child’s inheritance and that Elisabeth’s avariciousness and wrath over the first child’s death caused her third child, who was still nursing, to contract a wasting disease and die as well.

To counter these accusations, rather than initiating a legal complaint with the city magistrates, Elisabeth went instead to her family, particularly her brother who as a member of the Barbers’ Guild was Dietz’s approximate equal in social standing. When Elisabeth’s brother confronted Dietz at the guild hall and Dietz refused to retract his accusations, the brother attempted to stab Dietz across the table, but was restrained by his fellow masters before he could inflict a serious wound. Meanwhile, Elisabeth’s father, Meister Schober, initiated legal proceedings to disinherit Dietz and to reclaim the house and barber’s shop which had been


74 “weil sie da aber keine Wartung hatten, verdarben die Kinder in Läusen und bösen Grind. Da sie aber mit einer Schmiersalbe drüberkamen, stürb das eine Kind.” Dietz, p. 236.


76 Dietz, p. 237.
included in Elisabeth’s dowry. Faced with physical violence and potential fiscal ruin, Dietz mitigated his criticisms, reaching an agreement with the family to pay a sum of 1000 thalers for the house and to fund the education of his remaining stepdaughter. Elisabeth lacked the immediate recourse to the city magistrates which Dietz utilized when slandered by his Hauptmann. Still, by her family’s claims both to the house in which she and her husband lived and to the shop which served as Dietz’s trump in his still simmering imbroglio with the guild over his court barber status, Elisabeth was able to use the community framework of honor to at least temporarily halt her husband’s slanders and to secure a commitment from Dietz to provide for well-being of his stepchildren.

While summoning her family’s assistance offered Elisabeth one important method of protecting her honorable reputation, it was by no means her only strategy, as is evident in Elisabeth’s separation suits against Dietz. Claiming that his wife’s habit of frequenting the tavern led to übele blâme and Schaden against his honor, Dietz took it upon himself to mete out an especially savage beating to Elisabeth as she returned home one night from visiting her daughter. Rather than appeal either to her family or to the town council, as had been the case when Dietz had assaulted her maid, Elisabeth instead took the case to the Konsistorium in

77 Dietz, p. 237.
78 Dietz, p. 238.
80 Konsistorium: consistory. The Konistorium, or consistory, was a church court, and generally dealt with cases containing a religious dimension such as divorce or adultery. As will be seen below in the case of Hans Ludwig Nehrlich, the consistory also dealt with cases regarding appropriate conduct and teaching by church members. The consistories were presided over by church officials but could also involve civic authorities. In Nehrlich’s case, during his first consistory trial he was questioned not only by church authorities, but also by the Landesherr Friedrich II, Herzog von Sachsen-Gotha-Altenburg. See Nehrlich, p. 46.
Magdeburg, to ask for a legal separation. And after the consistory recommended that she “undertake nothing further against her husband’s will; to keep out of the beer houses, and in everything to prove herself a virtuous Christian wife,” she filed the suit an additional three times, until she finally received approval for the separation nearly a decade later. To effect this change in judgment, Elisabeth made continual appeals to three local church officials, the diaconus Schumann and the pastors Reichhelm and Schwentzel, to intercede on her behalf with the Konsistorium. In particular, Schwentzel, a distant relative of August Watzlau, provided her with advice about winning the favor of the Konsistorium. Elisabeth also sought help from a number of different advocates whose acquaintance she made when they defended Dietz in unrelated lawsuits. A Dr. Krimpffe, in particular, offered his services to help Elisabeth secure a proper monthly alimony from Dietz for both herself and her daughter by Watzlau. While the separation proceedings ultimately took 15 years to be successful, the first suit having been filed around 1710 and the final separation coming only a year before Elisabeth’s death in 1726, the lengthy dispute demonstrated the extent to which Elisabeth could marshal a number of resources both inside and outside the city of Halle for an honor defense. If not enough to enact a decisive or a quick break from her husband, these resources at least allowed her to protect her honor and her income as well as the well-being of her eldest daughter.

Hans Ludwig Nehrlich

81 Dietz, pp. 253-256.

82 “ferner nichts wider des Mannes Willen vornehmen, aus dem Bierhaus bleiben und im allem sich, als einer tugensamen, christlichen Ehefrau gebühret, bezeigen.” Dietz, p. 255. The account of the fourth filing of the suit, which finally led to a formal separation, can be found in Dietz, pp. 275-278.

83 Dietz, pp. 271-272.

84 Dietz, p. 274.
Around the same time that Johann Dietz was defending his honor through an endless stream of litigation, an artisan from the village of Sülzenbrücken near Erfurt, the cooper Hans Ludwig Nehrlich, also took up the language of honor to defend his actions. Born in 1653, Nehrlich worked as a shepherd before eventually apprenticing as a cooper in Sülzenbrücken. While Nehrlich recorded little about his experience as a journeyman, by 1678 he acquired master status, returning to Sülzenbrücken to marry Martten Christinen Meÿin, the daughter of a tailor. Just as Dietz existed on the implied periphery of dishonor as a barber, Nehrlich, as a former shepherd, was at least potentially dishonorable. The majority of the honor conflicts detailed by Nehrlich in his memoir involved his persistent disputes with the local church in Sülzenbrücken over his affiliation with the pietist movement, rather than conflicts with kin or fellow guildsmen. However, as was the case with Dietz and Elizabeth, these conflicts often ended with challenges to Nehrlich’s honorable reputation, and he was brought before a consistory on a number of occasions to explain his purportedly dishonorable behavior.

The pietist movement flourished in and around Prussia in the late seventeenth century largely through the efforts of the theologian Philipp Jakob Spener and his follower August

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85 Nehrlich was a native of Sülzenbrücken, and most of the honor conflicts he describes in his memoir, particularly with the pastor and superintendent of the local church, occur there. However, Nehrlich’s actual conversion experience to Pietism occurred while he was living in Erfurt, and he also spent lengthy periods of time in both Gotha and Halle.

86 Nehrlich, pp. 22-24.

87 The phrase “periphery of dishonor” taken from Stuart, Chapter 4, “Living on the periphery of dishonor.” Stuart specifically addresses the quasi-dishonorable status of shepherds in pp. 94-97. See also Wissell, Chapter VII, “Die Unehrlichkeit der Schäfer, Vögte und anderer Berufe” pp. 172-179.
Hermann Francke. Stressing the importance of personal religious experience and spiritual rebirth, the pietists sought to reform the established Lutheran church in Germany. Spener's pietism broke from Lutheran orthodoxy through its advocacy of conventicles, small religious study groups within the larger parish, and its focus on the spiritual transformation of daily life. Francke in turn built on Spener's goal of a religiously infused daily life, founding an orphanage, school, and various business enterprises in Halle, all organized along pietist principles.

However, while the pietists proffered sometimes vituperative criticism of orthodox Lutheran practices, they remained part of the Lutheran church structure and sought to reform the church from within rather than breaking off to form a new denomination. Francke and Spener both served as pastors, as well as university professors. Although pietism remained highly controversial, and for many orthodox theologians borderline heretical, in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, it nevertheless attracted important adherents in the Prussian court, including the Elector Friedrich III. As will be seen in the case of Nehrlich, by the late seventeenth century, pietism occupied a highly ambivalent place within the larger Lutheran church–while a significant number of the clergy and church hierarchy considered it devilish and possibly sexually deviant, the support given pietism by a number of prominent church and secular authorities meant that pietists retained a measure of protection for their activities.


89 An overview of Spener’s pietist thought, as well as a brief comparison of German pietism and English puritanism, can be found in Fulbrook, particularly Chapter 2, “In pursuit of further reformation,” pp. 19-44. Francke’s endeavors in Halle are covered in Fulbrook, pp. 157-158.

90 Fulbrook, p. 162.
Nehrlich’s disputes with the church authorities in Sülzenbrücken began almost immediately after his meetings with Joachim Justus Breithaupt and attendance at August Hermann Francke’s Halle prayer meetings in 1691 led him to fully and formally embrace pietist teachings. 91 Nehrlich expounded upon his new found beliefs to the Pfarrer of his parish, only to receive sharp questions about the propriety of his new religious community in return: “He asked further though, what do you do in the houses, where so many of you come together, One hears with amazement, that not only men, but also women, young journeymen and maidens go there?”92 In his response to this line of questioning, Nehrlich affirms not only his own honor, but that of all the attendees of the pietist meetings.

Yes, yes, Master it is true, I was also there I can well say with truth, that what went on there was honorable and Christian, with singing and praying, commending and lauding God. One heard no idle gossip there, neither shameful words nor foolish things and the like, which are so often around. Neighbors, relatives, siblings, children and servants, that accordingly all of these were speaking and applying themselves to the honor of God and the bettering of their fellow creatures, as also the poor voluntarily gave a little to put on the table, given either from their discretion or from their ability.93

Nehrlich’s account described co-religionists as ehrbar, but it is an honor that bears little resemblance to Dietz’s legal claims. Nerhrlich’s honor is religious, tied explicitly to christlich behavior which eschews idle or rude action and talk, and based on a set of universal pietist

91 Nehrlich’s describes his spiritual rebirth under the guidance of Francke and Breithaupt in Nehrlich, pp. 33-37.

92 “er fragte aber weiter, was machen sie den in heisern, da ihrer so viel zusammen kommen, Man hört Ja mit verwunderung, das nicht allein Männer, sondern auch weiber Junge gesellen und Jungföen mit darzugehen?” Nehrlich, p. 39.

93 “Ja, Ja, Herr Magister es ist war, ich bin auch mit darbey gewesen Ich kan wol mit warheit sagen, das solches so erbar und christlich darbey zugehet, mit singen und beten, Gott loben und preisen. Man höret da keine faule geschwätz, weder schambare word noch Narenteidinge und dergleichen, da sind so oft darbey, Nachbar, gefatier geschwister, kinder und gesinde, das also dieses alles zu Gottes Ehren und des Nechsten beßerung geredet und angewendet wird, wie den auch eine freywilligkeig den armen gegeben auch eine bischöfe auff den disch stehet, da ein itweder nach seiner wilkir nach seinem vermögen gibt.” Nehrlich, p. 39.
values which supercede any community qualms. By dedicating themselves entirely to Gottes Ehren, Nehrlich and his fellow pietists defined themselves as honorable, regardless of the assumed social impropriety of allowing a group of mixed gender and social standing to mingle in one house.

Where Dietz continually changed his honor justifications, invoking local authority, state authority, professional competence or personal rectitude as best befitted the situation and Elisabeth utilized both her position as a master’s widow and her honor as a Christian wife to win a settlement against her husband, Nehrlich maintained a consistent definition of honor throughout his memoir. Whenever Nehrlich spoke of honor, it was inevitably his honor as a Christian, specifically as one who had experienced a personal Wiedergeburt. While the Sülzenbrücken church’s case against Nehrlich claimed that his behavior was a sexual Schande and theological Irrlehre, Nehrlich subsumed both these claims under one religious defense, maintaining that the religious honor of the pietist participants effectively excluded any possibility of sexual impropriety. In direct contrast to both Dietz and Elisabeth, who eschewed investing the entirety of their honorable identity in any one particular source, Nehrlich used a single totalizing definition of honor in his memoir. However, although Nehrlich drew on only one source of honor, he nevertheless orchestrated the defense of his honor and the honor of his fellow pietists against a number of different accusations of dishonorable conduct.

Appeals to honor proved as effective a method of challenging or circumventing

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94 Christlich: Christian.

95 Gottes Ehren, Honoring God.

authorities for Nehrlich as they were for Dietz and Elizabeth, even though Nehrlich invoked an entirely different type of honor. In Nehrlich’s case, it was Lutheran church authorities in Sülzenbrücken who initially made claims against his honor, claims backed by their position as the arbiters of local religious issues.\textsuperscript{97} They accused Nehrlich and his fellow pietists of sexual and theological misdeeds, bringing Nehrlich to face the consistories in Gotha and Arnstadt and going as far as interning Cattarina, another member of Nehrlich’s prayer group, for a time in the Hexenturm.\textsuperscript{98} Although it was the church authorities of Sülzenbrücken who brought the case against Nehrlich and the pietists, enough overlap and ambiguity existed in the regulation of honor in religious issues to allow Nehrlich to utilize religious arguments for his conduct in much the same way that Dietz used legal and cultural justifications to vouch for his honor. Just as Dietz’s honor defenses made use of the overlap between regional and local authorities in regulating the conduct of the guilds, a significant part of Nehrlich’s legal strategy was to invoke the supportive theological opinions of fellow pietists like Francke. As a well known pastor and a university professor, Francke’s opinions and letters carried significant weight with the consistories. If pietism was, as Nehrlich’s cases so aptly demonstrate, an exceptionally controversial movement at the time, it nevertheless still existed within the larger framework of the Lutheran church and had a number of adherents in influential church positions. If the

\textsuperscript{97} A good number of church officials from in and around Sülzenbrücken are named by Nehrlich as involved in the various cases against him. Nehrlich avoids naming his principal adversaries, referring to them as Herr Magister and Herr Suprint. But the initial conflict, as recorded in notes 76 and 77 was in all probability between Nehrlich and the pastor of Sülzenbrücken, Johann Wolfgang Rhodius (Rothe). Herr Suprint likely refers to Johann Andreas Gnüge, who served as a pastor at Ichtershausen and as Superintendent at Cranichfeld during this time period and was Rhodius’ stepfather. Editor’s note on Rhodius, Nehrlich, p. 4; editor’s note on Gnüge, Nehrlich, p. 40.

\textsuperscript{98} Nehrlich’s various encounters with the consistories in Arnstadt and Gotha are dispersed throughout the book, but the particular series of events mentioned above comes from Nehrlich, pp. 40-54. After the trial which involved Cattarina’s internment, August Hermann Francke took an interest in Nehrlich’s case and assumed the role of the group’s primary spokesmen in their travails with the church courts.
consistories could plausibly claim to arbitrate matters of honorable religious conduct, the theological divisions within the church meant that they could not unilaterally impose their interpretation of honorable behavior. Even in a case as theoretically straightforward as that of Nehrlich, in which both sides agreed on the primacy of religious honor and the authority of the Konsistorium to regulate religious honor issues, the language of honor proved an effective method of justifying conduct deemed unacceptable by local authorities by appealing to influential figures outside the community.

Conclusions

So how then are we to reconcile the various models and theories of honor in early modern Germany with what we see in the actions of Johann Dietz, Elisabeth Dietzin and Hans Ludwig Nehrlich? To some extent, these writings suggest a vision of honor which differs from these theoretical models. In most of the theoretical models of honor, whether the emphasis is placed on honor as a form of economic consciousness or as a process of defending and articulating cultural status, the locus of honor is generally placed within the individual’s community. Insofar as honor is defined beyond the community at all, it is related to the quasi-legal organizations set up for traveling journeymen or to the attempts of extra-communal authorities to regulate or curb guild uses of honor, as in the Imperial Edict of 1731.99 Dietz, Nehrlich and Elisabeth, however, each had recourse to authority groups outside the immediate community. For Dietz, it was the court in Berlin, which served as the guarantor and protector of his Hofbarbier concession, and frequently reaffirmed Dietz’s honor against charges in Halle that

99 Among others, see Mack Walker, pp. 93-98, for his argument about the paradoxical effect of the Imperial Trade Edict as strengthening the exclusiveness of the German home towns. The book also contains the full text of the Edict itself, appendix pp. 435-451.
Dietz was a tainted *Freimeister* rather than a proper guildsman. For Elisabeth, appeals to the *Konsistorium* in Magdeburg eventually resulted in the separation from Dietz which local authorities proved unwilling to grant. And for Nehrlich, help came from his contacts with pietist scholars and supporters in other cities, particularly August Hermann Francke. All three faced peers and elites in their community who impugned their honor. And each took their case to a regional or state authority, protesting that they were, in fact, still honorable citizens and deserved to be treated as such. The regional and state powers proved not only to be more favorably inclined towards the supplicants than the town councils and pastors had been, but also to have viable and enforceable claims to serve as arbiter of artisan honor disputes in many of these instances.

Furthermore, this confusion of honor jurisdictions encompassed much more than simply the contest between local and state elites. Not only did kin groups, professional organizations and church authorities, each make claims as sources of honor, but they also overlapped in their constituencies. For instance, in Elisabeth’s various cases against Dietz, she lacked her husband’s formal connections to the guild and legal apparatuses which generally served as the initial point of appeal in honor disputes. However, Elisabeth’s kin group included a brother and son-in-law who were part of the Barbers’ Guild and Pastor Schwentzel, each of whom exerted their own pull, either on Dietz or on the town authorities. The multiple categories into which each actor fit insured that the arbiters of honor did not simply overlap, they were in fact often profoundly intertwined.

In this sense, though, the variance between the events depicted in the memoirs of Dietz and Nehrlich and the models of honor propounded by Andreas Griebinger or Kathy Stuart is not
so much a matter of incommensurability as it is of emphasis. As Stuart, borrowing again from Bourdieu, puts it: "in practice’ German dishonor prohibitions were ‘lived rather than clearly conceived’.”

It is indeed useful to conceive of honor as a sort of symbolic or social capital. Many of Dietz’s accomplishments in his honor disputes can be thought of as a the use of this capital. The assortment of personal connections and political rights which Dietz accumulated as an artisan were then used both to defend his social position and to accrue a material benefit. However, in contrast to Grießinger’s model, there is little sense in Meister Johann Dietz that such capital should be considered either coherently acquired or consciously spent. Rather than Grießinger’s guildsmen banding together to undertake honor rituals which in turn provide them with leverage against the power ambitions of urban authorities, in the case of Dietz honor appears considerably more malleable.

For a high-status artisan such as Johann Dietz, the recourse to the language and reasoning of honor goes beyond the defense of artisanal privilege to take a distinctly opportunistic slant. Certainly, in both Dietz’s and Elisabeth’s cases we can see honor used reactively, to defend their actions against accusations from a variety of sources that they had been acting dishonorably and thus reaffirm their place within the existing social order. However, both also use the concept of honor in an active and positive sense as well. Similarly, Nehrlich, although he holds to a singular definition of honor, uses that notion to defy the dictates of community church leaders. For both Dietz and Elisabeth, the language of honor serves as a method of legitimating contacts


101 Grießinger summarizes his conception of honor as symbolic capital wielded by the artisans as a coherent group on pp. 451-452.
and associations with communities beyond Halle, contacts which could in turn be used to better their status within the Halle community. Nehrlich's use of honor connects him with a larger network of German pietists, a network in which he was the *de facto* leader of a local religious community, as opposed to simply a cooper of limited means and questionable origins. For Dietz especially, this recourse to extra-communal sources of honor is often used at the expense of his fellow barbers, to gain an advantage over those with whom he theoretically formed a unified front. This involves not only legal actions, but Dietz's more general creation of a personal picture of an honorable barber-surgeon, at once recognized by a variety of state and local authorities, and at the same time possessing an honor independent of external authority generated by personal and professional competence, by the ability to understand and sort through the diverse practices of barbers to reach proper practical and theoretical opinions.  

In contrast, the use of honor by Elisabeth remains considerably more circumscribed. If Johann Dietz's experience points to the essential mutability of honor, Elisabeth's experience highlights the concept's inevitable limitations. Where Dietz never needs to invest the entirety of his honorable identity in one particular role, Elisabeth faces far more constraints, as her personal honor remains perpetually tied to her sexual identity and status. When Dietz levels the charge against Elisabeth that she has failed in her role as a mother and a helpmate, if the charge gains the sanction of the pastor or the town council behind it, Elisabeth is left with little choice but to comply, particularly given Dietz's willingness to back the judgment up with violence.  

At the same time, even within Elisabeth's far more bounded circumstances she retains an amount of

102 See for instance Dietz, pp. 210-211 for his theories on medical practice.

103 Take for example Dietz, p. 242, in which he debates with a town councillor about whether or not he should use his pharmaceutical knowledge to poison his wife rather than endure her next attempt to gain a separation.
social capital as an artisan’s wife and an artisan’s widow and invoking honor proves efficacious. By consistently adhering to the position that Dietz’s godlessness and violent temper are an affront to her honor and a threat to her life, Elisabeth, on the fourth attempt, does win a separation from and regular alimony payments from Dietz. However, given the length of time necessary to secure this legal victory, the separation remains perhaps as much an example of Dietz squandering his entrenched honorable reputation through repeated and public acts of violence as of Elisabeth’s success at using the language to honor defense to make a gain in her material and social standing.

Nehrlich’s use of honor presents a somewhat different set of strategies. Where both Dietz and Elisabeth make use of the multiple sources of their honor, Nehrlich steadfastly adheres to a singular definition of honor as based in religious rectitude. But at the same time, if Nehrlich presents honor as a narrowly defined quality, he is in the end no less effective than Dietz or Elisabeth at using that definition of honor to refute the aspersions cast on his honor by others in his community. Even in a case between church authorities and a parishioner in which both sides agree that issue of religious propriety and personal honor is at stake, the ability to decide what makes an action honorable and dishonorable remains contestable. Although Nehrlich’s mixed gender prayer gatherings could be deemed socially scandalous or dishonorable by church officials, throughout the proceedings of the consistories, Nehrlich retains his ability to both make theological arguments about personal honor and piety and to call on the support of influential, if controversial, church figures like Francke or Breithaupt. While Nehrlich exploits the overlap and uncertainty in the doctrinal and bureaucratic structure of the early modern church rather than that of the early modern city, the language of honor and honorable conduct
nevertheless proves at least as effective a way for Nehrlich to marshal a defense against an immediate challenge to his status as it does for Dietz and Elisabeth.

All of this points to the importance of taking into account the multivalent nature of honor in early modern Germany. As a value system which penetrated nearly every aspect of artisan life, honor, as evidenced by the actions of Johann Dietz, Elisabeth Dietzin and Hans Ludwig Nehrlich, provided a way to enforce a political, social and economic order. But at the same time, the language of honor served equally adroitly as a way of negotiating with the authorities who attempted to enforce its strictures. With no single accepted authority on standards of honor, a subtle and infinitely complex gradation of honor expectations dependent on innumerable cultural variables and a continued overlap and interconnection of authorities' jurisdiction over the early modern Prussian city, for each group which attempted to stake a claim to honorable conduct, there was inevitably another which could offer an alternate and contestable definition.
Bibliography


