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was the support given by German intellectuals and artisans, and what was the connection between an ideological proclivity deriving from the European liberal tradition, basic humanistic principles, public and press opinion, and actual everyday practice?

It should be evident that this study must rely heavily on work by other scholars, such as community and neighborhood studies, histories of the respective cities, and monographs on race relations and race riots. Emphasis will be placed on reconstructing the work and everyday living situations of German immigrants as well as on the ways in which these aspects affected their perspectives on African Americans and the actual interaction between the two populations.

D. "The Meaning of Political Institutions: Political Culture and Institutional Configurations in Germany and the United States." (Dietmar Schirmer)

Unlike Almond and Verba's behaviorist definition of the concept, I do not view political culture as an aggregation of individual political attitudes. Referring to recent works and theories in anthropology, ethnology, and the sociology of culture, I understand political culture as a more or less coherent structure of political assumptions, as a specific means to make sense of and give meaning to political events. From this perspective, one can interpret political institutions as the materialized form of a dominant political culture or, in other words, as the codified expression of the basic assumptions of political order and legitimacy within a society. Thus, the task of my research is to decode the assumptions of reasonable and justified political rule inscribed in the system of political institutions, that is, to analyze political institutions as signs and symbols. In this sense, the project aims to construct and evaluate political semiotics.

The subjects of my research are the legislative, executive, and judicial institutions in Germany and the United States on the federal level. With respect to the heuristic approach of the project, I have found it useful to introduce a comparative perspective and to deal with two institutional systems representing opposite poles, in terms of their history and structure, within the framework of Western democratic systems. By contrasting one of the oldest established democracies with one of the youngest; a single presidential system with one of the purest
parliamentary systems; and a self-confident, "innocent nation" with a country that has a deeply uncertain and fractional political identity, it seems possible to prove the analytical power of the concept of a semiotic approach to political institutions.

The institutional configurations of the American and German political systems will be examined with respect to the following dimensions:

a. Modes of political representation. The question of adequate representation of the *demos* within the political process has turned out to be the main problem of political legitimacy in the modern age. It is obvious that the constitutional and practical answers to this question differ widely. Thus, I will look into the significance of areas of divergence between the American and German traditions, such as elections; outlets in the political arena for the great variety of social differences; divisions of legislative members based on gender, region, religion, or race; and governmental departments and the committee systems of the parliaments, which both reflect and formulate policies and issues regarded to be the most important. Furthermore, I intend to analyze the plenitude of symbols representing the values, norms, and cultural and political heritage that are shared—or, in the view of those in power, should be shared—by all or virtually all members of each political system.

b. The nations' capitals: architecture and representation of the political order. Political systems always try to demonstrate their self-understanding in the architectural forms of their representative buildings—by interior and exterior design as well as topographical arrangement. For example, the District of Columbia is a perfect reflection of the American system: the particular situation of the White House and the Capitol on the perpendicular axes of the city signals the dualism of the executive and legislative powers that they represent. Similarly, the architectural symbolism in Berlin can easily be decoded: The neighboring Schloß and Dom, which represented the monarchy and the church as the two dominant powers of the Empire, occupied the most prominent position in the center of the old city, whereas the new, constitutionally weak Reichstag was erected on the opposite side of the Brandenburg city gate.

c. The political encyclopedia. During the nineteenth century, which was shaped by the rise of the bourgeoisie as well as by broader access to education and a growing rate of literacy, encyclopedias
increasingly became a representative type of literature exhibiting an aura of truth and objective knowledge. This is also true of the political knowledge that encyclopedias impart: facts about the political system in general, particular institutions and offices, and basic values and norms. The encyclopedia implicitly provides the linkage between the political system and the public opinion that research on political culture tries to make explicit. Therefore, I will analyze such political key words as state, government, democracy, and freedom as defined in encyclopedias.

My project focuses on decoding the basic cultural patterns of cognitive, evaluative, and affective assumptions that mold political reality in the three dimensions under examination and will apply it to the entire political discourse.

The purpose of the project is to construct and evaluate an analytical concept integrating institutional theory and political culture, rather than to reconstruct the historical process. Therefore, I will look at three synchronic periods based on the significance of the expected results within a comparative framework that does not seek to be complete but exemplar. The time intervals chosen are the turn of the century (the Gilded Age and the German Empire), when the German and American political systems faced largely similar developments and demands; the 1930s (the New Deal and National Socialism), when their comparable political and social problems resulted in substantially different responses; and the cold war era, when the United States was rising as one of the two superpowers and the West German state was taking the shape of a Western representative democracy.

E. "Emigration from Thuringia to the United States in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century." (Ulrike Skorsetz)

Although the historical and social research in the former West Germany has led to extensive works on the various aspects of emigration from parts of West Germany to the United States and on the immigration experience of Germans in the New World, emigration from the eastern parts of Germany is only now being seriously investigated.

At the outset of my research on emigration from Thuringia, I visited the archives of various Thuringian principalities. I decided to concentrate on the districts of Saxony-Weimar, Saxony-Altenburg, and