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I am submitting herewith a thesis written by William Bradley Hinton entitled "Through the Looking Glass: *Der Spiegel's* Presentation of America's Image in the Iraq War." I have examined the final electronic copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, with a major in German.

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Through the Looking Glass: *Der Spiegel's* Presentation of America's Image in the Iraq War

A Thesis

Presented for the Master of Arts

Degree

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William Bradley Hinton

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my dear mother, Anita,
whose love is gold. She has always supported me in my curiosities and travels,
and she has enriched my life. My life is beautiful because of her.

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I thank *Der Spiegel* for its permission to reproduce and include key cover pages analyzed in this thesis. During the thesis defense, other images were shown from the pages of *Der Spiegel*. These images are not included in the appendix because of cost considerations.

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ABSTRACT

Der Spiegel, the weekly German news magazine, offered extensive coverage of the beginnings of the Iraq War. The magazine blended historical fact and cinematic and historical comparisons to present its decidedly negative view of the conflict. The twofold purpose of this thesis is to illuminate the German attitudes towards the war and the American culture from which it sprang and to explore some of the comparisons and metaphors and the visuals used to communicate this viewpoint. The intent is to examine the gap between the abstract position the magazine expresses and the wider scope of meaning created by the metaphors and visuals.

Chapter I concentrates on the magazine's presentation of a perceived history of failures on the part of the American CIA and the manner in which this is combined with allusions to the Rambo image. Through the use of the Rambo figure and other references to film characters (James Bond), the magazine suggests that both U.S. leaders such as George W. Bush and the population at large are victims of their own cinematic myths and vastly overestimate their own capacity to determine the world's fate. Sharply contrasting portraits of two CIA agents who were casualties of the war, Alabama born Michael Spann and German born Helge Philipp Boes, cast the American as an inept blunderer and the German as an idealistic and sensitive defender of Western freedoms.

Chapter II concerns the way in which historical comparisons are used to illuminate the conflict. The magazine suggests that the U.S. is an empire in decline. The very heterogeneous selection of examples offered in defense of this argument (e.g. the Roman, British, and Soviet empires) all spring from material that would be familiar to German readers. They offer cursory and arguably superficial analogies to explain today's complex situation. Part II of the chapter explores the use of images from 20th century history, particularly World War II, to explain events. Very often the comparisons seem overblown and particularly inappropriate (e.g. Stalingrad and the Battle of Baghdad; the bombing of Dresden and the bombing of Baghdad). Rhetorically the magazine sometimes distances itself from these questionable analogies by attributing them to others (anonymous "observers"). Such comparisons speak to a specifically German historical sensibility and the deep emotions these events evoke in German readers rather than to the explanatory power of the examples.

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Introduction

The German news magazine *Der Spiegel* (DS) offered extensive coverage of the beginning of the Iraq War. In its coverage, DS viewed the events through the filter of many comparisons and metaphors, both visual and verbal, which go beyond its stated arguments against the war. These metaphors highlight perceived grotesque qualities in American culture or reflect German historical sensitivities towards human suffering in war that are not overtly expressed in the text. The purpose of this thesis is twofold. The first is to illuminate the German attitudes towards the war and the American culture from which it sprang so as to gain a clearer understanding of one German viewpoint. And as such it is an exercise in cross-cultural understanding. The second is to explore some of the comparisons and metaphors and the visuals used to communicate this viewpoint and to examine the gap between the abstract position the magazine expresses and the wider scope of meaning created by the metaphors and visuals.

DS is well known for its news coverage and it has high circulation: "*Der Spiegel* is Europe's biggest and Germany's most influential weekly magazine, published in Hamburg with a circulation of approximately 1,000,000. It is known for its distinctive, academic writing style and its incredible heft" (*The Media in the German Speaking Countries*). DS has a reputation of being an outspoken critic of the German government, as evidenced by a story about the inability of West Germany's military to defend against a Communist attack, which resulted in a post World War II test of freedom of the press in the Spiegel Scandal of 1962 (Gartmann). The magazine's target audience is the opinion makers in German society, and the magazine seems to be directed predominantly at an "elite male consumer group" (Wörsching 60), such as politicians and policy makers. Another reason for my selection of DS is that the text is rich in meaning with an

abundant selection of drawings and photos to support its arguments. The magazine is indulgent of metaphors, and provocative images broaden the field of meaning of the text. Also, it often has overtones of ironic humor that bring out the negative tone of the overall coverage and complicates interpretations of the content. Its subject matter includes detailed treatments of historical topics, and this focus often encourages a historical turn in the treatment of current events as well.

I have chosen this magazine over its main competitors, *Stern* and *Focus*. *Stern* has great photography but not enough textual substance to support the images. *Focus* is a good competitor but is much newer and does not have the same status as DS. *Focus* is also directed primarily at current events and lacks the historical bent of DS. Availability was also a prime consideration. In recognition of its status, the magazine is the only German current events weekly subscribed to by the University of Tennessee library.

The Iraq War has been, and still remains, a subject of intense debate in the world, and Germany strongly opposed the U.S. invasion. This international disagreement on the use of force in Iraq mirrors the strongly differing cultural and political attitudes of the U.S. with Germany as expressed by former U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld:

> Germany has been a problem and France has been a problem. But you look at vast numbers of other countries in Europe, they're not with France and Germany [. . .] they're with the US. You're thinking of Europe as Germany and France. I don't, I think that's old Europe

Furthermore, American media has, in retrospect, adopted a similarly dismissive attitude and not given much attention to dissecting the German argument against the war. At the beginning of the

war, American media coverage of the conflict was at a fever pitch while any and all dissent by other nations on the invasion of Iraq played a distant role, if at all. DS's coverage of the Iraq War reflects the mainstream of German thinking. It has been consistently negative and it offers a far different opinion of what transpired in Iraq than Americans receive from American media outlets. This thesis presents an opportunity to clarify Germany's position on the war, at least as it is reflected in one very influential news source, and to explore both the explicit and implicit attitudes towards America and American culture communicated by the magazine.

Because the event has been so momentous and the difference of opinion so pronounced, the coverage by the magazine has been extensive. The sheer depth of the coverage on a plethora of topics pertaining to the United States, its image, and its involvement in the Iraq War in DS requires limitation to several stories and themes in order to truly focus analytically on certain subject matter and not become lost in the thousands of pages of material over months of coverage between March and April 2003; DS's weekly publication schedule and its 200 plus pages per issue make selective treatment necessary. Therefore, I have selected characteristic images that will crystallize DS's attitude towards the U.S. in Iraq. I will limit the discussion to three focal issues between March and April 2003. Quotes from other issues within this time frame will be referenced as needed in order to reinforce the claims of the three primary issues.

Each focal issue expresses different claims in its negative coverage of the U.S. in the Iraq War. Issue 10 from March 1, 2003, predates the outbreak of the war. It treats covert military operations in Iraq and documents the CIA's record of failure resulting in disaster when it tries to topple other nations' governments. America is pictured as a grotesquely masculinized Rambo ruled by laws of aggression and violence. In chapter one, I will analyze the Rambo figure, and I

will discuss how DS superimposes the Rambo character onto the U.S. image. I will show how Rambo has been updated for the 21st century and comment on how DS uses images created by Hollywood to further discredit American actions in Iraq.

In chapter two, the focus shifts from images of pop culture to the use (and abuse) of historical analogies, and the magazine's argument in issue 12 from March 17, 2003, that the U.S. shares characteristics with failed historical empires is discussed. Issue 15 from April 7, 2003, uses examples drawn from 20th century European history, particularly World War II, to illuminate events in Iraq. I analyze the cogency of these arguments and suggest that they represent attempts to engage the reader emotionally rather than to explain current events. It is acknowledged that there is a longer history of negotiating the relationship between the US and (West) Germany in DS, a history which, despite the references to world war and the failure of Vietnam (Rambo), will not be explored.

Chapter One:
Cinematic Myth and Historical Fact:
Der Spiegel's Portrayal of the U.S. as Rambo in the Iraq War

The cover page of the March 1, 2003, issue of DS (No. 10; Fig. 1) shows the upper body of a man in the foreground and to the left of the frame. The body is turned perpendicular to the camera, but the man's head is turned as if he is looking to the right outside the frame of the picture and beyond the camera. The figure has a full beard and is wearing a backwards baseball cap, sunglasses, a sleeveless shirt, a military utility belt with knife and sheath, a watch on his right wrist, gloves on his hands, and he is holding a military rifle pointing downwards from his right shoulder to his left hip in a guard stance. In the middle ground there is nothing but sand and rocks on the barren earth, and the distance between the armed man and the landed Chinook tandem rotor helicopter on the right side of the background has heat waves that distort the space between the two like a mirage. Only a blur of off-white color is visible in the distance behind the helicopter. The Chinook helicopter was "the standard troop transport used by the U.S. Army 1st Cavalry Division in Vietnam" (art. "Ch-47"), and it is a product of and reminiscent of the technology of the Vietnam War and the ability of that technology to deliver soldiers and equipment into hostile terrain. The aircraft helps to make the United States a military power capable of inserting agents of the state in nearly any land environment in the world in a relatively short time. The resolution of the soldier figure appears very sharp while the slightly fuzzy background denotes a large distance between the soldier and the helicopter transport. The soldier is by far the dominant figure in the frame, taking up the whole left side space and part of the middle with his military rifle.

Although the style of the man's clothing and his weaponry would immediately lead the viewer to identify the man as a U.S. operative, there is no official sign or symbol to confirm this. DS both affirms the viewer's initial judgment and explains the reason for the lack of official markings with its cover caption: "Operation Rambo: Die geheimen Spezialtruppen der USA."

This issue was published approximately two and one-half weeks *before* the United States military invasion of Iraq. While the U.S. was preparing for the full-scale invasion, the CIA already had a presence there. According to DS, the successful fight in Afghanistan against the Taliban had revamped the image of the CIA into an agency loved by the nation (10/2003, 102). The primary topic of the series of stories surrounding the cover page is not the CIA in Iraq but rather the ineptitude of the CIA and, by extension, America and American society. One of the principal metaphors at the heart of this argument is that America is a nation of Rambos and one of the major implications is that the U.S. is a culture that cannot tell cinematic myth from reality.

This chapter looks primarily at the cover and the four stories associated with it: "Die subversive Armee der Supermacht," "Rumsfelds Sondereinheiten im Kampf gegen den Terrorismus," "Der Tod eines CIA-Agenten aus Hamburg," and "Wie die CIA im Afghanistan-Krieg agierte." There are other stories in other sections that pursue related themes and that also highlight the presumed haplessness of the American military and its clumsy foreign policy. The story "Militär – US-Piloten Militär warfen in Afghanistan eine Bombe auf kanadische Soldaten - unter Drogeneinfluss" in the "Gesellschaft" section has to do with two U.S. pilots, Umbach und Schmidt, who flew together and were part of a friendly-fire incident involving Canadian soldiers. The American pilots in Afghanistan thought the Canadians were firing upon them while flying over Afghani airspace. Schmidt bombed the Canadian convoy and the two pilots later blamed

Dexedrine pills given to them by the Air Force as having caused the lapse in their judgment that prompted them to attack before confirming their targets. Two more stories in the "Ausland" section turn to foreign policy. The first, "Irak/Uno: Bushs Kampf mit der „Achse des Friedens'" details U.S. president Bush's quest to press the UN to support the immanent invasion of Iraq by U.S. and allied forces. The diplomatic lines were being drawn at that time, and it became clear that the Bush administration did not have enough votes to win approval, regardless of the pressure placed on Europe and Russia to vote for and legitimize the Iraq War. The last story, entitled "USA: Spiegel-Gespräch mit der Autorin Susan Sontag über den hegemonialen Feldzug der Amerikaner," is an interview with Susan Sontag, who talks about the death and destruction that will be caused by the U.S. military if it invades Iraq. She maintains that this is the dawn of a new era of foreign policy for America in that it will use self-defense as a rationale for military expansion (121). Although these stories are important in creating a general impression of the dysfunctional murderousness of American military and diplomatic actions, I have chosen not discuss them because they do not pertain directly to the Rambo motif, the CIA, or Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's Special Operations Forces. Instead I will limit my analysis to the stories of the cover complex to see how they play off the central themes established by the cover and also how the particular style of the stories shapes and guides the attitudes of the reader. First, however, I will consider the original films that established the Rambo image and their relation to both this cover and a related "Rambo issue" that had appeared in DS one year earlier.

In the first film of the series released in 1982, *Rambo: First Blood*, a U.S. soldier who served in the Vietnam conflict is making his way across the United States to find his former comrades. He is stopped by the local sheriff, Will Teasle, who harasses him and takes him into

custody. After much unprovoked mistreatment of Rambo by the local police that causes flashbacks of his imprisonment in prisoner of war camps in Southeast Asia, Rambo becomes violent and breaks out of the local police headquarters. He flees on a motorcycle into the woods where he becomes a fugitive from the law. The police hunt him through the forests. When a policeman falls out of a helicopter while trying to shoot Rambo, Rambo tries to turn himself in, pleading "there's one man dead. It's not my fault. I don't want any more hurt. [. . .] But I didn't do anything. I didn't do anything." In order to stay alive after he is fired upon when trying to turn himself in, Rambo is compelled to severely injure or kill the police officers who are hunting him. Rambo is very resourceful and cannot be killed by the local police. The sheriff calls in the state police once the local police find out more about Rambo's military background. However, Rambo's Green Beret skills help him evade even the state authorities, and the U.S. National Guard is called in to settle the matter. Colonel Trautman, Rambo's old senior officer in Vietnam and the only person Rambo trusts, comes to diffuse the situation. He makes his case for his intervention by stating to the local sheriff: "I didn't come here to rescue Rambo from you. I came here to rescue you from him." Rambo ultimately turns himself in, but not before he blows up a gas station and a hunting supplies store, and nearly kills the vengeful sheriff. The first film portrays Rambo as a victim of corrupt law enforcement officials who wrongly consider him a trouble-maker. Rambo is a Congressional Medal of Honor winner and war hero, yet he cannot re-assimilate. He is at war with himself, a war that his colonel calls a "private war." The main message of the film is that U.S. veterans of the Vietnam War have been victimized by America and rejected by some American citizens because the war in Vietnam became increasingly unpopular domestically. "The movie tries hard to make sure that Rambo will be seen as a

tormented, misunderstood, amazingly resourceful victim of the Vietnam War, rather than as a sadist or a villain" (Maslin 109). In a final maneuver to both solidify audience empathy and serve the cause of civil order, the film ends with Rambo being taken off to prison. Additionally, the significance of the film ending with Rambo in prison is that even Rambo is not above the law, no matter how violent or reckless he reacts to law enforcement officials in the movie.

In the second installment of the Rambo film series and the real source of DS's symbolic use of the figure, *Rambo: First Blood Part II* (1985), John Rambo is serving hard time in a prison work camp busting rocks with a sledgehammer. Colonel Trautman returns to offer a presidential pardon for the mayhem Rambo caused in the first film. To receive this presidential pardon and clear his name, Rambo must return to Vietnam on a special operations mission. He will be there as a soldier at the behest of the U.S. military and not as a private citizen. His mission is to locate what is thought to be a prisoner-of-war (POW) camp deep inside the jungles of Vietnam and take photos there to prove there are U.S. prisoners from the Vietnam War that are still alive in captivity. Rambo cannot believe he is required only to take photographs and not engage the enemy. He states in disbelief, "I'm supposed to leave them there?" In the ensuing conversation with Colonel Trautman, old Vietnam War tensions come to the forefront. Colonel Trautman states: "And John, I want you to try to forget the war and remember the mission. The old Vietnam is dead," to which Rambo replies, "Sir, I'm alive. It's still alive, isn't it?" When the operation manager, Marshall Murdock, suggests that Rambo might not be able to withstand the pressure of the hell he is going into, Colonel Trautman offers this assessment: "Pressure? Let me just say that Rambo is the best combat vet I've ever seen, a pure fighting machine with only a desire to win a war that someone else lost. And if winning means he has to die, he'll die. No fear,

no regrets. And, uh, one more thing, what you choose to call hell, he calls home." While the Rambo series is an attempt to cope with the loss in Vietnam and attempt to redeem the American soldier, Trautman's reply to Marshall Murdock suggests that "others" lost the war and this loss can not be attributed to the failures of American soldiers, but to failures in government leadership.

Once over the drop zone, Rambo's insertion into enemy territory is botched. He has to cut himself away from all of his equipment with his military knife to keep himself from being dragged to death in the air by his parachute jump chord. Although he lands far from the intended drop zone, he accidentally finds his contact in the jungle. In a conversation with his ground contact, Rambo is asked what he wants, to which he replies: "To win, to survive, to survive a war, you gotta' become war." When he discovers that American POWs are indeed alive in the camp, Rambo goes against orders and proceeds to wage a one-man war against the camp to free his comrades. At the end of a daring, yet failed escape attempt, he reaches a hill among rice paddies with one POW in tow. With the enemy not far behind, the helicopter sent to retrieve him deserts Rambo and the POW. Extraction is but a stone's throw away, but Rambo is betrayed again by his country in Southeast Asia. He is taken prisoner by a Russian contingent in the camp. He escapes and all hell breaks loose. Along the way back to the camp, Rambo kills every enemy in sight. He steals a helicopter as it hovers, killing the Russian soldiers inside. He shoots a rocket at a Russian helicopter gunship after playing dead in the parked helicopter cabin as the gunship approaches for the kill. Rambo then pilots the badly damaged helicopter out of Vietnam with the POWs on board. The movie concludes with Rambo telling Colonel Trautman about how the U.S. government and its people should respect and support the brave U.S. veterans of the Vietnam

War at home, calling the American POWs heroes that deserve the highest combat medal the U.S. can award – the Congressional Medal of Honor.

According to one review of *Rambo: First Blood Part II*, the movie "does nothing less than rewrite history. Though the movie doesn't say so, it's designed to win the war that officially ended 10 years ago in humiliating defeat" (Canby C23). This movie was released to coincide with the ten-year anniversary of America's military withdrawal from Vietnam. Another review of the movie includes a movie theater licensee who points out the ambivalence of the figure, especially for an international audience: "If Rambo is a patriotic hero in America, he may be an object of morbid fascination in some other countries [. . .] what Rambo is doing in the movie is terrorism. He's knocking off all kinds of people. Maybe he's a hero in the U.S. and a terrorist in other parts of the world" (Farley 109). Regardless of how people of different nations view the cinematic Rambo, there are some superhero characteristics that he always exhibits. Firstly, Rambo cannot lose. He is driven by a moral imperative to win the Vietnam War. This is an interesting paradox. Rambo is a physical specimen of masculine strength to an almost grotesque degree. Also, he is a one-man army. Although he is an agent on a mission to document the existence of POWs in Vietnam, he is a rogue agent in that he redesigns the mission to suit his own objective: to free the POWs and bring them home. Therefore, his official capacity has been redirected to meet his personal objective. At this point, he morphs into a war machine answerable only to himself. The Rambo adventure continues in the film *Rambo III* (1988), but it will not be discussed here because it deals with an entirely different war and adds nothing new to the basic outlines of the character. The same applies to the sexagenarian hero of *Rambo IV* (2008).

The Rambo trilogy debuted during the presidency of Ronald Reagan. To casual American viewers Rambo represents patriotism that is determined not to fail, which makes his efforts to win the war a personal, individual moral triumph. DS, however, follows both the signals within the film and the strand of U.S. film criticism quoted here when it states: "[The Rambo films] spiegelten den überbordenden Patriotismus der Ära Ronald Reagan wider und verklärten Amerikas traumatische Niederlage im Dschungel von Vietnam zum moralischen Triumph" (101). DS presents the Rambo films as basically retelling the story of America's failure in Vietnam as a story of moral triumph – following the lead of the film series However, DS furthers the Rambo discussion by leading the reader to believe that the CIA's "real" Rambo featured on the cover page and the traditional cinematic image of Rambo (a special operations soldier) are related by including a photo of Sylvester Stallone as Rambo (102) followed by a discussion of real CIA failures. When DS presents a real life CIA agent on its cover, it attempts to bridge the gap between cinematic and real-life special operations soldiers. America's failure to win decisively in Vietnam combines with the historical failures of the CIA to extend the Rambo image from cinema to reality to suggest that Rambo's outward appearance of strength masks the long record of failure of the CIA in clandestine operations abroad. The cover page is an actual photo, not some Hollywood film image; DS is building upon the traditional figure and updating it to fit current circumstances. The baseball cap is an immediately recognizable American cultural item and is worn in a distinctly American style: backwards. A new look with the baseball cap is an update to the cinematic Rambo that keeps the balance between a paramilitary and skateboarder look. The baseball cap loses its functional purpose of shielding the eyes in the sun and turns into a fashion statement once the bill is turned backwards (Berger, et. al 2005). The

film character Rambo did not wear a hat but rather a bandanna tied around his forehead, a fashion accessory applicable to the 1970s U.S. culture out of which he was born and which is reminiscent of Jimmy Hendrix or Bruce Springsteen. The CIA soldier on DS's cover page has a bushy, thick beard. Taking Hollywood liberties with reality, the cinematic Rambo did not have a beard while on a mission lasting days deep in the jungle where access to basic hygiene would have been difficult or altogether impossible. The lack of the beard on the cinematic Rambo's face also sets him apart from a hippie U.S. counter-culture of the sixties and early seventies. Ironically, the beard in the DS cover page looks similar to the appearance of Mujahedeen resistance fighters who fought Russian soldiers in the Russian-Afghan War. The beard also resembles those worn by present-day Al-Qaeda members, whom the CIA supported and now fights against. While the soldier on the cover page does not have the chiseled physique of the shirtless cinematic Rambo, he is still grotesquely large and masculine. DS's version of Rambo has sunglasses, which the traditional cinematic Rambo does not wear. The baseball cap worn backwards, the beard, and the sunglasses all come together to form an image of a man who is not subject to military codes of dress. However, DS is portraying more than just a soldier. DS's Rambo is portrayed as relaxed, fashionable, yet still very deadly. Underneath the relaxed appearance of the figure wearing the cap, beard, and sunglasses is a *killer*. A perceived reckless indifference towards using violence to get one's way is lurking underneath all the fashionable distractions. The man in the cover photo is indeed ready to fight. He is holding the rifle and wearing a utility belt with knife and sheath.

This cover picture is not the first time DS used Rambo to symbolize American foreign policy. Appearing a full year before the beginning of the Iraq War, the image of Rambo was

deployed on the cover of issue 8 (February 18) of 2002 bearing the title: "Die Bush Krieger: Americas Feldzug gegen das Böse" (Fig. 2). High-ranking cabinet members of the Bush administration are depicted as superheroes: then Secretary of State Colin Powell as Batman, then Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld as Conan the Barbarian, U.S. President George W. Bush as Rambo with a .50 caliber machine gun in his arms, Vice President Dick Cheney as the Terminator, and then National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice as She-Ra. Hollywood characters like Rambo and Terminator are entertaining and easily recognizable as Hollywood/American characters. The implications of linking cartoons and Hollywood to spheres of politics and warfare are that the person caricatured is subjected to humor, ridicule, and satire. A cartoon drawing of Bush's head is placed upon a cartoon drawing of Rambo's body wearing a bandoleer and holding a machine gun. This caricature implies that U.S. foreign policy is a "cartoon-like" undertaking based on violence and overblown expectations. DS mocks Bush further by including a pretzel-shaped dog tag hanging around his neck. This symbol undoubtedly refers to the story reported in some media on January 14, 2002, about an incident in which president Bush choked on a pretzel while watching television. As a result, he fell to the ground and sustained a small bruise and scratch on his cheek and lip, and he remained unconscious for a short time. The pretzel dog tag around Bush/Rambo's neck suggests the vast gap between the prowess of the fictional superhero and the incompetence of the real-life president, who is so inept that he cannot even eat a pretzel properly (let alone direct the fate of the world).

However, DS is very serious in its caricaturing of President Bush as Rambo. DS is pointing out an American individualism in George Bush's character that mirrors the dangerous endeavor of the nation to win a war almost single-handedly (then Vietnam, now the Iraq War).

DS's Bush-Rambo does much what pop culture superhero films try to do, but with different results: "The adaptation of various superhero continuities into blockbuster films has been characterized, at its best, by consideration of what Bryan Singer calls the essence of the material; [. . .] to discover the emotional truth of what the characters, and the major stories surrounding them, mean and then work with that material in an intelligent way" (Kaveney 226). DS is also attempting to uncover the truth in the Bush-Rambo comparison and the major stories that can link them intellectually, but it finds only negatives rather than redeeming moral qualities. Though DS never explicitly makes the claim, DS is keeping the faith with its primarily German audience in providing its own emotional truth and essence of the material by inferring Bush *thinks* he is a one-man warrior, a superhero who cannot be defeated, a *Rambo*. There is the further implication that this is an entire administration that has lost its grip on reality and lives in a fictional world of its own creation.

DS offered another superhero Rambo cover in 2008 (issue 14, October 27), the last of the the Bush-Rambo cover series, entitled "Die Bush Krieger: Ende der Vorstellung" (Fig. 2). On this cover, the superheroes are bruised and bloody. Colin Powell is no longer present, only an empty Batman suit remains. Donald Rumsfeld's face is not visible, but the Conan character's torso with bloody arm, shoulder, and back exits the cover page to the left. Bush as Rambo is standing in the middle on the cover page with his right arm bloodied and bruised and resting in a sling improvised from an almost empty bandolier that hangs around his neck and extends down to his waist. His left arm is also bloodied and bruised and his left hand rests on the muzzle of his .50 caliber machine gun that now functions as a support. His hair is not combed and his headband is askew. To Bush's left is Vice President Cheney. Cheney as Terminator here has bruises on his

head and his hair is disheveled. His mouth is agape and his right cheek is bruised. To Cheney's left is Condoleezza Rice. She is carrying a bloody short sword in front of her. Her hair is also disheveled and she has a bruise on the right of her forehead, some scrapes on her face, and a wound below her left shoulder on her bicep. Below the characters hangs a blue banner with red and white stars running the parameter of a blue rectangle on which is written in white letters "Ende der Vorstellung." The "end of the performance" suggests an end to the idea that the U.S. is the almighty superhero power which can fight inexhaustibly and indefinitely on the world political stage. Below that in a yellow block-style font is "Die Bush Krieger." Within the traditional orange frame of the DS cover in the upper left and right corners, the "poster picture" or "theater backdrop" is beginning to fall away from the frame. This cover page is ambiguous in that the observer does not know whether it pictures a defeated America, or an America whose leadership is tired from its overreaching struggles abroad.

DS carries this basic concept of overreaching into its criticism of the CIA. According to DS in the story entitled "Die subversive Armee der Supermacht," the CIA is lauding its successes achieved fighting the Taliban in Afghanistan. Now, according to DS, the CIA is searching Iraq before the regular military invasion for information about weapons, targets for U.S. bombers, and friends to help the U.S. military conquer Iraq quickly (10/2003, 101-102). The magazine maintains that the CIA is fighting against the "Schatten der Vergangenheit" or the stained record of failure that has tarnished the reputation of the agency (100). DS claims that CIA agents are moving about in Iraq and relaying information back to the CIA by satellite phones and laptops (100). In northern Iraq, the CIA is paying money for information from locals. Before the war begins in the south, U.S. spies are looking for bio-weapons and Scud missiles. Commandos

attack and explosions near Baghdad are heard, suggesting the CIA soldiers are active in the capital of Iraq (101). The existence of the CIA's secret units' is publicized by Washington bureaucrats for use against their political enemies. The CIA's final mission is to go to Baghdad and depose Saddam. Saddam's soldiers cannot catch the CIA. Again, employing an explicit comparison with Rambo, DS implies that the CIA sees itself as the collective reincarnation of Rambo: "So, als Rambos Wiedergänger, präsentiert sich die geheime Armee der CIA [. . .]." (101).

When it comes to numbers, DS offers what seems to be contradictory information. On the one hand it talks of hordes of Rambos penetrating Iraq (101). On the other hand, it states that the CIA special operations group is comprised of only a few hundred men who are specialists in sabotage, scouting the lay of the land in war regions, and educating their allies (102). Operation Rambo (DS's term) cannot be carried out alone by the CIA. It needs help and takes resources and men from the Pentagon, which angers the Pentagon because the CIA gets the praise while using the Pentagon's resources.

The underground soldiers are trained like a mini army (paramilitary). They have their own navy with small boats and even freighters to move massive loads of equipment. The CIA has a mini air force that can insert men or supplies to support them. The CIA uses old helicopters acquired from the Warsaw pact armies since U.S. airplanes would attract too much attention in Afghanistan and Iraq (102). CIA soldiers are also stationed in Pakistan, Central and East Asia, and in North Africa where they are hunting Al-Qaeda. According to DS, the paramilitary CIA should be the most secretive branch of the agency, but since September 11, 2001, the Americans are determined to use the CIA and any other weapons that can be used to fight terrorists (102).

Even though the CIA has been enmeshed in scandals and failures, it is now, according to DS, the idol of a nation where once it was its laughing stock: "[. . .] Geheimagenten, die in Jahrzehnten von Skandalen und Misserfolgen geradezu zur Lachnummer verkommen waren und sich [. . .] fast vollständig aus dem Operationsgeschäft hinter feindlichen Linien zurückgezogen hatten, plötzlich wieder Idole der Nation" (102). The expression "Lachnummer" is a very negative term and DS offers no claim as to why this expression is used.

The CIA is the eyes and ears of the military. They agency can find out much more than even satellite photos from space can show. George Bush received a CIA briefing every morning by the CIA director on options for his next move. George W. Bush was told by his father, the 41st president and CIA chief from 1976 to 1977, to trust the CIA (102-103). DS maintains that this fact is a historical irony given that the CIA had no idea about the planned attacks of 9/11 (103). The CIA did not consider Bin Laden a large threat, although fellow terrorists attacked the World Trade Center in 1993 and the U.S. embassy of Nairobi in 1998. The CIA has caused democracies to become dictatorships and been involved in attempts to murder foreign leaders (103). Instead of being forced to resign after the terrorist attacks, CIA boss George Tenet became one of the most respected guests in the White House, having more power bestowed upon him and the CIA than ever before in the agency's history (103). According to DS, the CIA is now experiencing a sweeping resurgence and interrogating its detainees in Bagram airbase near the city of Kabul in Afghanistan and in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba (103-104). Prominent weapons include predator drones armed with Hellfire rockets. A predator drone finds and liquidates Mohammed Atif, the military boss of the terrorist group Al-Qaeda. A year later, the CIA kills both the Al-Qaeda leader Ali Kaid Sinjan al-Harithi and an American citizen, but "Nur die Welle des Patriotismus [.

. .] verhinderte Empörung über die Tatsache, dass in diametralem Widerspruch zu amerikanischem Rechtsempfinden Geheimdienstler einen US-Bürger ohne jede Anklage exekutierten" (104). Here, DS presents the CIA as a group that ignores human rights as it executes friend and foe. The predator drone later also killed three Afghanis as they were searching for metal and demonstrated how fallible the agency is: "die Operateure waren sich sicher, den lang gesuchten al-Qaida-Chef selbst im Visier gehabt zu haben" (104).

DS believes that the agency is one of many institutions but has an edge on the others. It carries out the wishes of the U.S. president. The information the agency provides the president is sometimes correct and sometimes wrong. According to DS, George W. Bush knew that North Korea had enriched uranium in November 2003 and that the country was trying to build nuclear weapons from it (105). Yet Bush did nothing while the U.S. government turned its attention from Afghanistan and towards an invasion of Iraq. Conversely, the false information that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction was given priority when it should not have been. The agency is thus the "Spielball der Interessen des jeweiligen Präsidenten" (105). The article continues with paragraphs about the CIA's creation and its main goal to protect the U.S. DS compares the trauma of the September 11th terrorist attacks with the American shock at the Japanese military attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, and it suggests similarities between the CIA and the KGB (107). After this extensive introduction to the CIA, which already suggests the dubious nature of the enterprise, DS discusses the long record of actual failures in CIA history.

The CIA was often a "williges Instrument im größten moralischen Desaster der amerikanischen Außenpolitik" (110) in that the agency went along with the decision to send more military resources into Vietnam even though it was skeptical about the outcome. Except for

the superlative "größtes," the quote also seems to describe the CIA's early actions in Guatemala and Iran. The agency went to Guatemala in the early to mid 1950s to topple the democratically elected president of Guatemala, Jacob Arbenz Guzman, because the agency believed that the government and its leader was Communist-friendly and that the U.S. company United Fruit would be bought up and partitioned by the Guatemalan government. Guzman's replacement was Elfego Hernán Monzón Aguirre, and Guatemala became a much less stable government once the CIA had its hand in its national affairs.

In 1953 the CIA had its first success in its first major operation in Iran, which then turned into a failure to maintain pro-U.S. political favor in Iran decades later. The CIA involvement in Iran began when Iranian Premiere Mohammed Mosaddeq tried to bring a British oil group under state rule. The CIA was successful in causing various uprisings in Tehran which, in turn, led to the return to power of the shortly exiled Shah of Iran, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. From 1953 to 1979, the Shah kept an acceptable relationship with the United States. The overthrow of Pahlavi was a surprise, and the CIA's attempt to kill Pahlavi's successor, Ayatollah Khomeini, failed and resulted in the taking of American hostages, a debacle that lasted 444 days, and an abortive CIA attempt to free the hostages (104).

The next failure was a result of poor organization in Cuba. This catastrophe had unforeseen consequences that could have resulted in a nuclear war. The CIA trained Cuban exiles to reenter Cuba and cause a public revolution to overthrow the Communist dictatorship of Fidel Castro. The Bay of Pigs invasion between April 17 and 19, 1961, caused major embarrassment to President Kennedy and the CIA when it failed. DS does not specify why the revolution failed. It only mentions that the small army of exiled Cubans "wurde wegen schwerer

strategischer Fehler bereits während der Landung aufgerieben" (104). Rather than the CIA scoring success after success in its operations abroad, DS claims that the agency's failures end in dictatorships, disaster, and death: "Die CIA hat schon geholfen, Demokratien in Diktaturen zu verwandeln. Sie war in geglückte und missglückte Mordanschläge auf ausländische Staatsführer verwickelt" (103). DS questions the morality of assassinations, especially when mistakes are made which lead to the murder of the wrong people. DS's chronicle of CIA failures continues with the CIA-led putsch against the South Vietnamese leader Ngo Dinh Diem on November 1, 1963. The CIA weeded out pro-Soviet Vietnamese in South Vietnam and conducted commando operations both inside and outside of enemy lines (105). Diem was a dictator whose death led to an invasion of South Vietnam by Ho Chi Minh's northern Vietnamese army, which in turn further complicated America's long involvement in Vietnam. Years later, after the U.S. was fully involved militarily in Vietnam, the "Phoenix Program" was initiated. The purpose of the so-called "Phoenix Program" from 1967 to 1972 was for the CIA to track down the Vietcong, the insurgency fighting against the government of South Vietnam, and eradicate it. However, in the words of a CIA expert, "Sie haben verdammt viele von den falschen Leute umgebracht" (110).

In the last years of America's Vietnam War, the CIA was active in Chile. DS mentions but does not go into much detail about the CIA's involvement in Chile and the murders of the democratically elected Chilean president Salvador Allende in 1973, but it does spend time on the Iran-Contra Affair, which began in August 1984 and continued through October 1986. CIA boss William Casey helped sell U.S. weaponry to Iranians opposing the rule of Ayatollah Khomeini via Israel. Israel, in turn, would funnel the money back to the CIA and the CIA would give more weapons to Israel to be sold back to the anti-Khomeini regime Iranians. The plans changed and

some of the funds were diverted to a right-wing political group, the Contra rebels in Nicaragua, in their ultimately failed efforts to depose the communist Sandinistas from power in a bloody civil war in Nicaragua. National Security Council (NSC) military advisor Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North, and then Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, and many other high-ranking officials in the U.S. government were eventually convicted of selling arms directly to Iran for the release of American hostages. The arms deals had devolved from arming anti-Khomeini groups in Iran into a weapons-for-American-hostages debacle that was illegal and against the Boland Amendments between 1982 and 1984, through which the U.S. Congress had specifically decreed that the U.S. was to limit its support for the Contra rebels in Nicaragua. According to DS, the Iran-Contra affair could have cost Reagan his role as Commander-in-Chief had CIA boss Casey not died during Reagan's presidency (110).

The CIA did have some success in Afghanistan during the 1980s at the time of the Russian occupation. "In Afghanistan erlebte der Geheimdienst auch seine Rehabilitation" (113), but this achievement was later eclipsed when the agency had to fight some of the very groups it once supported. The success of the CIA helping freedom fighters defeat the Russian military in Afghanistan in the late 1980s ironically became a fight against some of those very people, the Taliban, in the current wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. For several years prior to the Gulf War, Saddam had killed hundreds of CIA-trained Iraqis for trying to topple his dictatorship. The agency's reputation was further sullied because of the subsequent lack of willingness on the part of Iraqis to work for the CIA (113).

Another failure was that the CIA of pre-9/11 had no centralized knowledge of the planned terrorist attack. DS takes this opportunity to deploy the Rambo motif once more. The Rambo

mentality is set off by terrorist attacks on America: "Die Amerikaner wollten nie wieder einen Überraschungsangriff erleben wie den der Japaner auf Pearl Harbor 1941 – eben deshalb ist der 11. September 2001 zu einem schweren Trauma geworden, und eben deshalb ist die Bereitschaft wieder groß, den CIA-Rambos freien Lauf zu lassen" (107). DS equates the resulting fear generated by 9/11 with the American trauma resulting from the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. DS also makes a quick jab at the CIA for not catching Bin Laden: "den Hightech-Nachstellungen der USA entwand sich Bin laden auf einem Eselsrücken" (104). With all its financial and technological resources, the CIA still cannot win.

Along with DS' discussion of CIA failures in history, there are also suggestions that some failures had a domino effect. For example, DS maintains that the failure of the Bay of Pigs invasion in April of 1961 guided the Soviet Union in making the bold step of inserting nuclear weaponry into Cuba, resulting in the Cuban Missile Crisis in October of 1962. "Schlimmer noch, 18 Monaten später [after the Bay of Pigs invasion] standen die beiden gegnerischen Supermächte am Rande eines Nuklearkrieges, weil die verpatzte Kuba-Invasion die Sowjets auf den Gedanken gebracht hatte, sie könnten Atomraketen unentdeckt und ungestraft in gut 300 Kilometer Entfernung von Miami aufstellen" (108). While DS does not comment on whether the Cuban Missile Crisis was a failure or success for the U.S., it was, without doubt, not one of the agency's finest moments. The CIA's lack of awareness of the transport of nuclear weapons to Cuba made the situation an immediate crisis for the U.S. government and it placed millions upon millions of American citizens in harm's way.

In discussing Afghanistan, DS exculpates the CIA by indicating the U.S. government lost interest in Afghanistan after the Red Army left in 1989. That lack of a CIA presence there after

the Russian withdrawal allowed Afghanistan to turn into a terrorist shelter to which the CIA had to return in 2001 in order to fight the Taliban as part of the ongoing global war on terror: "In Afghanistan aber braute sich eine neue explosive Mischung aus Fundamentalismus und Terrorismus zusammen. Aus einstigen Freiheitskämpfern wurden Quartiergeber für Terroristen, die frommen Mudschahidin waren den noch frommeren Kämpfern der Taliban gewichen, und Bin Laden war ihr geehrter Gast. So wie die CIA als Werkzeug für die Außenpolitik herhalten musste, als es galt, die Sowjetunion zu besiegen, so war sie wieder zur Stelle, als es darum ging, die Taliban zu besiegen und Bin Laden zu jagen" (113). In "absolving" the CIA of this failure, DS is only pointing through the use of terms like "Werkzeug" and "herhalten" to another weakness: that the CIA is subject to misuse from above.

Whether the CIA succeeds or fails, it has competition for the job. DS uncovers this competition between the CIA and the Department of Defense (DOD) for resources and praise. In its second major article "Rumsfelds Sondereinheiten im Kampf gegen den Terrorismus," DS claims that the strategy to use non-American Northern Alliance soldiers to fight the Taliban in Afghanistan in 2001 started an intense rivalry between CIA director Tenet and Pentagon DOD head Donald Rumsfeld. The CIA would use anti-Taliban tribal soldiers and equip them with money and weaponry to fight for the CIA's causes against common enemies. "Damit war aber auch der Grundstein gelegt für die erbitterte Rivalität zwischen Pentagon-Chef Donald Rumsfeld und George Tenet um den richtigen Einsatz ihrer Sondereinheiten" (114). The rivalry is included in both the story of CIA failure "Die Subversive Armee der Supermacht" and in the story of how Rumsfeld deals with CIA competition "Rumsfelds Sondereinheiten im Kampf gegen den Terrorismus." In the first story, DS portrays the DOD as being at odds with the CIA because the

CIA can take DOD's soldiers at will for covert operations. When successful, the CIA reaps the honors while the DOD remains without praise. There is an on-going battle of one-upmanship between the two entities. The title of the entire issue, "Operation Rambo," suggests a loner is doing the work. But, in fact, both agencies must work together to coordinate resources for a successful mission. However, both agencies are competitors on the same team. This internal struggle for power is hampering the chances of success for the U.S. Special Forces in Iraq. DS quotes Donald Rumsfeld comparing himself to a little bird in its nest waiting for CIA permission to join the fray, "Ich habe all die Jungs unter Waffen und muss wie ein kleiner Vogel im Nest warten, bis die CIA uns reinlässt" (114). DS views the Department of Defense as competing with the CIA for recognition. According to the second story, "Rumsfelds Sondereinheiten im Kampf gegen den Terrorismus," U.S. Special Forces of the Pentagon are broken down into subcategories, including the Green Berets, Army Rangers, and Delta force in the U.S. Army, the United States Air Force Special Operations force, and the Navy Seals of the U.S. Navy. All groups are under the command of Donald Rumsfeld. Regarding the battle against rebels/drug traffickers, DS asserts that the "Nebenziel" of Rumsfeld's forces is "den ungeliebten, konkurrierenden CIA auf diesem Gebiet möglichst wenig Spielraum lassen" (106). But Rumsfeld has decided to put together his own special unit for its own special purpose – to hold the CIA in check by means of the Proactive, Preemptive Operations Group (P2OG). The group will coordinate the movements of the CIA with Rumsfeld's own Special Forces. DS states that some critics of this second secretive organization view it as an attempt "mit diesem Supergeheimdienst jene gesetzlichen Auflagen zu umgehen," while other critics, specifically the "Vereinigung Amerikanischer Wissenschaftler," fear that: "[the Special Forces] regen Terrorakte an, um dann

die Täter zu schnappen" (107). DS apparently views Rumsfeld as a civilian leader of the military who wants to control the CIA and who will stop at nothing to gain that control. That can even mean creating the P2OG to provoke terrorists to act out their plans so his unit can catch the terrorists more easily (107).

Apart from Rumsfeld's attempt to control manned groups, there are efforts to partially unman the battlefield with military drones. Because one false decision can result in dead agents and/or lost information, the CIA is working to partially unman the front lines in its covert war around the world by introducing "Hinrichtung per Joystick," drone spy craft into enemy skies (107). DS maintains that the CIA has access to as much money as it needs to implement technologies like drones and satellite imagery that serve as the eyes and ears of the agency in foreign lands.

DS maintains that unlike the DOD's Army Green Berets or Navy Seals, CIA operatives can murder for the first time since Vietnam without permission from the White House (103). They oftentimes make life-or-death decisions instantly and are in constant danger and out-numbered by their foes, often without military reinforcement, much like a lone Rambo. Their dangerous predicament is evidenced by the deaths of two agents, Michael Spann and Philip Boes. Each of their stories is included among those belonging to the title story, so they are linked to the Rambo motif. Both men die serving the CIA. Both Spann and Boes were real CIA agents, who are portrayed quite differently by DS.

CIA agent Michael Spann was the first American agent to die in Afghanistan after he was deployed there by the CIA. Spann had always wanted to be a CIA agent and the mission that resulted in his death was his first major mission outside the United States. Just two weeks after

the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on U.S. soil, he was in Masar-I-Sharif with his colleague David Tyson to collect information. Michael Spann led the efforts to interrogate over 500 Taliban prisoners at Qala Jangi fortress. Before the fortress was conquered by the Northern Alliance forces, it had been a Taliban base. Unlike the highly-trained linguist David Tyson, Michael was easily distinguishable as an American in his Western clothing. A deadly mistake was made before interrogation when the CIA colleagues chose to interrogate the suspected Taliban agents in the fortress in groups rather than individually. The CIA Agents were outnumbered and ill-equipped for the fight that lay ahead. Many weapons had been secretly hidden by the Taliban in their former base, and not all of the prisoners had been completely searched for weaponry. Shortly after the interrogation of the American Taliban John Walker Lindh took place, other prisoners started fighting. In the ensuing skirmish, which later became an all-out battle for control of the fortress, Michael Spann was blown up by a prisoner who pulled the pin on a grenade. David Tyson found cover with a reporter for the German news organization ARD in a corner tower of the fortress and used the reporter's satellite phone to inform the CIA of the raging battle. A total of at least 350 died and seven days passed before the Americans and British regained control of the fortress.

DS writes about Michael Spann because he is the first American casualty of the new war on terrorism which America is waging. The story, entitled "Wie die CIA im Afghanistan-Krieg agierte," puts the ironic writing style of DS on display and it does not present Michael Spann in a positive way. Spann is an agent who "knows Muslim lands only from books" (112). Er läuft in blue Jeans und einem blauen Pullover herum. Schon von weitem ist er als westlicher Ausländer zu erkennen" (112). DS remarks in astonishment that his colleague, who survived the attack, was

less equipped with communication equipment than a German t.v. reporter: “Kaum zu glauben: Der CIA-Mann hat kein Satellitentelefon dabei, er leiht sich ein Gerät von einem ARD-Reporter” (113). The phrase “kaum zu glauben” calls attention to an omniscient writing style that DS uses to lead the reader to the conclusion that the CIA agents are stupid and naïve for not being prepared for such an attack. The magazine invites its readers to join in marveling at the incompetence of the U.S. operatives. In an example of ironic writing style, DS cites Spann’s own words from an email he sent to his parents shortly before he died at the very end of the article: “Haltet zu eurer Regierung und eurer Armee, vor allem wenn die ersten Toten nach Hause kommen“ (113). The man warning of the coming casualties becomes the first casualty.

Helge Philipp Boes, by contrast, was a German citizen from Hamburg who fought for the United States in Afghanistan. He was a well-studied youth who attended the John F. Kennedy School in Berlin and studied politics in America. After three years studying law at Harvard, DS tells us, he could have been a lawyer and could have possibly had a great career and done very well for himself financially. However, he wanted to join the U.S. military and defend the positive qualities of the West. When he was promised only a desk job with a law team with the U.S. Army after trying to enlist, Boes decided to refuse the offer. Instead, he applied to join the CIA. He was successful. From January 2001 onwards, Philipp Boes served on highly secret missions, missions which even his parents back home in Berlin had little or no knowledge of. The secretive nature of his job as a member of the anti-terrorism department and specialist for undercover operations at the CIA kept him busy and without contact with his family for weeks at a time. Boes died on February 5, 2003, when a faulty grenade exploded. He was flown back to the U.S. from Germany for burial, with the CIA bearing the cost of transportation. He became the

eightieth star on a white marble wall in CIA headquarters in Langley, Virginia. The director of the CIA, George Tenet, praised his service. His German family and American wife attended his funeral. Boes' casket was covered by the American flag and carried by six Air Force soldiers upon arriving on American soil at Andrew's Air Force Base. DS undoubtedly wrote about Boes because he was a well-educated German and the story of his adventurous life would resonate strongly with the well-educated male audience of which the magazine's readership is comprised. The difference in the treatment of Spann and Boes – both representatives of the hapless CIA – is striking. DS portrays Philipp Boes sympathetically as a man with "glänzende Optionen" for a career, but one who chose instead to work for the CIA out of a sense of duty because: "er glaubte an die Werte der freien westlichen Welt und sah seine Berufung darin, sie zu verteidigen" (10/2003 108). He is a "Hobby-Torwart" who brought cds with him to Afghanistan : "[. . .] von Mahler bis Metallica. Eine Frank-Sinatra-Aufnahme steckte noch in seinem CD-Spieler" "(108). The significance of the preceding quote is that DS portrays Boes as a sophisticated person who listened to Mahler, yet he also had a more mainstream taste in music that ranged from gritty to mellow. He was an intelligent yet down-to-earth human, who as a "hobby goalkeeper" was fit in body as well as mind. Harvard law – soccer – Mahler – Metallica – a defender of Western values: this is a German at work for the CIA. He is betrayed not by his own doltish incompetence, like the American rube Michael Spann, but by a defective device, a faulty grenade. The only sour note in the article is struck by a German observer, a family member, who deplores the pomp of the American military funeral.

In summing up the treatment of U.S. efforts in Iraq in this issue, we can conclude that DS bases its critique of the U.S. actions on the failures of the CIA. The magazine frequently departs

from “objective” standards of journalism when it interjects such phrases as the already quoted “Kaum zu glauben” or when it describes agents as clumsy oafs or klutzes: "Schließlich habe kaum noch ein Iraker mit den Tollpatschen Langley zusammenarbeiten wollen" (113) or suggests they are jokes on the historical stage: “Ein Treppenwitz der Geschichte. Der Dienst hatte es ja fertig gebracht, dem 11. Septembers 2001 in völliger Ahnungslosigkeit entgegenzudämmern” (103). The critique may be one-sided and non-objective – at least when judged by the standards of historical scholarship – because it employs such weighed expressions and because it focuses on the failures and makes no real attempt to identify the successes, but it is based on solid historical fact.

The principal accusations are incompetence and illegality. The agency has constantly blundered and failed to achieve the desired result, either out of ignorance and poor planning or because unforeseen and unintended consequence arose from their operations. It has also willfully engaged in assassination and the overthrow of legitimate governments, thus demonstrating it has no respect for principles of law and morality.

The invocation of Rambo adds a new dimension to the criticism and allows a freer play of associations. Rambo is a grotesque and hyper-real creation. People who fashion themselves on that model – as the soldier on the cover of the issue seems to do – have lost touch with reality. They have confused a celluloid myth with the real world and are delusional in their belief that they can exercise the kind of power that is created on the screen. If we assume continuity in the magazine’s readership, then the earlier use of the Rambo figure in conjunction with George Bush and the association of superheroes with key figures of his administration also play a role and extend the aura of disfunctionality to the highest level of government. American foreign policy

in Iraq becomes the creation of fools who do not recognize the limits of either personal or national power. They too are delusional.

DS adds strength to its argument by drawing on American cultural triumphs – the film industry and the creation of mythic figures recognized the world over – and then subverting them by revealing their inadequacy in the real world. Even the victories in the cultural sphere, it is implied, are hollow and false. As if to underscore the American propensity to believe in cinematic myths of invincibility, DS continues at various points to work film into its treatment of events. As part of the cover story DS describes the deployment of a limited number of special operations forces in these hyperbolic terms: "Als hätten Scharen von Rambos ihre angestammte Zelluloidwelt verlassen, bewegen sich die hochgerüsteten Vorkämpfer im Feindesland" (101). The high tech efforts of the agency approach the special effects of action films: "Die Methoden der CIA, stets auf der technischen Höhe ihrer Zeit, waren häufig filmreif – ein bisschen Bond, ein bisschen Frankenstein, und sehr viel Terminator" (107).

James Bond is mentioned, and he recurs again several times. Even though he is not named in the following quote, many readers will think of his "license to kill" in reading "Zum ersten Mal seit Vietnam und Watergate dürfen die Sonderkommandos der CIA auch wieder morden – ohne Rücksprache mit dem Weißen Haus" (103). It is worth noting parenthetically here that "Watergate" fits this picture chronologically but has nothing to do with the CIA or Vietnam. Its sole purpose seems to be to suggest shame and to invoke the memory of yet another colossal failure of American political morality. Bond is also used as a metonym for CIA agents in describing Donald Rumsfeld's frustration because: "die Masse seiner Spezialeinheiten

Gewehr bei Fuß abwarten musste, bis die 007-Agenten der CIA Afghanistan eroberungsreif gemeldet hatten" (107).

Rambo is the hero to emerge from America's failure in Vietnam and 9/11. Now the CIA is the new hero for an American public that is shocked at the 9/11 terrorist attacks even though the agency had little or no knowledge of the attacks and was unable to defend U.S. citizenry from them. DS updates the Rambo image for its readers with a cover page that purportedly shows a real CIA operative. The grotesque hyper-masculinity of the Rambo physique is transformed by DS into a full-bearded soldier and modernized by the backwardly worn baseball cap and sunglasses, but weapons remain in both. The superimposition of past onto present, the Rambo character onto the CIA character in Iraq, makes a convincing emotional argument that the U.S. is an aggressor abroad who is trying to make up for past failures in other foreign lands as well as at home. The CIA has a long string of failures, so why should this stint in Iraq be different? The historical facts are the heart of DS's argument, but the Rambo figure is the associative and emotional soul of the piece that allows the reader to connect grotesque images of rage and graphic violence to the historical narrative. The conversion from Hollywood movie figure to a real life Rambo is dramatic. DS implies that the U.S. government has mistaken Hollywood fiction for reality. Intertwining of Rambo within the text about the real CIA makes it clear that DS believes U.S. foreign policy in regard to the Iraq War is based on the cinematic myth of Rambo, which the magazine also implicitly suggests the U.S. government perceives as real.

Chapter Two:
The U.S. in Iraq: Empire and German Historical Sensitivities in DS
Part I: Empires and the U.S. in the Iraq Conflict

Following the outbreak of the Iraq War, DS invoked historical comparisons between the U.S. and past world empires and revealed particular German historical sensitivities in its news coverage. Blending past and present, DS argues that America is an empire whose decision to invade Iraq has signaled the decline of the U.S. as an imperial world power. Comparisons to empires and to imperial actions are drawn, such as the Roman Empire, the Mongolian invasion of Baghdad in 1258, the Holy Crusades of the Middles Ages, the Napoleonic conquests, the Hapsburg Monarchy, the decline of the British empire, and the decline of the Soviet Union.

DS also offers a German perspective on war that the American collective consciousness does not and cannot relate to because the U.S. homeland did not come face-to-face with the horror, death, and destruction of two world wars. The analogies DS draws when it compares, for example, George W. Bush to Hermann Göring or the Battle of Baghdad to the Battle of Stalingrad, exhibit DS's propensity to interject historical narratives that derive from its culture and that may have little in common with the situation in Iraq.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the manner in which DS presents its historical arguments in its comparisons of the U.S. actions with those of past empires and to enter into a discussion of German sensitivities to war as reflected in DS's news coverage of the first weeks of the Iraq War. While not a historical journal, DS has been an important part of the German effort after World War II to analyze its own past to discover the roots of historical catastrophe. One early example is "Der Orden unter dem Totenkopf" about the history of the German SS (issues 42-43, 45-53 in 1966, issues 1-11 in 1967). Its extensive serial coverage of historical topics is

one of the things that distinguish DS from its American counterparts, *Time* and *Newsweek*. This commitment continues into the present with the most recent series, "Sechzig deutsche Jahre" (issues 7-13, 2009), and in extensive single articles such as "Staat von Blut und Eisen" (issue 4, 2001).

DS develops the idea of America as an empire that has reached its pinnacle and is possibly at the beginning of a decline. The U.S. image as an empire is central to issue 12 (March 17, 2003), "Die eingebildete Weltmacht: Übernimmt sich Amerika?" DS claims that America is an imperialist power that has already taken over economically and culturally, and it asks whether active military dominance is far behind. The title stories that will be summarized and cited are "Die letzte Schlacht um den Frieden" and "Das hochmütige Imperium des George W. Bush." I will also reference photos and illustrations, including the cover page. Quotes from issues 17-18 of 2003 are also included since they represent an extension of the discussion of world powers in issue 12, and other issues from 12 through 18 will be cited in the discussion of German historical sensitivities brought to the Iraq conflict.

DS asserts, correctly, that the invasion of Iraq is mere days away (12/2003, 110). America's move to invade Iraq cannot be stopped by the European nations as they try to sue for peace. According to DS, U.S. President Bush has created a worldwide crisis by insisting on war in Iraq (111). At the UN Security Council meeting in January 2003, the U.S. lost the vote for a UN supported invasion of Iraq (112). European powers France and Germany were adamantly against the proposed war, with both countries favoring more time for diplomacy, while the Americans insisted stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) existed. Russia decided to side with Germany and France against America, Britain, and Spain, as any Russian-supported

invasion could have caused additional problems for Russia in Chechnya and in the Arab world (114). When it was clear that the U.S. would not win a vote on a second resolution to invade Iraq, the U.S. decided to invade Iraq without UN support.

According to the story "Das Hochmütige Imperium George W. Bush," Bush is fully convinced that going to war in Iraq is the right decision (116). At this point, DS begins its discussion of U.S. dominance. DS considers the U.S. to have already taken over the world via economic and cultural influences (116). America is now concentrating on letting its military influence be felt globally (117). The link between economic and military power is made obliquely: "Sie schaffen mit vierundeinhalb Prozent der Weltbevölkerung 31 Prozent des wirtschaftlichen Gesamtprodukts auf der Erde. Sie geben in diesem Jahr mehr für Rüstung aus als die nächsten zehn Staaten zusammengenommen" (118). The scope of the overall dominance of America in the world has no historical precedent: "Wohl noch nie in der Geschichte der Menschheit hat ein Land mit seiner Politik, mit seinen Panzern und seinen Produkten die Welt so dominiert wie heute die USA" (118). DS uses photos to advance its argument that the U.S. has already taken over the world culturally and economically; There are images of Britney Spears, the opening of a Wal-Mart in Dortmund, a concert at a Coca-Cola bottling plant in China, a picture of Mickey Mouse at Walt Disney Film Park in Paris, Oscar statues in Los Angeles, Microsoft founder Bill Gates in Tokyo, and a jeans advertisement in Malaysia (116-117). DS states that the U.S. cultural and economic exports have permeated the entire world. The cultural influence extends into nations whose people protest U.S. dominance while at the same time consuming and wearing its products: "Der extrem erfolgreiche US-„Kulturexport' reicht von Big Macs bis zu Baywatch und Britney Spears. Und manchmal tragen die zornigen Jugendlichen der

Dritten Welt, die amerikanische Flaggen verbrennen und die ‚Coca-Colonisierung„ verdammen, dabei originale ‚stonewashed Levis.„" (118). Another photo shows the familiar McDonald's arches in Kuwait with Arabic writing glowing in the night; this internationally-recognized symbol belongs to " [the] Bauen an einer neuen Weltordnung" (120).

DS presents an image of America as an imperialist nation whose power knows few limits. As George W. Bush said in his 2004 State of the Union Address to the U.S. Congress nine months later:

> From the beginning, America has sought international support for operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, and we have gained much support. There is a difference, however, between leading a coalition of many nations, and submitting to the objections of a few. America will never seek a permission slip to defend the security of our people.

The irony of the "objections of a few" is that those "few" included nations with UN Security Council vetoes like Germany, France, and Russia, without whose support the U.S. could never gain the votes needed to have a UN-backed invasion of Iraq. The few are most of the major member states of the UN. The language used by U.S. president Bush and cited by DS suggests a mentality that makes no apologies for his administration's willingness to invade a country with a pre-emptive strike against terrorism in the face of strong international opposition. In alienating language Bush draws the line between friend and foe: "Wer nicht mit uns ist, ist gegen uns" (120). In an earlier issue DS used an interview with American author Susan Sontag entitled "Sei Patriotisch und denk nicht" to advance its view that the Iraq War was inevitable because the American administration and even the Americans themselves, wanted it. Sontag claims "Die

Amerikaner sind entschlossen, den Irak zu besetzen. Sie sind auf eine Neuordnung des Nahen Ostens aus" (10/2003, 121).

The U.S. is trying to extend its military influence abroad. DS considers the invasion of Iraq as the watershed moment in a period of military over-expansion by the U.S. that may eventually lead to its decline and fall. DS also claims that the military expansion of the U.S. is causing tension among other nations that fear America. This fear of being attacked or invaded by America's army is perceived as real around the globe. Another concern is that fear of U.S. aggression will lead to world-wide rearmament among nations concerned with what is seen as an aggressive American superpower exercising its self-proclaimed right to attack countries at will and cause international instability. Russian president Vladimir Putin spoke of the neo-colonialism of America (16/2003, 48). America's claim that the conflict in Iraq is a defensive act to prevent terrorism opened the way for other nations to justify preemptive aggression. Prime examples of nations around the world who could lay claim to preventative war as their right are: Russia against Georgia, Pakistan against India, and China against Taiwan (12/2003, 118).The precedent set by the U.S. in attacking another nation without official UN international support could be dangerous for world peace (118). And the U.S. may have set off events whose results it cannot control.

Two historical models for collapse are discussed by DS: Rome suffered internal decay and collapse when it stifled civil liberties and the Hapsburg Monarchy declined because of overexpansion. DS draws historical material from comparisons with other empires as well: the Mongolian empire of the 13th century, the realm of the Holy Crusades, the empire established by

Napoleon, the British empire, and the Soviet Union. The analogies occur in quick succession without any consideration of how apt the comparisons actually are.

The cover page of issue 12 is the lead-in to these historical comparisons. It shows the White House on top of the world with beams of light streaming out from behind the building. The title is "Die *eingebildete* Weltmacht: Übernimmt sich Amerika?" (Fig. 3). The White House represents the power of the U.S. government. The beam coming out from behind the White House whites out parts of the blue sky. The White House is sitting on part of the earth. Only some of the earth is seen, not a whole globe. The provocative image suggests several important key points in the issue. Firstly, the location of the White House on top of the world suggests that the U.S. is the only world power. Secondly, the light beaming out from behind the White House and blotting out the blue sky suggests a heavenly light. This can be interpreted as a pseudo-halo or sun. The title, "Die *eingebildete* Weltmacht: übernimmt sich Amerika?", employs the use of a question that might be asked by DS in order to stir debate on how far is too far for the expansion of American influence throughout the world. Answers to rhetorical questions are either absolutely easy to answer, or not answerable at all and can denote the knowledge of the person or group asking the question: "A question [. . .] can be construed [. . .] as evidence of what the asker knows or does not know [. . .]. A question is rhetorical if it is either so profound that answering it is obviously impossible, or so superficial that answering it is impossibly obvious" (Black 2). DS implies, and its readers assume, that the answer to the question is superficial and that it should be answered with an unequivocal yes. But it is still a question and, as such, it is an escape hatch in case future events prove DS wrong. The question underscores DS's intent to present itself as an

investigative journal; the magazine poses a provocative question and purports to delve into a weighty question.

In the accompanying stories DS links war with both peace and death. One story title on the contents page of this issue (12/2003, 17) is "Die letzte Schlacht um den Frieden," while the story headline reads "Die Boten des Todes." The story is illustrated by an ominous photo -- many fully-equipped U.S. soldiers walking in the desert fill the entire frame (12/2003, 110-111). The soldiers march towards the camera in dusty, sandy conditions. Some look directly into the camera, some are hunched over behind those in front of them as they walk. Weapons and a variety of artillery items are being carried either in the soldiers' hands, on their backs, or by their sides attached to straps. Goggles or sunglasses are worn on each visible face. The photo is taken from a short distance away, and the brown camouflage hides the true numbers of the soldiers marching forward through the dust. The photo underscores DS's belief that the U.S. power cannot be stopped as expressed in the text: "Keine Macht der Welt kann ihn aufhalten, weil die Hypermacht Amerika diesen Gewaltstreich will, entschlossen zum Alleingang ohne ausdrückliches Uno-Mandat" (110).

DS launches into its discussion of the U.S. as an empire that has reached its peak. DS opens the inquiry by calling America "eine Großmacht, nahe am Größenwahn" and interprets the "delusions of grandeur" as signaling the decline of an empire:

> Doch so manches Imperium in der Weltgeschichte hat auf dem Zenit seiner Macht den entscheidenden Fehler begangen und frühere Freunde zu Gegner gemacht. Hybris kommt oft vor dem Fall. Amerikas robustes Auftreten gegen die Regeln der Weltgemeinschaft könnte, dafür gibt es Anzeichnen, auch seinen Niedergang einläuten. (111)

This hubris-verging-on-megalomania compliments the image of Rambo the magazine had put forward just two weeks earlier. America lives in an illusionary world and has lost touch with reality. Its international politics are as phantasmagoric as its films. DS admits that the U.S. is the uncontested leader militarily, economically, and culturally, but it claims – again in the form of a question – that the U.S. suffers from a sickness which may signal its decline: "Aber die Supermacht beginnt an der Krankheit aller Imperien in der Geschichte zu leiden: Selbstüberschätzung und Selbstüberforderung. Läutet der Irak-Krieg womöglich den Niedergang ein?" (116).

DS also indicates that there are religious overtones to Bush's aggression. In noting that Bush as president swore to uphold the the U.S. constitution, the magazine poses yet another question: "aber hat er auch geschworen, amerikanische Werte zwangsweise zu verbreiten – die Verfassung von ‚Gottes eigenem Land„ zum neuen Grundgesetz der Welt zu erheben? [. . .] Amerika – neue Heimat eines wohlwollenden Imperialismus?" (12/2003, 117). In this case, DS is playing on George Bush's public pronouncements of his Christian faith and the disdain of its own readers towards Bush's – or anyone's – use of religion to force their values on the rest of the world and the commingling of religion and politics.

The "Bush Doctrine," articulated in the story "Die Weltordnung der Supermacht" in issue 17, maintains that America has the right to undertake a preemptive, preventative strike against its enemies when those enemies support terrorist organizations and have weapons of mass destruction at their disposal (20, 23-24). DS makes the case that no nation has a right to preemptive strike. In doing so, the magazine mirrors the opinion of various European nations regarding the U.S. invasion of Iraq. American politicians consider the Iraq conflict an offensive

war to prevent terrorism. There is a shift in the DS text away from a leading question on the cover page of issue 15 to a direct, authoritative claim when DS uses the very phrase on its cover, but now as a declaration of fact:

> einen militärisch erzwungenen Regimewechsel, eine geopolitische Neuordnung der ganzen Region. Sie planen, völkerrechtlich entscheidend, keinen aufgezwungen Verteidigungskrieg, sondern einen selbst gewählten Präventivkrieg. Ein Recht darauf gibt es nicht – auch nicht für die USA, die eingebildete Weltmacht. (117)

DS references here a principle of international law that recognizes a right to self defense but not a right to wage offensive war. DS quotes former U.S. president Carter later in this article about the lack of justification for the American invasion and the practical consequences of the decision: "Es gibt noch keine Rechtfertigung für einen Angriff. Wir unterminieren die Vereinten Nationen und destabilisieren die Region" (125). In quoting a former American president who is internationally respected for his moral views, DS also backs up its claim to a moral basis for its arguments.

DS asserts that the U.S. is fighting the war on terror on multiple fronts: "Wohl noch nie hat Amerika an so vielen Fronten gekämpft – und das gleichzeitig" (119). This overextension of America's military power may lead to the end of the U.S. as a world power and is reminiscent of the process that supposedly brought down the Austro-Hungarian Empire.[1] The U.S. is already in

[1] DS does not address itself here to the question of what constitutes an empire and what the difference is between a super power and an empire, but a later edition does offer an explanation when it declares that the U.S. embrace of policies it formerly distained signals the transition from super power to empire: Eine Supermacht ist eine imperiale Macht im Wartestand [. . .]. Bushs Amerika aber besitzt einen ausgeprägten Willen zur Hegemonie. Es hat das Sendungsbewusstsein, seine Vorstellungen von Ordnung, Wohlverhalten und Demokratie auch in hochexplosiven Weltgegenden wie dem Nahen Osten zu verbreiten. Es handelt in der Überzeugung, Frieden lasse sich durch Krieg vorbereiten. Hegemonie, Interessensphären, Imperialismus – solche Begriffe wurden einst mit größtmöglicher Verachtung benutzt, gerade in den USA. (17/2003, 21)

a state of "relative [economic] decline," and yet it continues to take on gigantic new financial burdens as it finances the military, which is carrying out the Bush Doctrine. The Bush Doctrine is indirectly referred to as the catalyst for the expected decline and subsequent fall of the United States as DS compares the USA to famous empires in history in the story "Das Hochmütige Imperium des George W. Bush":

> Große Reiche neigten dazu, sich zu übernehmen [. . .]. Einige sind, wie das Römische Reich, wohl von innen her verfault und dann durch zahlreiche nadelstichartige Einfälle der „Barbaren" zerstört worden. Viele aber, wie etwa das Imperium der Habsburger Ende des 17. Jahrhunderts scheiterten an Selbstüberschätzung und Selbstüberforderung. An der zu großen Zahl ihrer Verpflichtungen – an „imperialier Überdehnung [. . .]. Auch die Vereinigten Staaten befänden sich im „relativen Niedergang" [. . .] für die nächsten 10 Jahre wird einen Fehlbetrag von 1,8 Billion Dollar prognostiziert – und doch erweitert der Präsident ständig Amerikas imperiale Ambitionen. (12/2003, 119)

Overreaching is the biggest problem, and it affected not only the Habsburg monarchy but also the British Empire and the Soviet Union. But for good measure, DS also discovers parallels to the Roman model of internal decay. In the U.S. this means undermining the historical cornerstone of American democracy, civil rights:

> Die größte Gefahr für die USA ist wohl die „imperiale Überdehnung", [. . .] an der Großreiche von den Habsburgern über das Britische Empire bis zum Vielvölkerstaat Sowjetunion gescheitert sind. Aber dicht dahinter folgt das „Römische Modell" des Niedergangs. Wie das Reich der Cäsaren könnte auch das Reich der Bushisten von innen

> her verfaulen. Amerika hat damit begonnen, selbstgefällig, ja selbstzerstörerisch seine Ideale im eigenen Land zu verraten – die Bürgerrechte, auf die man in der Heimat von Thomas Jefferson und George Washington so stolz ist, werden aufgeweicht. (12/2003, 125)

As evidence of an abandonment of basic human rights, DS points to Guantanamo Bay detainees. According to the U.S. view, these men have no rights under the Geneva Conventions because the government has not classified them as prisoners of war but rather illegal combatants (12/2003, 125).

Besides painting with a very broad historical brush and leaving the question of aptness unanswered, DS is also not consistent in its argument. In issue 12 it is the loss of civic virtue – specifically the abandonment of core civil laws written into the U.S. constitution – that forms the crux of argument for decline from within and links the U.S. to the Roman model. But in issue 17, entitled "Die Neue Weltordnung," the Roman empire is now also just another example of imperial overreach: "Die „unersetzliche Nation' wie sich die Amerikaner gern nennen, erstrebe „die Rolle eines Ersatz-Rom' [. . .]. Die Geschichte lehrt, dass Weltreiche früher oder später kritische Stadien erreichen, zumal bei einer imperialen Überdehnung" (17/2003, 24).

The analogies continue as DS compares America's Battle in Baghdad to the Mongolian attack on that city in 1258 C.E. When the Americans invaded Baghdad, there was a gaping hole in the façade of the Baghdad National Museum of Art as a result of American grenades being fired directly into it: "Granaten flogen. Eine knallte direkt in die Fassade des Nationalmuseums von Baghdad" (17/2003, 154). The story headline reads "Mongolensturm im Stahltresor: Kulturschock in Baghdad" (154). An argument is made by Eleanor Robson, a British historian,

who claims that the actions of the U.S. military storming into Baghdad are comparable to the invasion in 1258 when the city was captured, sacked, and burned by the Mongols (156). DS equates the U.S. force with the Mongolians in their shared barbarism. The U.S. does not care about preserving the historical and cultural artifacts of the Middle East. Here, the mark of empire is the lack of sensitivity the Americans show towards the artifacts of thousands of years of world history. DS's argument here is made partially by quoting an outside source, but DS adds its own condemnation of the U.S military for not protecting priceless ancient artifacts:

> Es sind Nähnadeln, fast 9000 Jahre alt. Trotzdem schien den US-Militärs die Bewachung der gigantischen Schatztruhe nicht wichtig genug. Zwar berichten Zeugen von vier Panzern, die am Eingang Stellung bezogen. Doch plötzlich gab es neue Order. Die Fahrer warfen die schweren Dieselmotoren an und zogen laut dröhnend ab. (17/2003, 154)

Related to the concept of empire are the references in issue 17 to the Crusades and to Napoleon's conquest of Egypt. Both of these events represent the desire by the West to impose its will on the East, and the story bears the title "Die Herren der Welt." DS reports that a visit to Egypt by crown prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia to meet Egypt's president Hosni Mubarak resulted in a common Arabian initiative, "den Irak vor Fremdbestimmung [zu] schützen" (17/2003, 26). On the same page there is a drawing of English knights on horseback around a lone English knight with his sword drawn in his hand with both hands up in the air as if he were celebrating a victory. Behind him a King-Richard-like coat of arms on a banner flies from a pole. The caption reads "Kreuzritter vor Jerusalem[.] Den Irak vor Fremdbestimmung schützen" (26). With its illustration DS is alluding to and amplifying on George Bush's description of the U.S. effort in Iraq as a crusade, a comment the president made on September 16, 2001: "This

crusade, this war on terrorism is gonna take awhile. And the American people must be patient." President Bush went so far as to say that the war on terror is a crusade against evil. His historically evocative turn of phrase raised alarm in Europe and the rest of the world. The feature marking the new U.S. Empire in this instance seems to be a cultural or even religious mission. In this case, the historical reference to the Crusades in DS was suggested by Bush's unthinking choice of words, and by the world media's reaction to the allusion, rather than by DS's tendency to draw on historical parallels, but it fits nicely into DS's penchant for history.

President Bush's modern-day Crusade is tied up with his and America's quest to spread democracy, and in the same story DS also reports on a secret delegation sent to Moscow by crown prince Abdullah to elicit support for a military assistance agreement with Russia. During that visit in St. Petersburg with Russian president Vladimir Putin DS quotes Putin "[der] Export der kapitalistischen-demokratischen Revolution" provokes "eine unendliche Serie militärischer Konflikte" and also a "sehr gefährliche Situation" (17/2003, 26). In the next issue the magazine questions whether this region of the world is ready for democracy and it links the desire to impose democratic government on the area with Napoleon's intervention in Egypt. The title of the story is "Wie viel Demokratie verträgt der Nahe Osten?" and the story bears the caption "Die Demokratie-Falle" (18/2003, 124). Within that story, the parallels between the U.S. and Napoleon and between the U.S. and the British and French colonial empires are constructed:

> Viele gebildete Araber sehen [. . .] in Amerikas Sieg nur eine neue historische Demütigung. Sie fühlen sich an 1798 erinnert, als Napoleon mit überlegenen Waffen in ihre Welt einbrach und nach Jahrhunderten islamischer Glanzzeit die westliche

> Überlegenheit demonstrierte; an 1916, als durch das britische-französische Sykes-Picot-Geheimabkommen der Nahe Osten willkürlich auseinander gerissen [. . .] (124)

DS shows a painting of Napoleon's victory over the Egyptians in 1798 with the German alliteration "Arabiens Alptraum" (126). This image of Napoleon and his army conquering the Egyptians drives home the concern that some may have about U.S. involvement in Iraq. Iraq is being invaded and humiliated by a Western army once again and the U.S. will either have to retreat early and leave behind a chaotic situation or remain behind as the colonial masters of a puppet democracy.

Unlike a scholarly publication, the news magazine DS has neither the time nor the space, nor perhaps the inclination, to discuss whether the U.S. constitutes an empire and whether the comparisons with earlier empires are appropriate or not. Rather than discussing details, the magazine overwhelms the reader with examples. Quantity rather than quality seems to be the driving force and very broadly drawn, one-note comparisons are the norm. All the examples are drawn from the Western tradition and belong to the foundational knowledge expected of any "educated German." The one exception is the Mongolian invasion of Baghdad in 1258, and it is attributed to an outside expert. The illustrations offer no new insights into the comparisons and simply serve to underscore in the most dramatic way possible the equation of the particular empire with the American variant. The frequent use of questions when the subject is introduced in issue 12 provides some cover for the glib historiography. The purpose of these historical comparisons is to offer a link between current events and historical moments educated Germans may be familiar with so as to bolster suggested associations between the two.

Part II: World War Vocabulary and Collective German Experience

Historical references to both World Wars are prominent in DS's treatment of the Iraq War. World War II dominates in the discussion of America's image in the Iraq War, but there are references to World War I and the Cold War as well. Using this World War vocabulary serves to evoke emotions tied to German historical sensitivities related to World War II and its aftermath. DS superimposes characters and vocabulary onto contemporary figures and actions from the Iraq War. The comparisons range from the Battle of Baghdad and the Battle of Stalingrad to President Bush as Nazi leader Hermann Göring.

DS published an interview with German Secretary of State Joschka Fischer in 2003 entitled "Amerika hatte kein Verdun," in which Mr. Fischer states that the Americans have not experienced any military disaster approaching the deaths of Verdun: "Wer die Geschichte Europas kennt, weiß um die vielen Kriege hier. Die Amerikaner hatten kein Verdun auf ihrem Kontinent. In den USA gibt es nichts mit Auschwitz oder Stalingrad oder den anderen schrecklichen symbolischen Orten unserer Geschichte Vergleichbares" (13/2003, 51). The Battle of Verdun lasted from February until December of 1916 and "[. . .] came to gain the unenviable reputation of being the battlefield with the highest density of dead per square yard that has probably ever been known [. . .]" (Horne 1). The casualties at Verdun numbered over a half million, with more than a quarter of a million of those dead. By including Auschwitz along with Verdun and Stalingrad, it is clear that Fischer is not comparing those battles to the conflict in Iraq; instead he is pointing to the experience of mass slaughter that cause present-day Europeans to shy away from war and armed conflict as a solution to diplomatic problems. The article itself deals with the failure of diplomacy in the Iraq conflict and discusses the global strength of the

Americans and the weakness of European foreign politics. While DS is quoting Fischer in its headline, the headline in isolation suggests that Iraq could become America's Verdun by its position in the headline. But the interview with Fischer clears up the confusion. Fischer is not suggesting that the war in Iraq will become America's Verdun but rather that America is more willing to enter into violent encounters because there is no collective American historical memory of gigantic battles that left a psychological mark on historical consciousness like the Battle of Verdun did on the German historical conscience. References to World War I are otherwise absent, but there are many references to World War II. DS includes the word blitzkrieg in its coverage of the Iraq conflict. As will be seen in multiple comparisons using World War II terminology, usage often "originates" with some other source, here Reuters, and the magazine acknowledges that the word is freighted: "was soll da [in Iraq] aus dem „Blitzkrieg' werden, den die Nachrichtenagentur Reuter -- das belastete deutsche Wort benutzend – den Amerikanern in Aussicht gestellt hat?" (13/2003, 29). Webster's defines blitzkrieg as "war conducted with great speed and force; *specifically* a violent surprise offensive by massed air forces and mechanized ground forces in close coordination." According to Webster Online the word was coined in 1939 and it was used by the German Army when it invaded Poland in September 1939 and initiated World War II. The word is as much a part of the historical moment it originally described as it is a term to describe a military's quick movement and the word cannot realistically stand alone without conjuring up the historical sensitivities to that world conflict. Its usage moves the American military into mental proximity to the German Wehrmacht.

Subsequent use of the term is without any caveats that the word might carry unintended associations. DS is content to let the full range of meanings come into play. The cover photo of the following issue (14, March 31, 2003) shows a soldier standing guard in a sandstorm with his rifle. The alliterative caption on the cover page reads "Supermacht im Sand: Americas Stockender Blitzkrieg." There is a medium disconnect here in that the cover photo and caption (Fig. 4) do not project the same information as what the title story and its content inside the magazine communicate; DS portrays the lone soldier on the cover page as an American soldier stuck in a sand storm, but there is no insignia visible on the soldier on the cover page to identify his nationality. The photograph of a soldier of an unknown nation in a sandstorm is presented as a one-sided metaphor for the abrupt halt of an American blitzkrieg due to weather conditions. The accompanying title in the table of contents and the actual story reveal the photo is a metaphor. The table of contents speaks of "Washingtons versandte Offensive," and the corresponding story "Widerstand auf jeder Meile" claims the main reason the U.S. blitzkrieg has faltered is the human resistance the U.S. military is facing. DS quotes an American soldier to lend credence to this argument, Colonel Ben Saylor, Chief of Staff of the 1st U.S. Marine Infantry Division: "sie [Iraqi civilian guerrilla fighters] kommen, sie kommen immer wieder [. . .] Sie stehen einfach auf und kommen [. . .] Jeden Inch, Jede Meile auf dem Weg nach Bagdad gab es Widerstand" (14/2003, 18). DS lends weight to the comment made by Ben Saylor by including the quote in the text as well as in large letters as the title of the story. This faltering advance is due more to military resistance by those who support Saddam Hussein than to blinding sand storms or an organized military fighting against the U.S. army, according to DS in this story. Finally, the discussion, which revolves around the slow progress of the army, calls

into question the appropriateness of using the term blitzkrieg to describe American progress. In retrospect the claim that resistance was constant – which is given extra weight through the quote from Colonel Saylor – seems strange, particularly because the U.S. military moved ever closer to Baghdad with almost no opposition. Undoubtedly information was sparse as the magazine put together its story, and quoting the American military official offers protection if DS gets the story wrong.

The medium disconnect represented by the picture of the sandstorm and the accompanying story is covered by a commonly used theory in journalism called the Visual Perception Theory (VPT). According to one aspect of this theory, the visual perception of images affects the way we remember things: "If the images we see are one-sided, we are more likely to see and to remember that side" (Newton 26). If we apply this theory to the images and text shown in DS, we must assume the German reader will believe what he or she sees. Furthermore, the German reader will construe the subheading of the story "Widerstand auf jeder Meile" as a reinforcement of the picture in that story. It states: "Nach verblüffend heftigen Kämpfen kam der Angriff der Allierten vor Bagdad zum stehen. Während die Not der Irakischen Bevölkerung steigt, müssen die Feldherren entscheiden: Sturm auf die Hauptstadt oder wochenlanges Warten auf Verstärkung?" (18). The image used in the magazine to introduce "Widerstand auf jeder Meile" is a two-page spread of American soldiers lying down, running, or dug in at a mortar post. In the foreground, there are two tanks; the furthest tank in the background has nearly disappeared in the sandstorm. One U.S. soldier is running to his left with his weapon in his right hand (18-19). This photo spread shows American soldiers fighting in a sandstorm, so the reader

is led to believe that both armed resistance and the weather are considerable obstacles while in retrospect neither truly was.

Issue 16 advertises a story on "Wie die US-Armee im Irak-Krieg triumphierte" in its table of contents and titles the actual article "Mechanisiertes Rückgrat" (16/2003, 36). The story sets the record straight and credits the U.S. military technology for the success in taking over Iraq so quickly and it again invokes the term blitzkrieg:

> Wehrmachtsgeneral Heinz Guderian perfektionierte diese Taktik anno 1940 im „Blitzkrieg' gegen Frankreich: Begleitet von massive Angriffen der Luftwaffe drang das deutsche Heer im „Gefecht der verbundenen Waffen' mit seinen Panzern in nur 48 Studen rund 100 Kilometer weit in gegnerisches Gebiet vor. Die deutsche Angriffsweise galt als eine Revolution in der militärischen Entwicklung Im Kriegesjahr 2003 schaffte die 3. Infanteriedivision der U.S. Army [. . .] die 500 Kilometer von Kuweit vor die Tore Bagdads in gut zwei Wochen (36)

The captions and titles from issue 14 like "Supermacht im Sand" and "Washingtons Versandte Offensiv" are conspicuously absent from the reporting in issue 16, and the readership is left to assume that this new version of the advance to Baghdad is the real, true, and final version of the story despite being misled into believing two issues earlier that the U.S. military was bogged down by sandstorms and violent resistance.

There are other historical allusions to World War II involving people rather than military movements. DS includes a quote that compares U.S. president George W. Bush with Hitler's second-in-command, Hermann Göring. Arundhati Roy, the Indian author and outspoken critic of

the United States' political and military role in Iraq, makes the comparison in an interview with DS entitled "Alles wird geschändet":

> [SPIEGEL] George W. Bush sprach vor dem Krieg von Amerika als "Friedliebendem Land." [ROY]: Ich finde das lächerlich, aber die meisten Amerikaner kaufen es ihm ab. Hermann Göring hat in Nürnberg gesagt, dass es einfach sei, das Volk hinter sich zu bekommen, wenn man ihm nur einbläut, dass es angegriffen werde. (15/2003, 168)

Roy indicates that Bush has successfully convinced Americans that the U.S. is a peaceful land under threat and that the administration is compelled to attack, although it does not wish to. Moreover, she implies that Bush, like Göring, is consciously fear-mongering and manipulating his audience. DS itself is not responsible for the statement, but it also does not challenge the assertion.

George W. Bush is also compared to Harry S. Truman: "[. . .] nicht zufällig wird Bush in diesen Tagen vorzugsweise mit einem anderen Präsidenten verglichen, der ähnlich schlichter Denkungsart war und deshalb permanent unterschätzt wurde: Harry Truman," but almost as soon as they are compared, DS differentiates between them:

> Es gibt allerdings einen entscheidenden Unterschied zwischen Truman und Bush: Bush stellt alles in Frage, was von der damaligen Welt an Institutionen, Bündnissen und Verträgen übrig geblieben ist [. . .]. Amerika wirbt nicht mehr um Bündnisse und Allianzen, Washingon klagt Gefolgstreue ein. (17/2003, 22)

Truman played a part of the process of creating the basis for the UN and NATO. Bush, however, is different in that he questions all these post-World War II institutions and is in fact working to undo them (22). As with the comparison of Bush with Göring, the starting point for this

comparison of Truman and Bush is not DS itself but an anonymous public supportive of the president.

Another comparison, much briefer than the Truman-Bush comparison, is made between British Prime Minister Tony Blair and former Prime Minister Winston Churchill. Blair had already moved 45,000 soldiers to the Gulf region although he needed a UN mandate to attack in order to not lose his base political support from his party in England (12/2003, 111-112). DS quotes publicist Timothy Garton Ash: "Er spielt Churchill," (112). But DS does not further quote Ash on what he means by comparing Blair to Churchill. The magazine editorializes by stating "[. . .] doch der legendäre Kriegspremier hätte sich nicht in eine solche Sackgasse manövriert" (112). DS's editorializing on what Churchill would have done in 2003 is dismissible as meaningless, but citing the comparison Blair-Churchill creates yet another bride to the legacy of World War II.

General Tommy Franks, who was then Commander of the United States Central Command in Iraq, is compared to two U.S. generals of World War II: directly to Douglas MacArthur and indirectly to George Patton. DS asks Zbigniew Brzezinski, a former security advisor to the American government, if he is alluding to an idea that has already been going around in Washington that Franks should play the same role in Iraq that Douglas MacArthur did in Japan: "DS: Sie spielen auf eine Idee an, die in Washington kursiert - [Franks as] ein neuer Douglas MacArthur als Herrscher in Bagdad?" (15/2003, 40). Brzezinski rejects DS's suggestion as "eine ziemlich zweifelhafte Idee" (40). Brzezinski talks about the differences between Japan in 1945 and the current situation in Iraq and in doing so contributes also to the series of World War II comparisons. DS's particular allegiance to this historical sphere is underscored by the

fact that it offers two photos illustrating the idea its expert has debunked (40). The first photograph shows General Franks saluting as he is exiting a building alongside Kuwaiti General Chief of Staff Fahid al-Amir. The second photo, located directly under the first photo, shows Douglas MacArthur in Tokyo at the signing of the surrender of the Japanese government on September 2, 1945. The caption reads: "Oberbefehlshaber Franks, US-Statthalter MacArthur ‚Zweifelhafte Idee„" (40). The caption is in keeping with the content of the interview. The prominence of the photos keeps the "dubious idea" alive.

DS also uses a quote by another authority in the "Eilmarsch auf Bagdad" story in issue 14 to compare General Franks indirectly to World War II U.S. General George Patton. A military analyst states that the movement of the American forces to Baghdad would have been much faster than it was had U.S. General George Patton's standards been used. "Wenn der Maßstab der berühmte amerikanische Weltkriegsgeneral George Patton wäre, müßten die ersten Panzer der Amerikaner „nach zwei Tagen' vor Bagdad stehen," says Patrick Garrett from Globasecurity.org (13/2003, 33). DS immediately interjects: "Konservativere Kommandeure würden allenfalls vier Tage benötigen" (33). In the very next paragraph DS talks about General Franks and his tactical movements. No direct comparison is drawn between Franks and Patton and the criticisms proceed by innuendo, but because of their close proximity to one another and the theme -- the speed and aggressiveness of attack – it is clear that DS is playing on some sort of association between the two generals. General Tommy Franks is very cautious, and DS states: "General Tommy Franks, der methodische, eher vorsichtige Kommandeur, nahm sich mehr Zeit [than Rumsfeld wanted him to] (33). The thrust of the suggestions seems to throw a negative light on

Franks when his tactics are weighed against those of a former German enemy who is nonetheless admired for his aggressive and effective military strategy.

D-day, which signaled the invasion of the European continent by the Allies and the turning point of World War II in the European Theater, is used to describe the beginning of combat operations in Iraq. While D-day is a general military term meaning a specific day on which a military operation is begun, it, like the term blitzkrieg, is wholly evocative of World War II vocabulary. D-day fell on June 6, 1944, when Allied forces began the invasion of France. DS mentions D-day in its chronology of the U.S. ascension to power (12/2003, 118). The table of contents for issue 12 lists a story, "Warten auf den Einmarschbefehl," which then carries the caption "D-day bei Vollmond" (12/2003, 122). In another issue, DS also appears to play with the reference in a cross-linguistic pun: the American offensive in Iraq actually began on Thursday, March 20, 2003, and D is the first letter for the German word for Thursday (Donnerstag): "Es ist Donnerstag, nur noch wenige Stunden bis zum D-day, dem Tag der amerikanischen Bodenoffensive" (13/2003, 26).

But perhaps the strongest of all World War II references is the comparison made by DS between the bombing of Baghdad and the firebombing of Dresden. The bombing of Dresden in February 1945 by the American and Royal British Air Forces resulted in tens of thousands of civilian deaths. The question of whether the city was an appropriate target has persisted for over sixty years (De Bruhl 280). The core discussion of Baghdad as Dresden takes place in the issue entitled "Bombenterror für die Freiheit: Amerikas Krieg gegen Saddam" (13/2003). The story listed in the table of contents as "Eilmarsch auf Bagdad," is captioned "Höllenfeuer in Bagdad" (16). Old B-52 bombers from another era are used in this modern conflict, yet the bomb

technology is different. DS comments on the mix of old technology with new just before the comparison is made between the two bombing raids. “Die alten B-52-Bomber aus den Zeiten des Kalten Kriegs und ihre moderneren Varianten vom Typ B-2 mit ihrer tonnenschweren Bombenlast schwebten längst in der Luft, nur noch wenige Stunden entfernt von ihren irakischen Zielen” (16). The comparison between Dresden and Baghdad is buffered by imputing it to “observers”:

> Dresden kam vielen Beobachtern in den Sinn, als die Bilder von unbändiger Sprenggewalt und gnadenloser Zerstörungskraft live rund um den Erdball gesendet wurden. Wie 1945, als in der Elbmetropole etwa 35000 Menschen ums Leben kamen, wurde nun an den Ufern des Tigris Bombenterror für die Freiheit entfacht. (17)

The phrase “Dresden kam vielen Beobachtern in den Sinn” creates a rhetorical distance, much like the mediated references to Verdun and Hermann Göring. It sounds like objective reportage, but given the anonymity of the sources, it may actually be just a form of editorializing.

DS represents American Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld as dismissive of the comparisons between the undifferentiated carpet bombing of World War II and the present operation:

> [. . .] Verteidigungsminister [Rumsfeld] wehrte alle Vorwürfe prophylaktisch ab: völlig unzutreffend der Vergleich mit dem Zweiten Weltkrieg. Damals seien „dumme Bomben“ über große Flächen ausgestreut worden. Diesmal jedoch hätten „smart weapons“ mit ungeheurer Präzision genau jene Punkte getroffen, die zuvor anvisiert worden seien. Noch Hunderte Ziele würden in den kommenden 24 Stunden ähnlich genau vernichtet, drohte Generalstabchef Richard Myers. (18)

DS offers a different reading of the bombing of Baghdad, one that is less favorable to Rumsfeld and indeed opposite to his claims that bombs fell precisely on their targets:

> Nichts lief, wie es die Auguren des Pentagon angekündigt hatten. Statt eines zweitägigen Feuerzaubers verfehlten rund um 40 "Cruise Missiles" und zwei Tarnkappenbomber vom Typ F-117 in der Nacht zum Donnerstag das wichtigste Kriegsziel – Saddam Hussein und seine engsten Vertrauten. Wen sie stattdessen trafen, vermochten Washingtons Auswerter tagelang nicht zu beantworten. (19-20)

It seems that DS is insinuating that there is no difference, in effect, between the bombing of Baghdad and the bombing of Dresden. The technology may have been different, but in the end "dumb" bombs rained all over both cities. The previous comparisons treated have been circumscribed enough that a reader could accept them either as food for thought or in a few instances regard them as the views of people with strong ideological bias. The comparison of the bombing of Baghdad to the bombing of Dresden, however, seems particularly inappropriate. The approximately forty cruise missiles which DS claims hit civilians or civilian targets would not have caused near the amount of destruction the bombing raids on Dresden did. While technology can malfunction and lead to the death of innocent civilians, the U.S. military did bomb military targets with great precision. Unlike Dresden, the majority of the city of Baghdad was left intact. Given the renewed discussion of German suffering at the conclusion of the war and the power Dresden possesses as a symbol, the mention of it seems much more calculated to provoke a deep emotional response in a German audience than to provide an accurate description of the bombing raid.

Another point of comparison that seems equally far-fetched is the Battle of Baghdad with the Battle of Stalingrad. The Battle of Stalingrad took place between August 21, 1942, and February 2, 1943. The German siege on the city, the ensuing battle within the city itself, and the Soviet military entrapment and defeat of the German Sixth army came at an enormous human price. Over 1.5 million soldiers and civilians died at Stalingrad. In issue 13, DS quotes Kenneth Pollack, former Security Council expert in the Middle East for former U.S. president Bill Clinton, in questioning whether Saddam Hussein can turn Baghdad into a Mesopotamian Stalingrad for the invaders: "Gelänge es Saddam, seine Hauptstadt in ein „mesopotamisches Stalingrad' zu verwandeln rechnet Pollack mit „Hunderten, Wenn nicht Tausenden' amerikanischer Opfer'(13/2003, 33). Pollack further speculated that possible door-to-door, house-to-house urban warfare in Baghdad could result in a "mesopotamischen Stalingrad" (15/2003, 22). It is difficult to compare a battle that has already been written into history with a battle of yet undetermined length and outcome. Neither the war in Baghdad nor the war in Iraq has concluded and final judgments cannot be made, but both then and now this particular equation seems as hyperbolic and out of place as the comparison of the bombing of Baghdad and the destruction of Dresden. And both resonate with equal strength for a German reading public.

The ties of past to present in DS coverage of the Iraq conflict, however apt or amiss they may be, are formed by invoking a distinctly German historical consciousness with the purpose of drawing comparisons of the present to those events in past history a well-educated German would be well-aware of, and thus more susceptible to identifying with. The diverse empires referenced fall with only one exception into a factual sphere that would be part of the knowledge base of the normal, well-educated DS reader. Although DS casts a wide net from antiquity

through colonialism and imperialism right up to the recently disbanded Soviet Union, the empires are a part of the broader Western tradition and thus seem particularly appropriate for understanding developments in the U.S. and projecting the historical course of future events. With one exception, the references are offered directly by DS and do not have to be mediated by experts or other third parties. The basic premise that the U.S. is an empire is simply assumed and comparisons are made on that basis. The comparisons suggest authority and but lackt equivocation. Only events from the 13th century involving Asiatic barbarians need a mediator for their introduction. The comparisons are limited in scope and put forward in quick and kaleidoscopic profusion so that they convince more by quantity than by depth of argument. The main thrust of the argument is that various empires have collapsed after as a result of overextending themselves and that the U.S. has embarked on such a course in Iraq.

Perhaps because of the emotions they engender and the "personal involvement" of the reading audience – even if it is in many individual instances at the distance of several generations – almost all the references to the German experience in the World Wars do not emanate from the authoritative voice of the magazine itself but are received through intermediaries; DS almost never claims the historical comparisons without quoting someone else One involves World War I, most of the rest the Nazi era and World War II. The prevalence of these comparisons seems less a product of their effectiveness (blitzkrieg, D-Day, Patton, MacArthur) than a rhetorical affect to bring the events closer to the reader through linkage to known events and personalities that have particular emotional import. It also can be argued that the more painful the memory is to German historical consciousness, the more strained the comparison (Dresden, Stalingrad).

The strength of memory seems to blot out critical judgment on the appropriateness of the analogy.

DS uses photos, drawings, pictures, etc. to support its own viewpoint. In the case of illustrations of past empires (the Crusades, Napoleon), the illustration have primarily decorative value and emphasize the grandeur or elation of conquest and rule. In one instance (Franks/MacArthur) the illustrations actually highlight a point that is contradicted by the expert interviewee. This highlights the rhetorical function of the World War II comparisons as a means to bring the story closer to the reader by invoking known quantities.

Conclusion

In the issues of DS selected for review, the magazine argues against a U.S. invasion of Iraq from two directions. It cites the historical record to portray one of the principal instruments of U.S. military and political policy, the CIA, as inept, immoral, and incompetent, and it employs history again to depict the U.S. as a collapsing empire that is dangerously overestimating its strength while undermining the very principles that made it great.

DS questions the ability of the CIA to carry out successful missions in Iraq in the weeks before the imminent, full-scale invasion by the American military. The historical record of this organization comprises a series of unmitigated failures: the Bay of Pigs Invasion, the Cuban Missile Crisis, Operation Phoenix, the coup against Iranian Premiere Mohammed Mosaddeq, the CIA-led putsch against the South Vietnamese leader Ngo Dinh Diem and the further deep U.S. military involvement in Vietnam, the abortive rescue attempt by the CIA of American hostages in Iran, and the failure to predict the fall of the Soviet Union or the 9/11 attacks. The CIA has had an immoral policy allowing political assassinations and has often murdered the "wrong" people and supported anti-democratic forces. A recent operation that had redeemed the organization politically, the successful arming and training of Afghani Mujahedeen fighters against the occupying Russian army, revealed another major fault, the inability to foresee consequences, since these same forces now opposed the U.S. in Iraq and Afghanistan. Internal power struggles between the CIA and the DOD further complicate the agency's mission. According to DS, Donald Rumsfeld has created a military group answerable only to himself, whose main function is to oversee and hold the CIA in check.

The CIA failures are also displayed on an individual level in the contrasting cases of the American Michael Spann and the German Philipp Boes. The Alabama born Spann is a caricature of the stereotypical CIA field officer. DS notes he is dressed wrong, has no understanding of local languages and customs, lacks common-sense survival skills and is – surprisingly – technologically ill equipped for his mission. The German-born CIA agent Philipp Boes is a kind of Renaissance man, a graduate of Harvard law, a lover of sports with musical tastes ranging from Mahler to Metallica, and a person inspired by the ideals of freedom and liberty. The historical record of failure, the internal fighting over CIA control and the characterization of Michael Spann as a buffoon all combine to make the agency look incompetent and primed for failure in the weeks before the Iraq War begins. Boes is a symbolic counterweight and offers the German reader a figure with whom to identify, one inspired by the same ideals, but more sophisticated, smarter and one who would (by implication) produce a better result. The textual treatment of Boes functions as a laudation of a German who died defending the values of the western world, unlike the Alabama Rube Michael Spann, who died because of his clumsy interrogation tactics.

The Rambo image superimposed onto the CIA by DS on the cover of issue 10 (March 1, 2003) is reflected in the text detailing the historical failures of the CIA. DS' argument that the American military is a Rambo-like institution is underscored by the factual mayhem and destruction caused by the CIA over its history. The Rambo character is updated visually by DS; he is wearing a backwards baseball cap, a full beard, sunglasses, and is muscular and nearly as physically grotesque as the cinematic hyper-masculinized Rambo. The old John Rambo lives on today. He is a killer who follows his own orders; he is a renegade one-man war machine who

uses unbridled violence and aggression to fulfill his wishes. DS had used a cartoon version of the Rambo image a year earlier (2002) on a cover page showing George W. Bush as the classic Rambo and his cabinet as superheroes. The implication was that the president and the members of his administration were delusional in their sense of their own power and their ability to influence world outcomes. The Rambo and superhero figures are creations of Hollywood and popular culture, but the cartoon image suggests that the American leadership actually shares these twisted fantasies of power and violence. The updated image on the October 27, 2008, issue extends the argument to a broader range of the American population. The argument made visually but not verbally is that the image of Rambo more accurately characterizes its originators than they themselves realize. This is a government of psychotically unbalanced people who believe that violence is the best way to solve complex issues and who mold themselves in the style of their own warped creations.

Within the discussion of America as an empire, DS views the U.S. as number one economically, culturally, and militarily – at the height of its power – but now actually in decline. America has overexpanded and its military will not be able to win the peace after winning the initial conflict, and it will not be able to respond to conflicts in other parts of the world because of its concentrated military effort in Iraq. DS mentions some of America's forefathers by name as it claims via rhetorical question that the country is sacrificing the internal principles of government by law that made it a beacon of democracy. Additionally, the Iraq conflict will cause fear towards the U.S. as other nations view America as a colonizing power. DS also presents America as a country that rejects the moral authority of the community of nations. By ignoring the U.N. and acting virtually alone it is alienating other nations and risking far-reaching,

uncontrollable effects on world stability. Other nations' leaders could claim a doctrine similar to the "Bush doctrine," citing a right to the defense of national interests by instigating preemptive attacks to ensure national security.

DS owes part of its influence to the emphasis it has placed on historical questions and in-depth examinations of issues relating to German history. This essay on empire, however, seems particularly superficial and the result of deadlines that were looming at a point when the magazine was being shut out of meaningful access to the unfolding details of the Iraq invasion. While the question of whether U.S. power has peaked is well worth discussing, there is no consideration of whether the vehicle chose, the concept of empire, is appropriate and whether the U.S. really qualifies as an "empire." The empires cited are those most known in the western tradition, and the comparisons are limited usually to a single salient characteristic.

Using historical references which, by their nature bring out German cultural sensitivities (Verdun, the Holocaust), DS claims that the U.S. is undertaking the wide-ranging war on terror partly because it has no collective consciousness of war on its own land or battles in history which have been bloodbaths; Americans are not familiar with the costs of war on a grand scale as Germans are and, therefore, Americans are more willing to fight than seek a diplomatic solution to international problems. In choosing its historical analogies, DS uses quotes to suggest that Iraq may be a major historical defeat for the U.S. (Stalingrad) or that the bombing of Baghdad is like the bombing of Dresden. The comparisons are strained and the events from World War II are not comparable to the present conflict, no matter the degree to which DS projects that they are germane. In several instances the magazine attributes the dubious comparisons to others, creating a kind of rhetorical distance between its statements and their

purported degree of truth. One revealing comparison is that of the U.S. role in Japan after World War II and the U.S. presence in Iraq. The magazine suggests this analogy in an interview with a U.S. expert, and despite the fact that the expert strongly rejects the comparison; the magazine uses valuable space to print a picture of General MacArthur accepting the Japanese surrender. The conclusion here is that the magazine is relying on the emotional response of its German readers to World War II allusions no matter how appropriate or inappropriate the comparison. DS advances clear arguments against the U.S. invasion of Iraq, but it uses visual themes to advance other, more extreme views that are not articulated verbally. It also bends historical comparisons for the sake of an emotional effect on its readers.

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Appendix

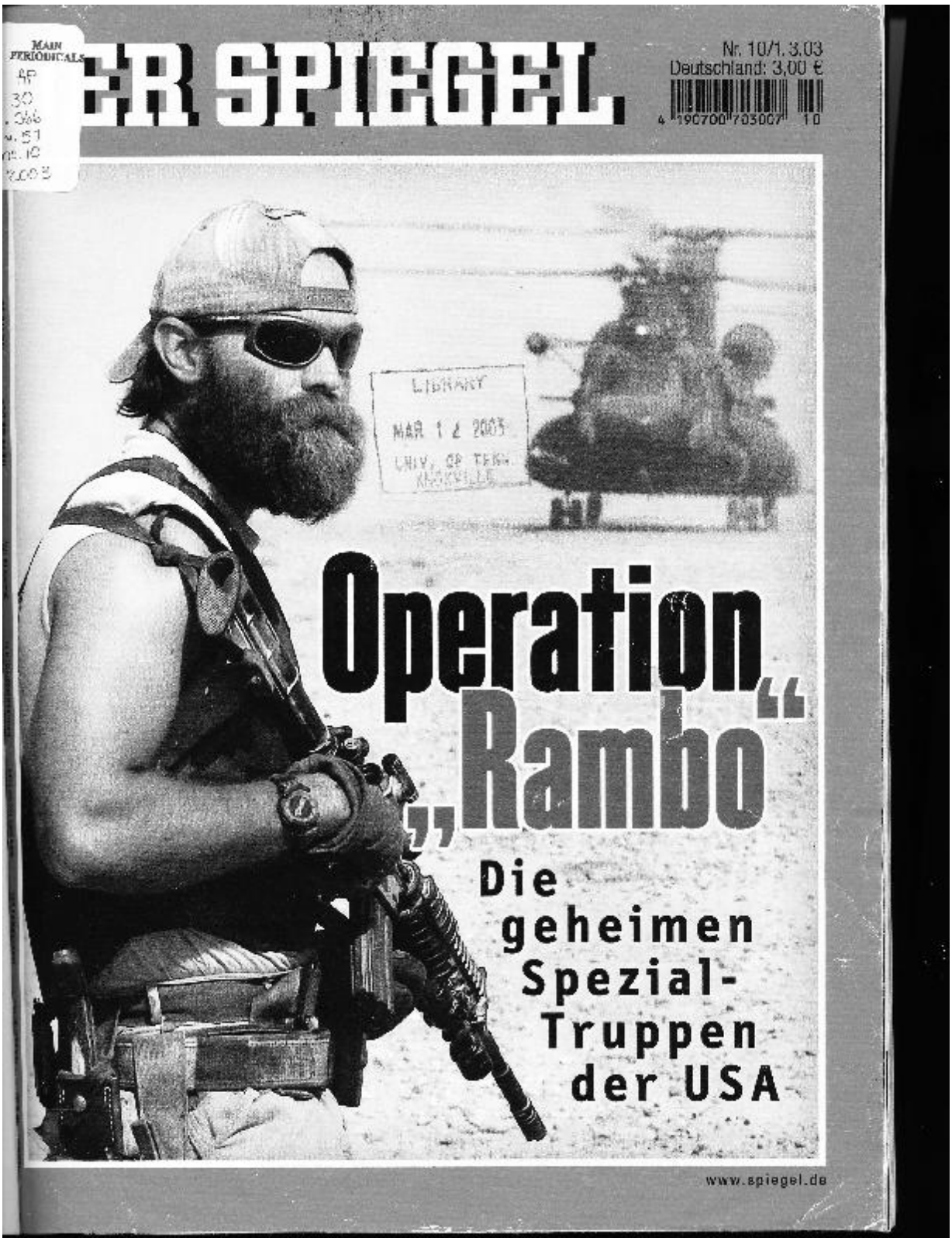
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Figure 1

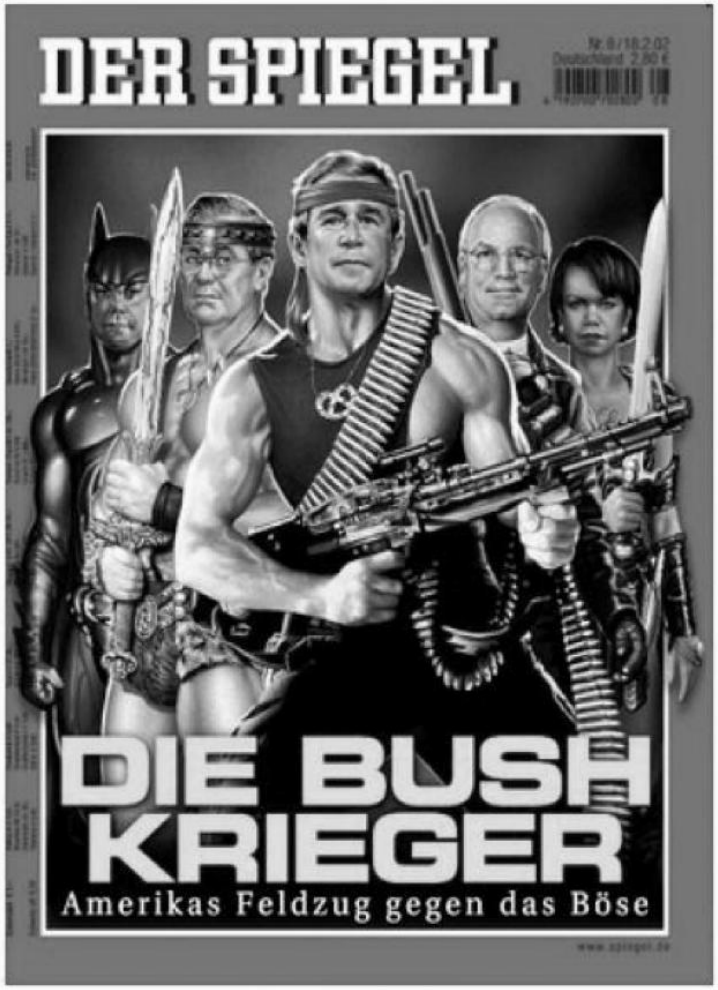

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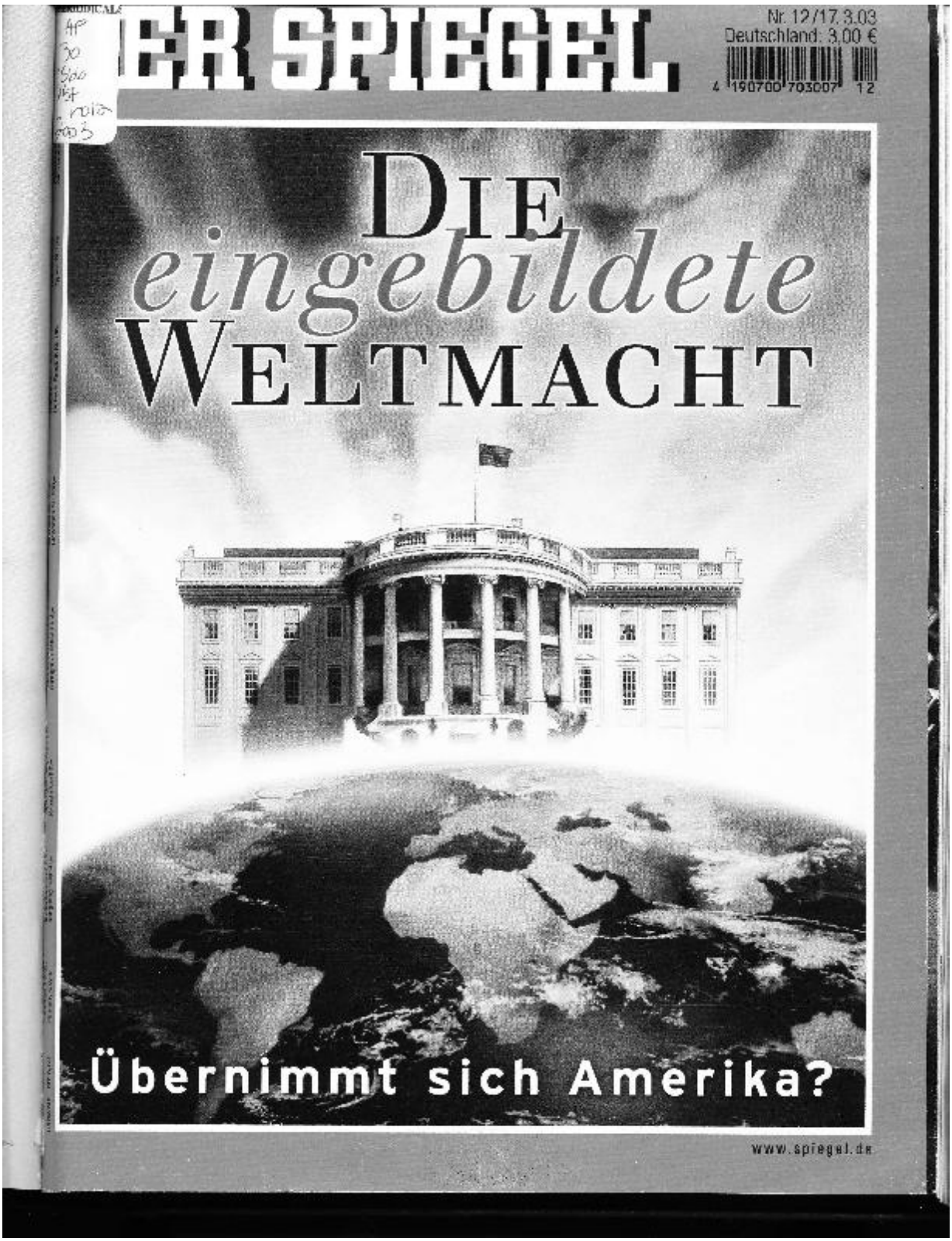
Figure 2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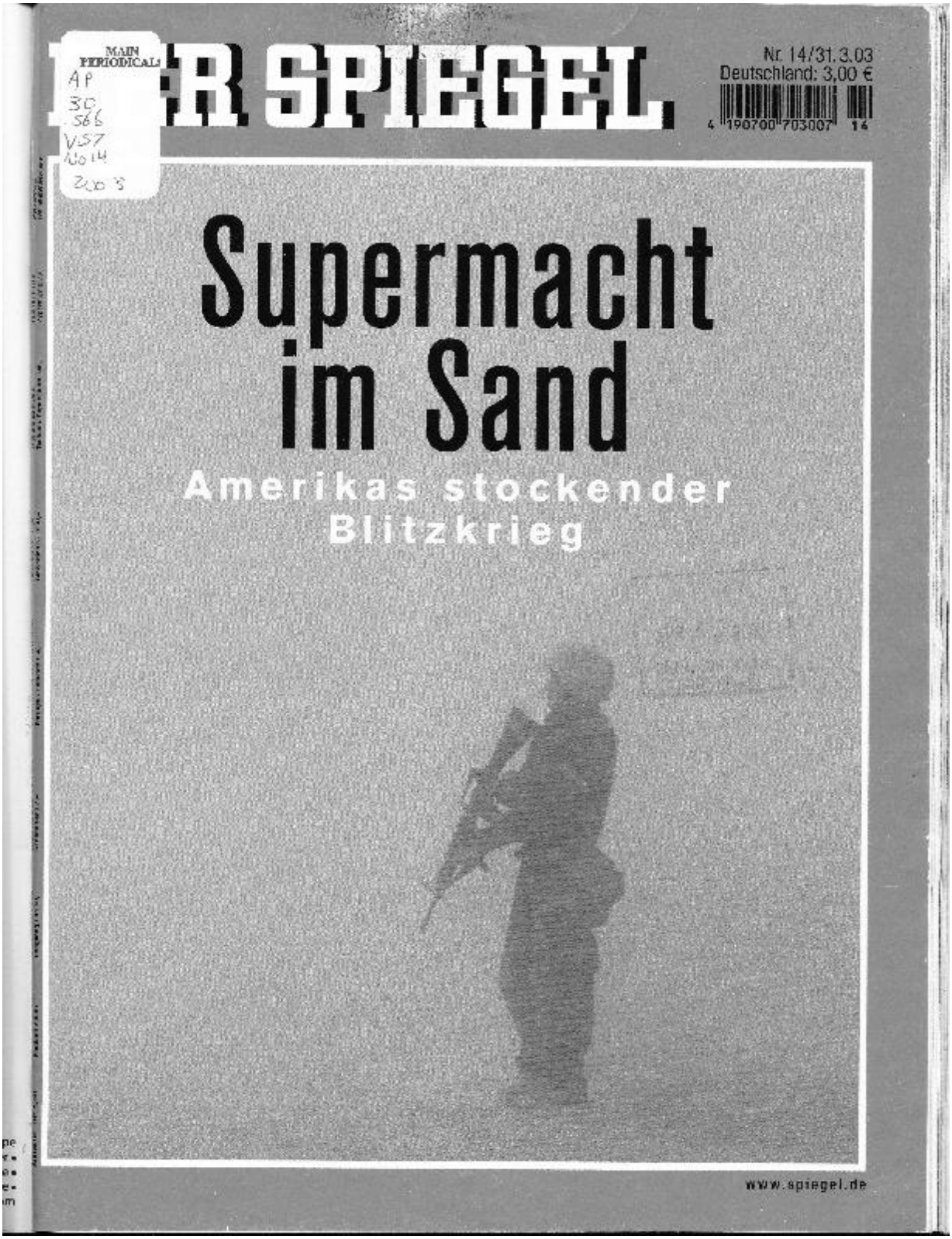
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Figure 4

VITA

I was born on December 26, 1979 in Patty A. Clay Hospital near Berea, Kentucky. I have spent the majority of my life in Knoxville, Tennessee. I earned a BA in German from the University of Tennessee in Knoxville in 2005. I returned to school and earned a Master's Degree in German in 2009. In 2010, I will have earned a Master's Degree in Information Science.