Ghosts of the Past, Specters of the Future, and Phantasmagorias On Recent Interpretive Trends in English Language Cold War Historiography

Duccio Basosi
Ca' Foscari University of Venice

> *But know, thou noble youth,*
> *The serpent that did sting thy father's life*
> *Now wears his crown.*
> William Shakespeare

Ghosts and other spectral creatures have always meddled with state politics. In ancient Denmark, at a time in which something was rotten in the state, Prince Hamlet famously had the ghost of his own father telling him the whole story of the conspiracies that had recently shaken the kingdom, and prescribing him what to do to redress the situation. Success may vary. In modern Italy, at a time in which the heart of the state was under attack, a *séance* of ghosts gave indications about where to find the chief of the Red Brigades during the armed group's fifty-five day abduction of the Christian Democrats' chairman Aldo Moro, but that information was squandered when the government sent the police to the small country town of Gradoli, instead of Via Gradoli in Rome. In more recent times, however, historians have also been detecting the presence of ghosts in international affairs. This essay is concerned with English-language Cold War historiography. The first section shows that the presence of ghosts in the foreign policy decision making processes of both the United States and the Soviet Union has been detected mainly in relatively recent works. The second, third and fourth sections are dedicated to distinguishing between three different kinds of apparitions—ghosts of the past, specters of the future, and phantasmagorias, respectively. The concluding section attempts some reflections on the possible meanings of such interest of Cold War historiography for spectral figures, particularly in connection with the ongoing debates about the "very notion of Cold War."[1]

1. On the recent apparitions of ghosts in Cold War historiography

Cold War historiography is a complex field, whose specialists have been spending a growing amount of time in recent years trying to identify with clarity their very subject of inquiry.[2] One would be tempted to say that the Cold War itself is a sort of ghost, if it weren't for the fact that the "elephant in the room" has already occupied the place of universally accepted metaphor for the Cold War in the age when the Cold War itself does not have a universally accepted definition (and yes: it would have definitely been great if *elephant* had contained the same root as *phantom*, but ancient Greeks were not so diabolical after all, and the two words are actually unrelated to each other).[3] In any case, it is in this complex environment that ghosts have begun to show up, irrespective of the chosen approach to the subject: ghosts appear increasingly as explanatory factors for policy in the interpretations of crucial phases of the "Cold War," when the phrase is intended as a shortcut to indicate the ideological and strategic "bipolar confrontation" centered on the US and the Soviet Union between 1945-47 and 1989-91; ghosts populate the studies of "Cold War" social, cultural and political processes, that is, processes that occurred throughout the world in the years between 1945 and 1989, but which did not necessarily bear any direct relationship to the confrontation between Washington and Moscow; finally, and possibly more interestingly, ghosts are crucial actors in the studies dedicated to the making of the Cold War proper, that is the US policy of war short of actual war vis-à-vis the Soviet Union between 1947 and 1963.[4]

Before any detailed analysis is made, it is important to clarify one point: it has not always been like this. Ghostly apparitions were quite rare to early Cold War historians. The so-called "orthodox" historians, most of them based in the US, interpreted the origins of the "Cold War" principally in terms of the US's moral and rational reactions to the intrinsically immoral, Marxist-Leninist-driven deeds of the Soviets. To the extent that elements of uncertainty, partiality of view, and subjectivity are taken into account, it appears that policymakers from both the US and the USSR acted based on "memories" and "prospects", sometimes "mirages."[5] Thus, the only ghost that features in W.H. McNeill's *America Britain Russia*—the "ghost of diversion [of US troops] to the Pacific" that haunted British policymakers in 1944—was not directly related to the brewing US-Soviet tension (McNeill 197). No ghosts show

up in Herbert Feis's *Trust to Terror*, nor in Arthur Schlesinger's essay on "The Origins of the Cold War." Winston Churchill's claim at Yalta (February 1945), that France should have a zone of occupation in Germany because he did not want to see "the specter of Germany at the Channel ports" again, is quoted verbatim by Feis in *Churchill Roosevelt Stalin* (531), but it is not clear whether or not the historian trusted Churchill's version of the story.[6] As for Thomas Bailey's *America Faces Russia*, the quip that in late 1946 the "ghost of Hitler must have laughed ghoulishly to see the democratic west building up Germany against Communist Russia" merely hints at a hypothetical apparition, with no claim whatsoever to an actual one (Bailey 327).[7]

The so-called "revisionists" interpreted US policy as being tragically positioned at the intersection between a structurally expansionist political economy and the idealistic convictions nurtured by Washington's policymakers about themselves. Where the Soviets appeared, which was not always the case, they were largely represented as cool-minded realists (which, of course, was not always the case either). In spite of the fact that—ever since the apparition of the ghost of Darius in Aeschylus's *Persians*—tragedies had been excellent ghost-spotting sites for more than 2000 years, William Appleman Williams's *Tragedy of American Diplomacy* only reports two cases of unconfirmed apparitions, with the author simply quoting the words of others: namely, Herbet Hoover's claim in the 1920s that "Communist Russia was a specter which wandered into the [Versailles] Peace Conference almost daily," and Senator J. William Fulbright's claim in 1958 that "the spectre of Soviet Communism" had often been used in previous years by US policymakers "as a cloak for [their own] failure" (Williams 81 and 12 respectively). However, the aforementioned chasm between fact and perception did allow the revisionists to provide greater space for visual complexities. Thus, "nightmares" of the Great Depression do play a crucial role in Williams's explanation of American foreign policy (Williams 202-275), just as "illusions" and "day dreams" shaped US foreign policy throughout D.E. Fleming's *The Cold War and Its Origins*.[8] And then, finally, a true ghost was spotted. This happened in 1972, with the publication of *The Limits of Power* by Joyce and Gabriel Kolko: it was the "specter of depression," who advised the Truman administration about the need to push for open markets and an open confrontation with the global Left (Kolko and Kolko 20).

Whatever its other merits and shortcomings, the Kolkos' volume opened a brief period when ghostly apparitions became rather usual in reference to US policy between 1944 and 1953: Thomas Campbell mentioned the "specter of isolationism" as an influential force in the US at the time of the creation of the United Nations;[9] Gaddis Smith dedicated an entire essay to the role played by the "ghost of Hitler" in shaping US policy;[10] a very important specter, that of communism, showed up prominently in the title of a work about the repression and marginalization of the Left in the United States;[11] finally, in his book about the "uses and misuses of history," Ernest May explained some of Franklin Roosevelt's positions during the final phases of World War Two by claiming that "the ghost of Woodrow Wilson was at his shoulder" (7). However, in a rather interesting combination with the onset and denouement of the "second cold war,"[12] ghosts disappeared from new Cold War scholarship for a while: no ghosts showed up in John Lewis Gaddis's so-called "post-revisionist synthesis," just as there had been no ghosts in *Strategies of containment* by the same author.[13] It was only after the mid-1980s that ghosts and specters became usual characters in Cold War historiography.

2. Ghosts of the past

Grand narratives are said to have died a natural death at some point by the end of the 1970s.[14] Interestingly, it was right after such death, that ghosts began to appear massively to Cold War historians (and not only to them, since Ivan Reitman's *Ghostbusters* was one of the most successful movies of the 1980s). This occurred in three main forms. The first was ghosts of the past, that is when the dead appear to the living. These may be called "specters" as well, but technically they are the truest forms of ghosts and seem to have been particularly active in the phase that is usually referred to as that of the "origins of the Cold War," particularly between 1945 and 1953.

After the relatively rare apparitions of the mid-1970s, one of the first instances in which ghosts from the past were presented as primary actors of the post-World War Two years came in Michael Hunt's 1987 study of "ideology" in the making of US foreign policy. In explaining the choices of the Truman administration, Hunt wrote that "the ghosts of Hitler lying in wait at Munich and Tojo plotting the attack on Pearl

Harbor haunted the memory of cold warriors and were regularly conjured up to emphasize the dangers of unpreparedness and appeasement" (151). Several years later, the intuition that a focus on ideology—something so intimately connected with the act of seeing—would lead to detect ghosts was retained by David Engerman in his contribution to the *Cambridge History of the Cold War*, where both sides appear to have had their ghostly apparitions: first comes the claim that "each side concluded, according to its own ideological dispositions, that the specter of Nazism outlasted Hitler"; and then comes the conclusion that "each side claimed to find the Nazi specter in the other" (Engerman 31 and 35). Indeed, the ghosts of Hitler's Germany appeared to virtually all the players: for example, Melvyn Leffler called them into question to summarize the French position in the immediate post war period, claiming that "most of all, they wanted security guarantees against the immediate prospect of Soviet retaliation and the protracted specter of German aggression" (2010, 80). The same ghosts could even play into Soviet hands, to the extent that Stalin was skeptical about the US proposal to demilitarize Germany in late 1945: according to Vladimir Pechatnov, the Soviet dictator was "concerned with the corrosive effect such a treaty might have on building a system of bilateral security guarantees with his clients in Eastern Europe, since the specter of German revanchism bound them together" (98).

3. Specters of the future

The second type of spectral figures which appeared with increasing frequency in Cold War historiography after the mid-1980s are specters of the future. These are politically dreadful to the beholders, but do not come from the reign of the dead. This is of course the case with Melvyn Leffler's 1994 volume entitled the *Specter of Communism*. The same author also wrote about Churchill's "iron curtain speech" of 5 March 1946, that "the former British prime minister recommended that Anglo-Saxons unite to withstand the new totalitarian specter" (ibid. 72). Writing about the origins of the Marshall plan, Charles Maier contends that "it was th[e] specter of impending economic breakdown, as well as the failure at Moscow in April [1947], that led American policy makers to give up their hope or illusion that recovery lay just ahead" (211). In turn, in trying to make sense of Stalin's often inconsistent

views between 1947 and 1949, Vojtech Mastny saw that "while the specter of war was never far from the Soviet mind, the changing estimates of its probability nevertheless made a difference" (60). Finally, Vladislav Zubok noted that "in both the Soviet 'metropolis' and the Polish 'satellite' late Stalinism did everything to extinguish the specter of cultural autonomy and freethinking" (90).

Unlike the ghosts of the past, the specters of the future seem to have been a prominent feature of the entire "Cold War" between 1945 and 1991, adapting rather well to the gradual turning of the original, existential Cold War into a more "traditional" great power rivalry after the mid-1950s. In particular, a large number of specters of the future has been found by historians when looking at the interaction between the "Cold War" and the "Third World." *Nixon's Nuclear Specter* is, for example, the title of William Burr and Jeffrey Kimball's recent work on the US Vietnam War. In 1986 Robert Wood contended that "the specter of communist aid led the United States to press the OEEC countries [...] to initiate or expand their own aid programs" (71). In 1987 Michael Hunt made the case that the wave of radicalism and unrest that rolled across Latin America, Africa and Asia in the 1960s "raised for American leaders the specter of Soviet meddling at the same time that it directly challenged American values" (161). In 1989, H.W. Brands entitled his work on the emergence of the "Third World" nothing less than *The Specter of Neutralism.* Finally, John Lewis Gaddis, in his own "neo-orthodox" reincarnation, saw that "the victory of communism in Cuba—and the prospect that that triumph might repeat itself elsewhere in the 'third world'—raised a specter of Western vulnerabilities" (1997, 189). More recently, Douglas Little has highlighted that by halting Britain's armed intervention in Suez the Eisenhower administration "removed the specter of Soviet troops in the Middle East" (309), and Matthew Connelly has written that a mix between the "Cold War" and "the specter of North–South conflict" led the United States to work indirectly through NGOs and international organizations in the 1970s (480). Further, from the work of literary historian Andrea Carosso we know that the "specter of female alienation" contributed to shaping *Cold War Narratives* in the US in the 1950s (128). But also Moscow had its apparitions: according to Sergey Radchenko, by 1964 "the specter of Chinese territorial claims to the underpopulated and yet strategically essential Siberia and Far East shocked Soviet leaders" (357). The list could go on further, but hopefully the point is clear.

4. Phantasmagorias

The third category of apparitions is phantasmagorias. Literally an "assembly of ghosts," the term first appeared in France in the last decade of the 18th century, to indicate a show of optical illusions produced in a dark room by means of a "magic lantern" concealed from the view of the audience. The term, and the related adjective "phantasmagorical" were successively popularized in a metaphorical acceptation and came to mean a "constantly shifting complex succession of things seen or imagined."[15] To the extent that urban life exposed the subject to such aesthetic experience, Walter Benjamin considered "phantasmagoria" as a synonym of modernity itself.[16]

Both the historical and the metaphorical acceptation of phantasmagoria recur in recent Cold War historiography. Consistently with their very nature, the two acceptations sometimes appear to overlap, but should nevertheless be kept separated from a conceptual standpoint: the former emphasizes the very fact that many of the things that were seen and imagined during the "Cold war" were actually produced as optical illusions, through discourse and representation (*how* things are seen and imagined is crucial here); the latter stresses the bizarre nature, and undefined mix of things seen and imagined, that was typical of the language and representations of the US-Soviet confrontation (*what* is seen and imagined is crucial here). In any case, unlike with regular ghosts, to detect a phantasmagoria is to detect a human artifact.

Indeed, it is hard not to remark the startling consonance between the "constantly shifting images" that constitute a phantasmagoria, and the "constantly shifting geographical and political points" at which, according to George Kennan, the US should exert the "containment" of the Soviet Union—that is, should fight a Cold War against the Soviet Union. While this linguistic quasi-coincidence has not been underlined as such, the phantasmagorical nature of the US's Cold War (not necessarily of the "Cold War") is the subject of much of Anders Stephanson's work. After recalling the accusation that Voltaire had once made to Montesquieu's representation of the Ottoman empire—"he had 'made for himself a hideous phantom in order to fight against it'"—Stephanson has convincingly argued that in 1946-47 the Truman administration converged onto replicating the same procedure vis-à-vis the Soviet Union (2005, 89). Not simply did Truman present his "doctrine"

with the documented aim to "scare the hell out of the American people" by positing axiomatically the Soviet Union's inherent need to follow in the Nazi foreign policy footsteps; by grouping together a set of local tensions—as diverse as those that were taking place in Italy, Poland, Greece and Turkey—and Moscow's horror record of domestic repression under the single heading of the struggle between Moscow and "the free peoples of the world," Truman and his advisers were also "producing" a powerful imaginary which was essential to the "war-like but short of actual war" climate of the late 1940s and 1950s.[17] In any case, according to Stephanson, what had phantasmagorical features in 1946-47, became pure "cold-war phantasmagoria" after 1949, namely with NSC-68's caricature of the (alleged) "Kremlin's design" for "world domination."[18]

Most of the phantasmagoria is detected in the US, either within the context of studies that take a culturalist perspective on foreign policy making, or within that of studies of "Cold War" culture. For example, while at times also referring to symmetrical processes at work in the Soviet Union, it is the contrast between the daily "invisibility" of the huge US nuclear complex and the undeletable images of atomic explosions impressed on the retinas of all American citizens by ever-present TV-sets, that leads Joseph Masco to conclude that "for Cold Warriors, the phantasmagoria of nuclear conflict provoked an imagination that was prolific." In turn, this would lead to "the constant overestimation of the nature of the Soviet nuclear threat by US government officials" (16). Of course, Richard Hofstadter's "paranoid style in American politics" looms large over this approach, but specific phantasmagorical features of Hollywood's post-war productions have also been detected: Tony Shaw gave a nuanced response to the question as to how much US cinema produced "spectres" detached from reality; Bernard Dick openly detected phantasmagoria in such movies as the *Red Menace* (1949) and *Invasion USA* (1952); and Michael Rogin claimed that "the cold war" introduced a new moment in the history of "American demonology" (Shaw 48).[19] Finally, phantasmagoria is the central word throughout the long essay dedicated by Irina Sandomirskaya to the analysis of Alfred Hitchcock's *North by Northwest* (1959) and Carol Reed's *The Third Man* (1949), where "cinematic Russia acquires a history as a grotesque phantom and one of those monsters that are produced by the sleeping (or dreaming) reason of Modernity" (Sandomirskaya 131). It is also with an eye to these elements of the "hegemonic culture" prevailing in the US, that Walter Hixson reached the conclu-

sion that "the 'Soviet threat' to West European and ultimately US security was a Cold War construction. Yet the public, conditioned by memories of Hitler, internalized the specter of a Red Army invasion, which prevailed for generations" (Hixson 176).

On the contrary, Cold war historians have detected fewer phantasmagorias in the Soviet Union. One of the few—if not the only—mentions of phantasmagoria as referred to the Soviet image of the US can be found, somewhat paradoxically, in a literary analysis of a relatively benign Soviet work of fiction from the 1970s (Rogachevskii 40).

5. Conclusive thoughts

When in the early 1980s the celebrated author of children's literature, Roald Dahl, ventured to select the best ghost stories of all time, he quickly found himself overwhelmed by the material he had to read. According to his own account in *The Book of Ghost Stories*, by the end of his "reading marathon" he had read a total of 749 stories, authored by perfect unknowns as well as by recognized literary celebrities (Dahl 10).[20] Since not all authors are mentioned by name, it is not possible to know whether or not the list included the Cold War historians who, by the mid-1970s, had already detected ghosts at work in and around the US-Soviet relationship. What is known, is that only a few years after Dahl's book, ghosts began to populate Cold War historiography *en masse*. The tone of this essay has tried to be somewhat humorous so far, but such a massive wave of apparitions does pose some questions about recent trends in Cold War historiography.

First, if one accepts the basic notion that such apparitions are metaphors and not actual sightings, it is hard not to ask what determined the widespread adoption of spectral language after the mid-1980s. With few exceptions, that concern to a large extent those who have worked on detecting phantasmagorias, the choice of spectral language is not explained. It seems, for example, that ghosts of the past have quietly flanked or taken over the previous "memories." But in fact, the change is far from being neutral on the account: memory is the ability to recall what has been learned, has a certain degree of fixity and is not associated with any particular feeling. To the extent that historians are able to ascribe policy or attitudes to the documented memories of the past, held by the human subjects of their inquiry, they acknowl-

edge the presence of a general outlook in the minds of those who share such memories, and the general influence of such outlook on the formulation of policy and rhetoric. When it comes to ghosts, however, the focus passes from the subjects who carry memories to the object of their views: besides the higher degree of dramatization that this confers to the account, what is preeminent here is the act of seeing a past enemy, presumably a mortal one, in the clothes of a specific present interlocutor, who then causes fear. If this is so, this does not seem to be an equally rational behavior. That the use of spectral language by the historian reflects a perceived element of irrationality of the policymakers seems sometimes more consciously affirmed when the chosen metaphor is the specter of the future: as is clear from the subtitle, Burr and Kimball's volume on *Nixon's Nuclear Specter* is, for example, a close examination of what Nixon himself called his "madman diplomacy" in Vietnam. As for the "specter of [western] vulnerability" raised by the Cuban revolution, Gaddis admits that it was "so powerful that it would push the United States, during the early 1960s, into an ambitiously ill-conceived campaign" (1997, 189). In most cases, however, both for the ghosts of the past and the specters of the future, the reader can only infer whether the new language reflects—if anything—new specific findings or, rather, a different philosophical outlook by the historians themselves, who now unconsciously attribute a much bigger role to irrationality, in the making of history, than their colleagues from the previous generation would have tolerated.[21] If the latter were the case, of course, the ghostly visions in recent Cold War historiography would be telling much more about the historians than about the stories they tell.[22]

As anticipated above, there are exceptions. Historians concerned with phantasmagorias trace the genesis of the specters they detect to specific "constructions," which pass through public discourse and representation. But of course, just as the passage from memory and perspective to ghosts and specters is not neutral on the story that is being told, neither is the choice between ghosts and phantasmagorias neutral, for it is clear that at least some of the ghosts and specters detected in the second and third sections above, were most likely the images resulting from the phantasmagorias detected in the fourth. From this standpoint, by publicly associating current Soviet foreign policy with the Nazi foreign policy of the 1930s, Churchill's "iron curtain speech" (and Truman's hands-clapping to it) could possibly be taken as the

most basic form of phantasmagoria. This might be true both for the speech's contribution to the creation of Stalin's image as the "ghost of Hitler" in the West, and for its contribution to the generation of a mirror effect: as a matter of fact, provided that in 1946 Soviet citizens did not need anyone to refresh their memory about their wartime sufferings, Stalin's response punctually associated Churchill's proposal for a US-British alliance with Hitler's aggression.[23] As noted above, however, the mechanisms—if any—through which such associations came to be built and internalized have been subject to historical inquiry prevalently in the case of the US. As far as the Soviet side is concerned, "propaganda" is still the prevailing category applied to the Soviet production of the image of the US (and the West more generally). In a technical sense, this appears to be a warranted approach: both for stylistic and political reasons, when cinema and literature are taken into consideration, in the Soviet Union there was virtually nothing symmetric about Hollywood's Red Army invasions and KGB infiltrations of the United States.[24] And yet, it would be interesting to know more about the ways in which Soviet propaganda interacted with public and private memory in the making (and, possibly, the later unmaking) of associations between western foreign policy and Hitler's expansionism (and, later, between Mao and Hitler). In any case, as witnessed by the renewal of the debate on "the very notion of the Cold War," the detection of phantasmagorias at least in the United States, challenges the traditional visual metaphors used in the prevailing accounts of US-Soviet relations, which still appear largely chained to an earthly interpretive spectrum ("depth of vision" versus "myopia"), regardless of the massive apparitions of ghosts that this essay has documented.

Notes

1. Pending such a debate, Cold War historiography is intended here as the field composed of all those who believe they deal with the Cold War, irrespective of how they define it. The author wishes to thank Giovanni Bernardini, Mario Del Pero, Olga Egorova, Andrea Gullotta, and Alberto Masoero for their useful suggestions, while obviously claiming all responsibility for any mistakes in this essay.
2. See Romero.
3. For the "elephant in the room" metaphor see Westad.
4. The latter definition was originally formulated and refined by Anders Stephanson in three successive essays: "Fourteen Notes on the Very Concept of a Cold

War," "Liberty or Death. The Cold War as US Ideology," and "The Cold War Considered as a U.S. Project." It has later been elaborated upon by the same author to include the mutual denial of legitimacy between the two superpowers following the deployment of US "containment" policies. See Stephanson 2012, 19-50. While acknowledging its philological merits, critics have seen in it an excess of precision, which allegedly makes it of little operational usefulness. See Westad; Romero, 688. This article will adopt the phrase Cold War when referring to the US containment project, and "Cold War" when referring to either the US-Soviet rivalry in general or the period in which it took place.

5. In Feis's *From Trust to Terror,* for example, memory is the "indiscriminating instructor [that] prodded the Americans to resist all proposals that might make it necessary to support the German economy even more expensively" right after World War Two (39). Prospects of "better harvests" and "peace conferences" abound throughout the volume, and the "mirage of possible compromise" is a main theme in the treatment of the final part of 1946 (151).

6. For the original quotation, see United States Department of State, 618.

7. In turn, the "specter of Bolshevism" that worried US policy makers right after 1917 ostensibly vanished after 1920. See ibid. 239-250.

8. Along the same vein, Lloyd Gardner interpreted US actions at the end of World War Two in light of US policymakers' "nightmare-like memories of the depression" (Gardner, 313).

9. See Campbell.

10. See Smith.

11. See Griffith and Theoharis.

12. On the "second cold war" see Halliday.

13. See Gaddis (1982) and Gaddis (1983).

14. See Lyotard.

15. The definition is from the Merriam Webster dictionary.

16. On phantasmagoria, see Cagidemetrio 3-106.

17. Stephanson (2005); Stephanson (1999). That Truman "scare the hell out of the American people" was of course Arthur Vandenberg's condition for giving his support, as chairman of the US Senate's Foreign affairs committee, to the President's request for funds for Greece and Turkey in 1947. See Patterson 128.

18. Stephanson 2011, 162. To be sure, in the 1960s "the very notion of 'international communism' [was] rendered increasingly phantasmagoric because of the Sino-Soviet split" (Stephanson 2012, 136).

19. Dick; Rogin. Also Hofstadter.

20. I am particularly grateful to Gaia Basosi for bringing my attention upon this precious book.

21. It would be interesting, for example, to learn more about Charlie Maier's passage from criticism of the "revisionists" to current stress on the aforementioned "specter of [European] impending economic breakdown" in the making of the Marshall Plan.

22. To be sure, adjectives such as "ghostly," "phantasmatic" and "phantasmagoric" characterize post-modernist analysis of "post-modern" society. See

Jameson.

23. Reference here is to Stalin's association between Churchill and Hitler (and the *Pravda*'s association between Churchill and Goebbels) in the days following the "iron curtain speech." See Fleming 450.

24. Indeed, there were exceptions: Feis mentions *The Mad Haberdasher*, a play popular with Moscow theaters in 1949, in which the main American character had "a strong facial resemblance with Adolf Hitler" (Feis 1970, 390). For a commentary on some Soviet science fiction, see Rogachevskii.

25. On Khrushchev's association between Mao and Hitler, see Radchenko 357.

26. "Depth of strategic vision" characterized George Kennan's thinking in 1947 according to Gaddis (1982, 23). US views in the same period were "myopic" according to Leffler (1994, 27).

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