

NOTORIOUS: HITCHCOCK'S GOOD NEIGHBOR FILM

Arlindo Castro

The New York release of Alfred Hitchcock's *Notorious* occurred in August 1946, one month after the Bikini atomic explosions, and one year after the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. "Is mankind dying of curiosity?" asked a double page *Time* magazine ad, in the same issue that published a review of the film. "*Time's* Science department noted recently," readers were told, "that people everywhere have one great Fear: will the curiosity of nuclear physicists someday set off a giant chain reaction which will flash-bum the world to a clinker?"¹ To overcome that fear of the nuclear apocalypse, according to the ad, readers should learn more and more about "the big mysteries of our atomic age," beginning by checking her or his score in the "*Time's* Quiz on Science." If they happened to go to Radio City Music Hall, *Notorious* would reassure them that the U.S. was doing well in preventing obstinate Nazis from making an atomic bomb, though at that moment of the nuclear espionage war, former Manhattan Project insider Klaus Fuchs had actually passed on to a Soviet contact in London classified information about the Manhattan Project and American atomic plans.² Indeed, in that transitional period between World War II and the Cold War, the major political villains were still Nazis, not

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Communists, as exemplified by other 1946 films like Orson Welles' *The Stranger*, Charles Vidor's *Gilda*, and Edward Dmytryk's *Cornered*.

Alfred Hitchcock was very proud of having "anticipated" the atomic bomb in the first draft of *Notorious* (December 1944), but the film does not address, even lightly, what was really at stake for the U.S. and Great Britain regarding Brazil's natural radioactive resources.³ In July 1945, for instance, the U.S. and Brazil signed an official agreement granting the former's priority in the acquisition and control of Brazilian thorium, to which no allusion is made.⁴ The film suggests, instead, that the Germans knew more than the Americans about radioactive resources in Brazil, a claim which proved both exaggerated and inaccurate. Recent investigations handle evidence showing that the Nazis were never as close to the atomic bomb as they were thought to have been, but the alleged threat helped the secret nuclear project of the American government to receive more attention and funds.⁵ Regarding the movie itself, the possibility of State Department censorship claiming "security reasons," combined with screenwriter Ben Hecht and the director's non-confrontational posture, helped to keep the political sphere out of the text. Indeed, depoliticization is often a key operation in the writing of idealist history, or, to put it another way, in the inscription of history in hegemonic narratives. But "real" history does get inscribed in *Notorious*, and we must discuss how, keeping in mind that depoliticization often means convenience politics.

Before articulating *Notorious* within its broader historical contexts, let us take a first look at the film in its own *habitat*, that of film history. At this first level, the film is to be thought of as both an individual utterance (Hitchcock's) and a Hollywood mid-Forties discourse; at a second level, the movie's relations to its contemporaneity will be placed on the broader horizon of nuclear history and the Cold War. We should begin thus by listing some reasons for *Notorious*' actuality: the atomic bomb-related theme; Hitchcock's prestige; Ingrid Bergman's aura (with all the Rossellini family intertexts); Cary Grant and Claude Rains, for all they are worth; Miami, Rio, and passion in the tropics; the film's

status. And, if one looks around, there seems to be indeed very few viewers who do not like the film. 1946 audiences in the U.S. also liked it: with a cost of \$2 million, *Notorious* grossed \$8 million, double the average box-office of the 425 feature films released by Hollywood that year, which produced record revenues for the industry amounting to \$1.692 billion.⁶ In the second week of its run, the film was being celebrated as the “Biggest Saturday and Sunday in History of Radio City Music Hall,” a phrase used as title of a RKO ad in *Variety*.⁷ Most reviewers also responded positively, and Ben Hecht was nominated for a Best Original Screenplay Oscar. Today, it is easily available in most video stores, being one of the most seen Forties’ Hitchcock in the U.S., at the same time it is relatively little known in Brazil.

The spy film was not new for the director. Among his Thirties’ British movies, *The Thirty Nine Steps* (1935), *The Secret Agent* and *Sabotage* (both from 1936) are examples of previous works in this genre. Moreover, among his eight Hollywood films prior to *Notorious*, *Foreign Correspondent* (1940) and *Saboteur* (1942) had espionage themes, and *Lifeboat* (1943) was conceived as “a microcosm of the war.”⁸ From the latter movie, *Notorious* borrowed the idea of the sympathetic Nazi character, a functional element for dramatic balance and complexity. An expression of Hitchcock’s maturity as a filmmaker—then 47, but already known as “the old master”⁹—the film is also an example of another maturity, that of the classical Hollywood narrative. It smoothly weaves a love story into a SPY plot, blending *melodrama* (the triangle Devlin (Cary Grant)-Alicia (Ingrid Bergman) Alex (Claude Rains)) and *thriller* (the American agents’ mission), to mention the two genres that contemporary reviewers most used to classify the film. But, perhaps to *Notorious*’ credit, it is a melodrama with virtually no family—or, more precisely, with two incomplete families, Alicia’s (the mother is absent, and the father commits suicide early in the story) and Alex’ (the father is absent, and the mother is a strong Jocasta figure)¹⁰; and a thriller with no fights or shootings.

Considering the director’s remark (in Richard Schickel’s 1972 documentary, *Hitchcock*), that characters are the “only” way to renew

formulas, let us now examine how this theory applies to *Notorious*' protagonists—do they renew or repeat formulas? We have just seen that the sympathetic Nazi had been used in *Lifeboat*, and was quickly becoming a reverse stereotype—nostalgically revisited in films like *Mephisto* (1981), *Kiss of the Spider Woman* (1985), or *Schindler's List* (1994). Structurally, the story of *Notorious* fits the archetypal model of the classical Greek love novel, which begins with the meeting of the couple, and ends with the “wedding.”¹¹ In the film's particular variation of that plot, however, the happy couple remains just a possibility, a romantic mirage: the Alicia-Alex marriage is doomed from the start, and this is made quite obvious for the spectator: an affair-for-life between a woman working for the American secret service and a rich Nazi exile was indeed an “impossible love” (even in Rio!) so it had to end sooner or later; and the Alicia-Devlin marriage is but an uncertain post-closure outcome, particularly for today's spectators, because it is very likely that many 1946 spectators saw Alicia's future as that of Devlin's submissive wife. This latter image is in sharp contrast with the outspoken, independent Alicia who we meet early in the film, and her change is indeed a key operation in *Notorious*' ideological discourse on women and heterosexual relationships.

One way of approaching the Alicia character is by seeing the Miami scenes as a sort of Ingrid Bergman's version of film noir's women. Single and liberated, full of cynical lines, overflowing sexuality, heavy drinking, and a taste for transgressions—the ingredients are all there. When she and Devlin fly down to Rio, these noirish elements are repressed at all signifying levels. For instance, her costumes, in contrast with the one she wears at her home party (celebrating, as it were, her father's twenty-year sentence as a Nazi spy), hide her body, and she even wears long black gloves in tropical Rio. This change is apparently designed to indicate a change of her persona, but it may be argued that one of *Notorious*' major dramatic inconsistencies is indeed the suddenness of her change. When Devlin plays a record (useful hardware for an archaeology of espionage equipment in films) of

wiretapped conversations between Alicia and her father, in a last attempt to make her accept the Rio mission, she is hardly shocked by that intrusion in her privacy, as one can imagine she would, and wire tapping is somehow taken for granted even in a post-war period.

Perhaps Rio's "magic spell" (then enhanced in the popular imagination by Carmen Miranda's persona, Walt Disney's productions *Saludos Amigos* (1943) and *The Three Caballeros* (1945), Bing Crosby's recording of Brazil, among other cultural products of Washington's Good Neighborhood Policy) helped to make more verisimilar her sudden love for a guy who virtually blackmailed her into the mission (moreover, that guy was played by sex-symbol Cary Grant!), but it was "the good cause" what really mattered, as a panacea for all doubts and conflicts. When she learns that her role would be that of a Mata Hari in the tropics, Alicia comments, "She makes love for the papers." In his typical tough macho tone, Devlin says, "There are no papers," and, one could add, there is no sex either. The complexities of Alicia and Alex' sexual life are kept at a monastic distance. Whereas the couple Alicia-Devlin has four important kiss scenes (to which we will return), she and her husband are never seen kissing, to say the least, and a key effect of this mise-en-scene strategy is to minimize and sublimate Alicia's sexual conflicts, leaving them out of the text. In an analogous strategy, the broader narrative often uses the spy plot to block off the melodrama. Whenever "love" gets in their way—as in one of Alicia's apartment scenes, or in the Jockey Club sequence—Devlin reminds her (and us) that they have an important, "tough job" to do.

Although the noirish elements of Alicia's initial characterization are cut short, other typical elements of the noir style—cinematography, lighting and use of subjective shots—permeate the whole movie. On a number of grounds—e.g., its representation of the city, or the secret agent as male protagonist—*Notorious* is far from being a film noir, but its use of expressionist lighting and "abnormal" point of view shots serves to remind us that Hitchcock, after all, was one of the European directors who migrated to the U.S. fight before or during the war (a

group that included Otto Preminger, Billy Wilder, Fritz Lang, Robert Siodmak, among others), and whose collaboration with American cinematographers, art directors, and other professionals helped to shape and crystallize the noir style. Ted Tetzlaff's cinematography has, at least, three moments to be included in any anthology of great shots in Hitchcock's movies: the long shot of Cary Grant's back in his first appearance—avoiding the shot/reaction shot formula—and, after a fade out, the tracking shot around him; the three minute sequence shot of the first love scene at Alicia's apartment, that works also through a certain friction between the image and the verbal track (a formula that would be repeated in *Rear Window*, for instance)¹²; in the party sequence, the dolly shot that goes from a high angle view of the Sebastians' mansion lobby to a close-up of the wine cellar's key in Alicia's hand. These virtuoso, authorial shots were an important element in Hitchcock's view of the artistry of his craft. Regarding *Notorious'* cinematography, we should also mention the extensive use of matting shots (all of the lead couple's Rio exterior scenes); and Alicia's point of view shot as she wakes up and sees Devlin walking towards her bed, and the camera movement makes his image spin 360 degrees—an "abnormality" of vision narratively justified by the fact that she has a hangover.

Devlin is an early Atomic Age spy, a species that, as it evolved, would be increasingly represented by a sort of liberated male type like James Bond, Flint, Napoleon Solo, and others. (In the Sixties, there was also Modesty Blaise, a liberated female spy who would deserve some attention in this context.) The Cary Grant character is repressed and repressive—he is even "afraid of women," in his own words—but, paradoxically, it is through him that Hitchcock materializes his (and the male audience's) erotic fantasies in regard to Ingrid Bergman, whose seduction, it is implied, no man would be able to resist. And the director even talked about his intention of having the viewer joining the couple for a *menage à trois* in the sequence shot of the love scene at her apartment mentioned above. At the same time, even if one does not see

Alicia as a liberated woman, it is clear that she is perceived as such by the other characters—and, one can argue, by the film's enunciator as well, for, after all, who "speaks" the title but a certain moralist mentality, a malicious voice expressing her view of the female protagonist? Devlin's boss Paul Prescott (Louis Calhern), in a typically sexist remark, describes Alicia as a woman "good at making friendship with gentlemen." Devlin makes a similar remark when she jokingly suggests that his hesitation in regard to their love affair had to do with the fact that he had "a lovely wife and two children" waiting for him at home. "I bet you heard that line often," Devlin overreacts to her provocation, betraying his own prejudices against her more-suggested than-shown promiscuity. "Below the belt, always below the belt," says Alicia, avoiding the confrontation—but there is a certain irony in the fact that life would soon imitate art in Miss Bergman's own life with the so-called Stromboli scandal.¹³ Later in the film, however, he gets upset when Prescott makes another derogatory comment about Alicia being "that kind of woman." Devlin asks, "What kind is that, sir? It is surely not the same kind as your wife, sir, sitting comfortably in Washington, playing bridge with three other ladies." Spectators are supposed to love the line for a number of reasons: they are never positioned against Alicia (much on the contrary); it shows that Devlin's vision of Alicia had changed for the better; Prescott's unfairness is obvious. Like her harsh remarks against patriots and patriotism early in the film, Devlin voices here a counter-discourse that, though controlled by the overall ideology of the film, talks back to "consensus culture" and sexism—in spite of Hitchcock's own sexual "theories," one could say. However, the resonance of these lines is minimal; they amount to little more than a dramatic construction gimmick, namely, the use of clashing voices to enhance conflict.

Notorious is part of a Hollywood tradition (apparently initiated by Thornton Freeland's *Flying Down to Rio* (1933), but part of a larger tradition of imperial stories set in "exotic" places) in which tropical settings connote romance and sensuality; a colonial image that has

served to romanticize Brazil and other Latin countries to the American mind, and survived not just the Cuban revolution, but the sexual revolution also, as one can tell from more recent films like *Blame It on Rio* (1984) and *Wild Orchid* (1990). However, since the Sixties, Latin American filmmakers and European directors like Gillo Pontecorvo (*Burn*, 1969), Costa-Gavras (*State of Siege*, 1973), Glauber Rocha, Fernando Solanas, Tomas Gutierrez Alea, and many others, have presented less idealized and unidimensional views of the continent, as a counterpoint to the classical Hollywood image. It is more than a coincidence that, after the Jimmy Carter's administration stress on human rights in PanAmerica, this second tradition began to include American documentaries and feature films like Costa-Gavras' *Missing* (1982), Roger Spottiswode's *Under Fire* (1983), Oliver Stone's *Salvador* (1986), Alex Cox' *Walker* (1987), Bille August's *House of the Spirits* (1993).

It is indeed suggestive to compare *Notorious* with *Topaz* (1969), not just as symptomatic of their respective historical moments, but also of Hitchcock's response to the changes in Latin America, from the Good Neighborhood days of the Forties to the rise of anti-colonialism in the aftermath of the Cuban revolution. In the latter film, based in a Leon Uris' novel, the Mata Hari figure is a typically Latin Cuban woman, who forms an inter-ethnic couple with the Anglo-Saxon male hero that can be contrasted to the German/American couple, and the absence of major Brazilian characters in the former film. At the same time, both films do not use local actors and were not shot on location. In *Notorious*, the stereotype of Rio as an idyllic set for the romantic couple is expanded by the city's portrayal as a place of Nazi conspiracy and atomic espionage—a depiction that, though somewhat exaggerated, was not totally inaccurate, since every person of German descent in Brazil became a potential suspect during World War II. What is worth stressing, in any case, is the fact that the film constructs an image of the Third World as a site for First World disputes, a post-war trend that led to most of the 105 major wars fought in 66 countries between 1945 and 1988.¹⁴

Notorious provides us with an early filmic version of a message that would be repeated over and over in the following decades, which is the *détente* concept that American nuclear hegemony was essential for world peace, so powerfully illustrated by the official discourses around the Bikini atomic tests in 1946 and by the explosions themselves.

Let us now take a closer look at the issues of time, space and causality in the story, using Bakhtin's distinction between "the world as represented in the work" and "the world as a source of representation" as a reference for this historical reading of *Notorious*.¹⁵ The Miami skyline in the opening credits introduces the film with a postcard visual motif fully explored in the latter Rio scenes—and it is no accident that this is the Rio that RKO and the Brazilian "Good Neighbors" wanted Welles to shoot earlier in the 1942 *It's All True* project. The city is introduced through great aerial shots from a Pan Am plane, that position the spectator as an American tourist on a business trip; and the two first kiss scenes are played against Copacabana beach postcard backgrounds, that position the spectator as voyeur, and establish the nexus Rio-Romance. The main domestic interiors are Alicia's rooms—in her Miami house, the Rio apartment, and the Sebastians' house; by contrast, we are never at Devlin's place, we have no access to his privacy in that way. Other key spaces are the Brazilian and the American secret services' offices, and Alex' house as the Nazi villains' nest, where exiled businessmen and scientists get together "to rebuild the German war machine," as Devlin puts it. Indeed, "the price of freedom is eternal vigilance." The transitions between these private spaces are filled in with public spaces, like the square bench, the sidewalk bar, the restaurant, the plane, the Jockey Club, and the road to the Corcovado hill. Objects usually have major plot functions in the spy thriller genre, and in *Notorious* the three main ones are related to the Sebastians' home, which is not only a home, but a home/office hybrid, or, to put it another way, family life is just a front for conspiracy, the "real thing," the German resistance in the tropics. And the objects—the wine bottle, the wine cellar key, and the coffee cup—link those two worlds within

the mansion. A possible exception early in the film, Alicia's scarf, seems to confirm the rule: it is more related to the love story than to the spy plot.

The film's temporality is linear and continuously specified, beginning by the opening subtitles that inform the place, day, and exact hour of the action: Miami, 3:20 P.M., April 24, 1946. This device, used by the director in other films like *Psycho* and *Topaz*, enhances the "effect of the real," by its calendar-like presentation of the story world to the spectator, who becomes "equal" to the characters in the sense of being able to answer elementary questions of (their) everydayness, "What time is it?", "What day is today?", and "Where are we?" But Hitchcock's description of a movie that begins in the Spring of 1946 as "a war time story"¹⁶ tells us something about the instability of peace in that transition period between the end of WW II and the beginning of the Cold War. Indeed, the film's references to extra-textual historical realities of its epoch can provide additional insights, particularly when we compare it to other films.

Notorious and Orson Welles' *The Stranger* open with similar establishing shots: closed doors above which names of law-enforcement instances can be read: Allied War Crimes Commission, in the latter title; United States District Court—Southern District of Florida, in the former. Behind those doors, the state apparatus is taking care of the enemy—with a little help from cinema. In Welles' film, the American agent, played by Edward G. Robinson, and his colleagues anticipate the action to follow, the hunt of Nazi Franz Kindler living under a false identity in the U.S.; in Hitchcock's film, Nazi John Huberman, Alicia's father, is being sentenced to twenty years in prison as "a war criminal," but we soon learn that the war is not over yet, because "there are Nazis in South America"—which has proved accurate throughout the following decades, since every other year a new war criminal has been found living in the so-called South Cone. The American agents' secret mission is to arrest German uranium smugglers in Rio, and the film sticks to this declared goal. Complying with a fundamental norm of the action-film genre, *Notorious* serves canned history to its viewers; indeed,

any reference to the mission's undeclared goal—to protect Brazil's radioactive resources for American and British use—would bring into the text a dimension of neocolonial domination in the Nuclear Age that the narrative carefully avoids. To deal with this particular aspect of the story would have been problematic in two levels, at least: one, that of national security, as there are evidences of State Department's concern with the theme of the film, and controversial accounts about the FBI's surveillance of Hitchcock during that period;¹⁷ another, that of the British-American business interests in South America.

It is true, however, that there were no major anti-imperialist discourses circulating in Brazilian politics when the film was made; the discourses in defense of Brazil's radioactive and energetic natural resources were still in the closet of Pan-American geopolitics, they would see daylight only in the late Forties. This justifies the absence of any allusion to the Brazilian anti-U.S. xenophobia, but it is also true that the broader interests behind the American protagonists' mission are effaced from the text. It could not have been otherwise, for such a mention would have touched the true secret, the use of Brazilian thorium and uranium in the Manhattan Project, a story that remains untold to this date. *Notorious'* use of black sand as the radioactive material—described as “uranium ore” by Prescott—seems remarkably accurate when one knows that monazite sands from the beaches of a coastal village, Guarapari, in the Brazilian Southeast were exported to the U.S. until the early Fifties. The film gives the Aymorés Range, in Brazil's hinterland, as the source of the “uranium,” and two hypotheses can be formulated in this respect: Hitch and Ben Hecht did not know about Guarapari, though all of the film's geographical references to Brazil are accurate (and the Aymorés Range has, indeed, radioactive resources); second, they knew about the Guarapari sands, but chose not to mention the city's name.

The coming of another war was a common shared fear in post-war American culture, and the Nazis-in-the-Americas 1946 films have, at least, three scenes in which such fear is associated to an alleged German

conspiracy in Pan America. In *Notorious*' opening courtroom scene, we hear and vaguely see (as the camera stays outside the room) Alicia's father threat of revenge, before he is calmed down by his lawyer; in *The Stranger*, Franz Kindler urges his Nazi friend to keep faith in "the day when we strike again"; and in *Gilda*, the line "The war is over" has slightly ironic undertones, since the dismantling of the German cartel in Argentina remains uncertain in the closure, therefore potentially dangerous. Given all these alleged menaces to the Pax Americana, counter-espionage could begin to be presented as part of the continuous struggle for the preservation of peace, an argument that would serve to justify the Atom Bomb, the arms race, and increased militarization throughout the whole Cold War period. If we articulate the public's fear of Nazis with deeper fears related to a possible atomic apocalypse in the post-Hiroshima world, the functions of a reassuring discourse become particularly important. As the images of Bikini spectacularized the Bomb, *Notorious* romanticized atomic espionage, and a long list of Atom Bomb films would follow.¹⁸

In the current jargon of the trade, Devlin and Alicia's mission could be described as a "foreign counter-intelligence operation," a kind of activity in which the CIA would specialize, as a civilian agency, from 1947 on. Although Devlin and Prescott's employer is never explicitly mentioned, Hitchcock and a couple of contemporary reviews describe them as FBI agents; at the same time, it is difficult to imagine their mission implemented without any participation of military intelligence or the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), base of what would soon become the CIA.¹⁹ Indeed, it is quite interesting to observe the expansion of the repressive apparatus bureaucracy within the American state, during that supposedly peaceful period.

The target of the protagonists' mission is the IG Farben industry, a German company that had established its Brazilian branch before the war, and, according to a dialogue, worked "in cooperation with the Brazilian government." The reality effect is enhanced by the blending of fiction and actual history, at least for those who know that IG Farben

was indeed a leading chemical conglomerate in the German industry—next to Bosch, Krupp, and others, all torn apart and reorganized in the Nuremberg Trial, that was taking place while *Notorious* was being shot and post-produced. In this sense, the film is a metaphor of the Allies' intervention in German economic activities all over the world, and not just in Germany itself, during that period.²⁰ And as the U.S. government agents weaken IG Farben's businesses in Brazil, by arresting its top bad guy and his close circle of conspirators, they serve the interests of American industrial capital—namely, Union Carbide—regarding the use of Brazil's mineral resources—a dispute that continues in the Amazon and in other areas of the country, very much like in the good old days of capitalism.

Natural radioactive resources, the film wants us believe, were one of the main reasons why the Germans had chosen Brazil (and, supposedly, its unmentioned neighbors) for "the reconstruction of the German war machine." When, late in the story, Prescott congratulates Alicia for her work, saying that the lab exams had proved uranium ore to be the content of the wine bottles, the "McGuffin" enigma is solved. "Now we know what we are driving at," Prescott says, and this "we" is supposed to include the privileged spectator, at the same time as it excludes him or her, since "we" can only vaguely guess the full meaning and implications of that remark for the characters. The line erroneously suggests that the Germans knew more than Brits and Americans about Brazil's natural radioactive resources. The notion of a race against the clock with the Germans haunted the Manhattan Project, and it was later incorporated into the Atomic Culture imaginary. Born out of the war-period uncertainties about what the Germans were doing in their atomic researches, that myth is now being revised, but we can expect its residues to linger on for a long time, because it is part of a larger myth and reality, that of the German excellency in technological matters.

Washington's Good Neighborhood Policy with Latin America was another important extra-textual factor to play a role in the choice of Brazil. *Notorious* is perhaps the best combination of war affirmative

film and Good Neighborhood ideology accomplished by Hollywood.²¹ When David Selznick gave up the project, and decided to sell the whole package (script, director, Grant and Bergman) to RKO, he could not have found a more appropriate buyer.²² Nelson Rockefeller, a RKO board member, was also the head of the State Department's Office of Inter-American Affairs, agency in charge of that policy. To portray the Germans as the *others* (and they are indeed introduced through impressive point of view shots, similar to those used to introduce the servants in *Rebecca*²³) in South America was, in an ideological way, to portray them as the "bad" colonialists, and we all know who the "good" colonialists were. But Hitchcock's Germans are no clear-cut Nazi war criminals that escaped to South America because of Argentinean and Brazilian sympathies to their defeated cause, because of the large colonies of German migrants in the South Cone, or because of the relative isolation they could enjoy away from the big cities, something well illustrated in Ira Levin's novel and Franklin Schaffner's 1978 film *The Boys from Brazil*, that demonizes the tropic of Capricorn region as a nest of exiled Caligaris—in this case, the "mad scientist" Joseph Mengele, played by Gregory Peck.²⁴ The German characters in *Notorious*, instead, are members of the economic and scientific elite behind Hitler, who go to Brazil at the service of that early German multinational, IG Farben. Exactly because they are who they are, and I reinforce this point, *Notorious*' plot allegorizes the dismantling of Germany's industry by the allies, and this is an important way through which the film relates to the broader horizon of its contemporary history.

Strictly speaking, there was no war within the Brazilian territory, except perhaps for the torpedoing of a few ships, which precipitated Brazil's adhesion to the allies in August 1942. However, the Good Neighborhood Policy accomplished a strategic geopolitical seduction, materialized in the participation of Brazilian soldiers in the campaign in Italy; in the mobilization (by the Brazilian government) of thousands of workers to intensify rubber production in the Amazon, in order to supply U.S. military needs; in the use of military bases in Northern

Brazil; in the repression of German and Japanese espionage, and in the social violence against citizens from these countries—because the Italians were the Axis' partner who got the best treatment.²⁵ In that seduction play, Brazil had the feminine role of the passive seducer, or, should I say, the active seduced; in *Notorious*' version of that "romance," a non-American lady seduces an American man, but only after he convinces her of joining the *Pater*, the patriotic fight. Objectively, Rio is little more than an exotic background, like an American *chronotope* transplanted to South America, Miami in a cosmopolitan Rio. The only Brazilian character is a Dr. Julio Barbosa (Ricardo Costa), whose exact position in the State's repressive apparatus is never specified; in a way, he is less than a character, he is just a speaking part. In any case, it is interesting to notice that he is the character who, in one of the meetings between Brazilians and Americans, asks the question, "Are you sure of her (Alicia's) political side?" particularly if we ask another question: "Which was Dr. Barbosa's own political side?". From his status, we can infer that he was a reliable bureaucrat of a government (Getúlio Vargas, 1937-45) that, in real life, became notorious for its political police, its censorship of media and the arts, its sympathies for Nazi-Fascism, and its systematic intolerance of Communism. During the war, the Roosevelt administration had some little publicized restrictions to the military governments in Brazil and Argentina; anticipating their post-war confrontations with the totalitarian communist block, the allies were concerned with the possibility of having dictatorships among those who would be proclaimed as Freedom Fighters after the victory.²⁶ However, *Notorious* presents a hegemonic war-time view of Pan-America in which political differences are overlooked because what matters most is the message of unity and cooperation between North and South against a common enemy, a role in which a number of Communist countries would be cast by the same Pan-American discourse in the following years. Hitchcock and his characters do not meddle with local politics, making inconvenient remarks about the non-Democratic practices of the Brazilian government. Much to the

contrary: in the midst of so much war-related action, Rio de Janeiro, then Brazil's capital, looks like an oasis of peace and civility, to paraphrase a famous quote from a later military president during the 1964-1985 dictatorship. For this reason, Dr. Barbosa's line to Alicia, after they find out about the uranium ore, "Compliments of our government, *señorita*," suggests an extra-diegetic voice saying to the director, "Compliments of our government, Hitchcock."

Notes

1. *Time*, August 19, 1946, pp. 72-73.
2. For a history of Cold War spy movies, see Roland Lacourbe, *La Guerre Froide dans le cinéma d'espionnage*. (Paris: Henry Veyrier, 1985). He mentions the Fuchs incident on pp. 15-16.
3. Some of the actions to assure American access to natural radioactive resources worldwide are narrated in Vincent Jones, *Manhattan: The Army and the Atomic Bomb*. (Washington: U.S. Army, n.d.), specially chapters XIII, "The Raw Materials Program," and XIV, "The Feed Materials Program," pp.292-318.
4. I refer here to a bilateral agreement signed in Rio, July 6, 1945, as a result of negotiations initiated earlier that year, on February 17, when Roosevelt's then recently appointed Secretary of State, Edward Stettinius, and Maj. John E. Vance, from the Manhattan Project, met with Brazilian president Getúlio Vargas in Rio. See Vincent Jones, op. cit., p. 306.
5. McGeorge Bundy, "Hitler and the Bomb," *The New York Times Magazine*, November 13, 1988, p. 42. *Fat Man and Little Boy* (1989), Roland Joffé's 1989 film about the Manhattan Project, gives the viewer a sense of how the scientists and workers in Los Alamos were under the constant pressure to be ahead of the Germans.
6. \$4 to \$5 million is my estimate of the average box office per picture in 1946. That year, 90% of the 357 films released in Brazil were American (325). The home-video release of *Notorious* in Brazil, re-titled with the Portuguese word for *Interlude*, occurred only in 1993, after most Hitchcock films were already available in the market, which indicates its undeserved secondary status in that country.

7. *Variety*, August 21, 1946
8. The director's own definition in François Truffaut, *Hitchcock* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1984), p. 155.
9. Expression used by a reviewer quoted in the mentioned *Variety* ad. *Time* magazine's reviewer called Hitchcock "thriller-expert," while *Newsweek's* (August 26, 1946) referred to him as "the so called women's director."
10. Although Mrs. Sebastian does not kill herself in the story, she tries to poison her son's wife; and although Alex' real father is absent, the film's closing line, "Alex, come in. I want to talk to you," delivered by one of his German partners, is definitively a voice of Fatherly Authority, and puts him in the subaltern position of someone who has to account for a misdeed.
11. For more in the classical Greek novel, see Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), p.250.
12. The scene in which Grace Kelly warmly kisses Jimmy Stewart, while he speculates about his neighbor's murder. In *Notorious*, Cary Grant kisses back, but both actors are reported to having felt odd about the scene. During the shooting, Ben Hecht would have said, "I don't get all this talk about chicken!" See Donald Spoto, *The Dark Side of Genius: The Life of Alfred Hitchcock* (New York: Random House, 1983; Ballantine Books, 1984), p.305.
13. During the shooting of *Stromboli* in 1949, Ingrid Bergman became pregnant of director Roberto Rossellini, and their adulterous affair became public (she was still married to physician Peter Lindstrom). Adrienne McLean examines the cases of Bergman and Rita Hayworth in "The Cinderella Princess and the Instrument of Evil: Surveying the limits of Female Transgression in Two Postwar Hollywood Scandals," in *Cinema Journal* 34, No.3, Spring 1995, pp.36-56.
14. Statistics mentioned in Peter Watkins' documentary series, *The Journey*, broadcast on PBS, June-July, 1988. Perhaps the only "new" fact in this context is that inter-ethnic wars within nation-states have become more frequent and more violent.
15. Mikhail Bakhtin, op. cit., p.252.
16. See the Truffaut/Hitchcock book, p.268. The film was conceived and written during the last year of the war (September 1944-July 1945, with the fall of Berlin

in-between), but shot and released after the surrender of Japan (October 1945-August 1946).

17. Hitchcock often mentioned the surveillance, but the "FBI files reveal no such scrutiny," according to Spotto, p.301. The absence of files, however, does not necessarily prove that the surveillance did not take place, even if only for a limited period, because the FBI was constantly looking for supporters of Nazism within the film industry. And it found some, like Errol Flynn, for instance.
18. According to a recent non-published listing, there were seven feature films with atomic bomb related themes in 1946, and more than 400 until 1988. There are also newsreels, documentaries and Civil Defense films, as well as long-suppressed footage, like the ones used in the 1981 documentaries *Hiroshima* and *Nagasaki*, shot just one week after the bombings.
19. See Truffaut, op. cit., p. 167. After a press screening of the film, the *Motion Picture Herald* reviewer (July 27, 1946) noted that "the FBI is never mentioned," implying that Devlin and Prescott work for the Bureau. The *Newsweek* review describes Devlin simply as "an American agent," whereas Time refer to the protagonists as "U.S. Secret Agents Bergman and Grant." Besides the symptomatic use of the actors' instead of the character's names (Bergman and Grant were, in fact, Hollywood "agents" in the propaganda war), we must note that Bergman was considered an agent by the reviewer, when her status is ambivalent.
20. See Douglas Botting, *In the Ruins of the Reich*. (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1985) pp. 170-173.
21. For a survey of film-related initiatives of Good Neighborhood Policy, see Sérgio Augusto, "Hollywood looks at Brazil: From Carmen Miranda to *Moonraker*," in Randall Johnson and Robert Stam, *Brazilian Cinema* (New Jersey: Associated University Press, 1982), pp. 352-362. For the story of Orson Welles in Brazil, see Myron Meisel, Bill Krohn and Richard Wilson's documentary *It's All True*.
22. RKO's previous experience in Brazil with the Welles' project had been frustrating.
23. The casting of German actors and one actress, Leopoldine Konstantin, all of them refugees in the U.S., enhances *Notorious*' effectiveness giving it a peculiar flavor of German-American collaboration, that contrasts with the hostilities between them in the story.

24. The South of South America has had large colonies of German migrants since the beginning of the century, which turned the region into an attractive alternative for Nazi fugitives. Although the Germans form one of the ethnic groups most distanced from the prevailing *mestizaje* in Brazil, Nazism, as an ideology of Arian superiority, has had relatively few followers in that country.
25. *The New York Times* is a rich source of information on espionage in Brazil during the war. While reading some of the stories, it occurred to me that the history of World War II from the perspective of Latin countries, like Brazil, Cuba, or Argentina, deserves more filmic treatments than it has received so far.
26. Moniz Bandeira, *Estado Nacional e Política Internacional na América Latina* (São Paulo: Ensaio, 1993), esp. chaps. II and III, discusses the tri-lateral relationships between Brazil, Argentina and the U.S. during World War II.