Title: 'It is always another world': mapping the global imaginary in William Gibson's Pattern Recognition

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Abstract: No account of the contemporary relationship between landscape and identity can afford to ignore the impact of globalization. Understanding the intricate imbrications of space and subjectivity increasingly requires a global perspective. This essay examines tensions in the global imaginary as they are articulated in William Gibson’s novel, Pattern Recognition (2003). The framework for this reading is taken from Arjun Appadurai’s essay, ‘Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy’ (1990), in which he divides the ‘imagined worlds’ of globalization into five overlapping categories: ethnoscapes, financescapes, technoscapes, mediascapes and ideoscapes. The heroine of Gibson’s novel, Cayce Pollard, moves across and into each of these -scapes and finds herself positioned precariously in a complex economy of global flows: a node in the network of people and power, finance and commodities, art and machines, images and information.

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In the end, William Gibson's novels are all about sadness - a very distinctive and particular sadness: the melancholy of technology. On the opening page of Pattern Recognition we are introduced to one of its central ideas, a "theory of jet lag". Pattern Recognition very much wants to be a novel of ideas. And the ideas it is concerned with are those of what Gibson sees as our po-mo Logo/No Logo world. The familiar idea of simulacra is put forward by marketing mastermind Hubertus Bigend (some SF habits, like the overnaming of characters, die hard). "Everything, today, is to some extent the reflection of something else." Much of William Gibson's novel Neuromancer is centered around cyberspace, or the matrix as it is alternatively called, the representational innovation for which his work has become famous. It is first defined for the reader via the narration of a children's educational program: "Cyberspace. Pointing toward his troubled call for cognitive mapping, the spatial metaphor Jameson invokes here is richly suggestive; for, in trying to think the totality, the postmodern novelist encounters a more immediate problematic, which, as Jameson notes, operates as an analogue of the totality, and that is the metamorphosis of space itself. In Williams's reading, the city always presents itself as a space of sublimity. 'It is always another world': mapping the global imaginary in William Gibson’s Pattern Recognition. IN: Berberich, C., Campbell, N. and Hudson, R. (eds.) Land & Identity, Theory, Memory, and Practice. The heroine of Gibson’s novel, Cayce Pollard, moves across and into each of these -scapes and finds herself positioned precariously in a complex economy of global flows: a node in the network of people and power, finance and commodities, art and machines, images and information. Description: This is a chapter from the book, Land & Identity: Theory, Memory, and Practice. The publisher's web page is at: http://www.rodopi.nl/senj.asp?BookId=SPATIAL+13. Version