

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

MAPPING IMAGINED REALITIES:
NAVIGATING THIRDSAPCES
IN *1982* AND *A GIRL MADE OF DUST*

by
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A thesis
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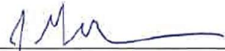
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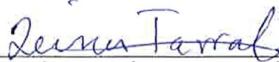
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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

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Title: Mapping Imagined Realities: Navigating Thirdspaces in *1982* and *A Girl Made of Dust*

The aim of this thesis is to analyze how the spatial aspects and imagined realities of different cultural productions highlight their characters' developments. The primary sources analyzed are Oualid Mouaness's film *1982* (2019) and Nathalie Abi-Ezzi's novel *A Girl Made of Dust* (2008). The narrated events in both works take place during the Lebanese Civil War, especially in 1982, and they tell the story of Wissam and Ruba respectively who are child protagonists navigating their complex environments which are their fictional spaces. The theoretical frameworks I use are Edward Soja's theory of Thirdspace and a combined theory of magical thinking based on different psychological theorists such as Jean Piaget, Jacqueline Woolley, and others. The thesis also conducts a spatial reading of both mediums that creates spatial maps that demonstrate how space is depicted.

The Thirdspaces discussed in the thesis are a combination of the tangible and material elements, the Firstspaces, with the mental and emotional aspects, the Secondspaces. Hence, the Thirdspaces become a lived-in space that reflects Wissam's and Ruba's developments. Moreover, magical thinking is a psychological coping mechanism that the child protagonists use to protect themselves and comprehend the brutality of the war around them.

This thesis explores how magical thinking remains persistent in Wissam's Thirdspaces showing that he remained the same throughout the film. However, Ruba gradually loses her magical thinking in her Thirdspaces as she becomes more aware of her reality which leads one to infer that she evolved in the novel. I argue that the Thirdspaces in *1982* and *A Girl Made of Dust* highlight the child protagonists' characters' developments respectively marked by Wissam's retention and Ruba's loss of magical thinking.

The spatial maps present further insights into both mediums and into the characters' developments. They illustrate how Wissam and Ruba navigate their Thirdspaces and move in different directions from one another. Wissam's linear movement shows a zoom-out effect that suggests that the story is not focused on his development, while Ruba's shows a zoom-in effect that suggests a reflection towards her inwards state.

Therefore, this comparative study between the novel and film uncovers parallels and divergences between their characters' developments in correlation to the established Thirdspaces and the presence as well as the absence of magical thinking elements.

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To both of my jeddos who were both once writers, Jeddo Ramez and Jeddo Tony, for genetically predisposing me with their love for art, literature, and culture.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Imagined realities are spaces used in cultural productions to provide a stage for the events of a story to unfold and for the characters to navigate through. In film and literature, spaces are used to model the reality of the world that the director or writer is trying to convey to their audience. Since these spaces are used in fictional stories and are constructed based on the writer's and director's imagination and creativity, they become classified as an imagined reality. Therefore, space is established as an integral element and a fundamental lens used in novels and films to explore storytelling aspects and the development of characters. Lebanese literature and films often portray imagined realities based on real historical and cultural events as well as on constructed thoughts, feelings, and the interactions of fictional characters. In Lebanon, history books that are used in schools abruptly stop after World War II and fail to bring to life significant events that happened after, especially the Lebanese Civil War that lasted fifteen years from 1975 to 1990. Selma Porobić, an international humanitarian scholar, states that the post-war generation, specifically those born after 1990, fail to receive "a coherent (or any) war narrative from their parents" (258). Therefore, a history gap is created for the younger generation which forces the arts such as literature and film to come forth to combat the collective amnesia of the civil war as well as deal with the underlying issues that were left unresolved.

Any country that witnessed a war-filled past suffers from the trickling remnants of its trauma that are still embedded in its culture. According to human activist Ariel Dorfman, many decide to move on from these events by smoothing over the truth of a

traumatic event, not bringing it up, and giving the people of the country the assurance that the past is gone without mentioning it anymore, which are all ways to “falsify and disdain human experiences” (353). Although it might provide peace for the country for a short while, in the long run, it causes the emergence of “conflict and pain” for the people in the community and freezes both “its maturity and growth” (353). Therefore, the need to revisit wars and collective traumatic events within cultural productions such as novels and films arose from the necessity to understand the past and its human experiences. Cultural productions tend to record war “in a manner in which they are lived, felt, used, and transformed by participants” (Brosman 86). The same notion applies to Lebanese literature and film as these mediums allow the younger generation to learn about their history from a humanitarian and nationalist perspective as it brings forth the context of the war through stories of and by the Lebanese people and not political ideologies. So, literature and film become a link to connect with Lebanon’s history and understand the nation’s identity.

Novels and films are also vessels for writers and directors to tell their stories as they “offer a way to ‘make sense’ of our experiences” (Berman 109). The film *1982* by Oualid Mouaness, released in 2019, and the novel *A Girl Made of Dust* by Nathalie Abi-Ezzi, released in 2008, tell war stories that focus on the characters’ growths and on their communities rather than provide accurate historical representations. This thesis will focus on these two primary sources to explore their imagined realities and establish a connection between their Thirdspaces, based on Edward Soja’s sociological theory, and the protagonists’ developments based on the presence or absence of magical thinking rooted from the different psychological works of Jean Piaget, Jacqueline Woolley, and others. The research question I raise relates to how imagined spaces are

used in cultural productions to depict how the child protagonists develop and progress in the narratives. To be able to answer my research question, I will first illustrate two theoretical frameworks which are Soja's theory of Thirdspace under spatial theory and magical thinking which is a combination of various psychological studies but mainly focuses on Piaget's and Woolley's works. These theories will be elaborated on and used as a guide to read closely and view the novel and the film. I will also conduct a comparison to interpret the Thirdspaces in both mediums and discuss how the protagonists keep or lose their magical thinking throughout the narratives. I will then highlight how navigating through Thirdspaces and the differences in navigation between the two stories convey the presence or lack of character development for the different child protagonists. The following chapter will further expand on the two primary sources, the theoretical frameworks used to conduct a close analysis, and my argument statement that will be further elaborated in the consecutive chapters.

A. *1982* and *A Girl Made of Dust* within Other Lebanese Cultural Productions

War is a topic that pulls an audience and, thus, becomes a profitable theme for the publishing and film industries. Post-war Lebanese cultural productions include novels and films that portrayed the civil war after 1990. *1982* and *A Girl Made of Dust* are classified as post-postwar cultural productions because they were also released after the summer 2006 Lebanon-Israel War. Although more than a decade separates the release dates of these two works, they echo one another in terms of themes. The following section will further elaborate on where the film and novel present themselves in the timeline of their respective industries.

In the Lebanese film sector, Lina Khatib claims that post-war Lebanese cinema was inaugurated in 1998 by Ziad Doueiri's film *West Beyrouth* which portrayed characters using a dialect resembling the Lebanese people and community as opposed to the more popular Egyptian movies that were heavily broadcasted at the time (xv). Although many other films came before *West Beyrouth*, it was this film that encouraged the production of similar films such as Randa Sabag's *The Civilized* (1999), Danielle Arbid's *In the Battlefields* (2004), and Josef Fares's *Zozo* (2005). Khatib states that "Lebanese cinema is still haunted by the civil war [...] and it is difficult to imagine a time in the near future where Lebanese cinema does not represent conflict" (31). This claim still holds true for films that emerged after the Lebanon-Israel War, such as Philippe Aractingi's *Under the Bombs* (2007) and Nadine Labaki's *Where Do We Go Now?* (2011), both of which portray friction and turmoil still present in Lebanon. Although not all films directly mention the civil war, Lebanese cinema reflects on religious pluralism and its difficult coexistence in Lebanon's community (Branco 211). It is important to note that Lebanese films did take on different topics, such as women's issues in Labaki's *Caramel* (2007), drug cartels in Rindala Kodeih's *Legal Hash* (2019), and child abuse as well as poverty in Labaki's *Capernaum* (2018). However, the civil war remains an "inescapable theme" in Lebanese cinema because film is a response to a collective desire for further exploration of wars' effects, be they old or recent (Ayoub 57). Even after all these years, Oualid Mouaness released *1982* in 2019 which directly recounted the events of the civil war and brought forth the topic to be re-lived by the audience. Therefore, Lebanese cinema has never strayed far from the trauma of the civil war and has continued to depict stories representing the Lebanese society's struggles.

As for the publishing industry, there was a surge in literary production after the civil war which “inspired a generation of writers to respond artistically, in a variety of genres, to the destruction of lives, families, institutions and infrastructure” (Hout 1). Lebanese literature consists of a multitude of stories that fall into three distinctive linguistic categories: 1) Arabic, 2) Francophone, and 3) Anglophone literature. The first two are recognized to be older and have been established longer since they were books published before, during, and after the civil war. Writers such as Elias Khoury with *Gate of the Sun* (1998), Hanan al-Shaykh with *Beirut Blues* (1992), and Rashid al-Daif with *Passage to Dusk* (1995), to name a few, were born before 1950 and wrote their novels originally in Arabic. Similarly, there were other Lebanese writers who wrote in French such as Evelyne Accad with *Coquelicot du Massacre* (1985) and Amin Maalouf with *Les Désorientés* (2012). However, the first generation of Anglophone Lebanese literature writers were born between the late 1950s and the early 1970s. Syrine Hout was the first to introduce these writers in her academic work which focused on post-war Anglophone Lebanese literature. Hout describes these writers as children and teenagers who left Lebanon during the civil war and “began writing in the last few years of the twentieth century and [have] not stopped since” (“Will the Lebanese” 3-4). Rabih Alameddine’s *Koolaid’s: The Art of War* (1998), Rawi Hage’s *De Niro’s Game* (2006), and Patricia Ward’s *The Bullet Collection* (2003) are examples of debut Anglophone novels. Nathalie Abi-Ezzi’s novel *A Girl Made of Dust* (2008) also addressed the civil war despite being released eighteen years after 1990 and two years after the 2006 Lebanon-Israel War. The invasion of Israel in 2006 reignited the need to document the war and artistically process successive traumatic events. The 2006 War was “one of the first blogged wars” and “included innovative forms, such as citizen print and

photojournalism, videos, online comic books, and graphic/illustrated narratives” (Hout, “Will the Lebanese” 5). Many novels that dealt with the newer war were also released such as Zeina el Khalil’s *Beirut, I Love You* (2009) and Nada Jarrar’s *A Good Land* (2009). Fourteen years later, Abi-Ezzi published her second novel *Paper Sparrows* (2020) to reflect on the destruction of the 2006 Lebanon-Israel War. Both of her novels are post-postwar narratives, yet both significantly distance themselves in their publication dates from the time of the wars that they reflect on.

Many of these Lebanese authors have even confessed in interviews that “their debut novels wrote themselves and were therapeutic” (Hout, “Will the Lebanese” 4). Since *1982* and *A Girl Made of Dust* are respectively Mouaness’s and Abi-Ezzi’s debut artistic projects, it could lead one to infer that these stories, which have child protagonists around the same age as Mouaness and Abi-Ezzi were themselves in the year 1982, reflect (on) their personal experiences. Since war destroys a community, the interaction with others “is central to a social theory of trauma, where identifications link individual suffering to collective suffering” (Eyerman 38). Therefore, writing about the civil war in novelistic or filmic formats allows the artists to express some of their traumatic incidents that they lived/witnessed and lets them connect with the Lebanese community.

B. Literature Review

1. 1982

Mouaness’s film *1982* premiered at the 2019 Toronto International Film Festival where it received the Netpac Award and was then nominated to represent Lebanon in the Best Foreign Film category at the 2020 Oscars (*L’Orient-Le Jour*). Produced by

Tricycle Logic, About Productions, and Maddog Film, *1982* did not garner a lot of attention when it was first released because of the continuous delay of its premiere due to the COVID-19 pandemic that closed cinemas during that period. Instead, the film was streamed on Netflix and was later on heavily promoted by Mouaness through interviews and collaborations with universities to screen the film on various campuses. The film tells the story of eleven-year-old Wissam who attempts to confess his love to his classmate Joanna at school. In the midst of examinations, teachers attempt to mask their worry and fears in front of their students as tensions rise during Israel's attack on Beirut. Eventually, everyone is forced to flee the refuge of the school to be able to go home to their families, but the film ends before they do so.

There are mainstream sources, especially newspapers and magazines, that have featured reviews as well as interviews with Mouaness discussing the film. In an interview with *National Public Radio (NPR)*, Mouaness states that he wanted the viewer to be Wissam and for them to feel that they could dream while watching the tough narrative (Fadel et al.). He treated the film from a "human angle" as a way to go "beyond the war" and help the audience understand the past to "achieve a better and just future" (Khalaf). *Arab News* criticized the film for its "absence of drama", and the review stated that the short scenes of the war in the film such as "the black smoke at a distance [...] and rolling tanks" were "not enough to underline the tension" (Bhasharan). Nevertheless, the film was praised by *The New York Times* for the way it managed to convey that the war was approaching with "small-scale details" such as the "radio broadcasts [...] and the volume and frequency of aerial noise" (Kenigsberd). *The Washington Post* also added in its review that what makes the film "so subtly effective is its contemplative silences". Mouaness was able to create a film with "naturalistic

rhythms of a story” with nature scenes, magical realism, and chaos to evoke events “that feel like it’s unfolding in real time” (Hornaday). The film’s purpose according to Mouaness was to showcase the “resilience of humanity” and that “love is stronger than war” (Mehanna). Despite all these reviews, there is a lack of academic works that analyze the film through a literary lens. The absence of academic works does present a limitation, but the aim of this thesis is to delve into a close reading/viewing of the film, including its character development, visual and audio characteristics, and spatial dynamics.

2. *A Girl Made of Dust*

Nathalie Abi-Ezzi’s novel *A Girl Made of Dust* was first published in 2008 in England by Fourth Estate. The story follows the journey of eight-year-old Ruba Khouri who is navigating her daily life in war-torn Lebanon. Ruba’s faith in magic and child-like wonder engages the reader to follow along as she uncovers family mysteries, the truth about her village’s “witch”, and how the Virgin Mary saved her all while the Lebanese Civil War continued to escalate leading up to the Israeli invasion in June 1982 and the Sabra and Shatila massacres in September of that year. There are many online reviews for the novel, but unlike the literature review for *1982*, this one will not cover any of these sources because most of them are generic summaries with links to purchase the book. However, one review on *Words Without Borders* is worth mentioning on account of its subtle analysis of the novel. Emma Garman states that the novel is a “visceral depiction of living with war literally crashing on your doorstep” as well as a “poignant family drama”.

There are a few academic sources that analyze the novel from various literary perspectives. A Master's thesis by Nibal Abou Mrad titled, "The Evolution of Images During the Lebanese Civil War in Nathalie Abi-Ezzi's *A Girl Made of Dust* and Zeina AbiRached's *A Game For Swallows*", compares two works by using their images. For *A Girl Made of Dust*, Abou Mrad tracks the images' evolutions in the novel to display "Ruba's growth and gradual loss of innocence" (25). She relies on "visual and symbolic objects" to argue that children's "understanding of their life events relies on... linking these images to their context" (38). In addition, in Hout's book, *Post-War Anglophone Lebanese Fiction: Home Matters in The Diaspora*, the novel is compared to Rabih Alamedinne's novel, *The Hakawati*. There is a book chapter dedicated to this comparison with a focus on child narration and the militarization of Ruba's brother Naji. Regardless, Hout analyzes *A Girl Made of Dust* again in her article "Having the Cake and Eating it Too: The Secret Ingredients of Code-Switching in *A Girl Made of Dust*" with an emphasis on Ruba's development. Hout focuses on code-switching and uses food studies to demonstrate Ruba's emotional development in the narrative. Hout also argues that "food imagery allows the astute reader to see sooner than Ruba how events, things, and people are connected" (88). These three sources have analyzed the novel on the bases of imagery, code-switching, food studies, and child soldiers. Yet, there has not been an analysis of *A Girl Made of Dust* through the lens of spatial theory. This thesis aims to fill this gap presented in the literature review to enrich the scholarly discourse surrounding this novel.

C. Characteristics of *1982* and *A Girl Made of Dust*

The novel and the film focus “not on narrating the war”, but rather on “when, how, and why selected war-related facts and experiences are remembered and by whom” (Hout 13). I chose as my primary sources *1982* and *A Girl Made of Dust*, despite their belonging to different media and genres, due to several similarities in their characteristics all while acknowledging their differences. One of the most prominent parallels between the two stories is that they share a similar temporal and geographical backdrop as well as feature child protagonists who remain within their childhood years throughout the narrative and do not have time to grow to be teenagers. The following section will highlight the relevance in comparing the two stories and the limitations due to their differences.

1. *Geography and Religious Beliefs*

The geography and religious aspects of the film and of the novel are similar in different ways which allow them to be comparable. The main locations for the film and novel are Mount Lebanon which is historically known as a predominantly Christian enclave. Therefore, Wissam and Ruba share the same religious beliefs as “fellow” Christians. This thesis will not focus on the religious aspects of the stories as it would create too big of a scope to analyze. Thus, these two cultural productions share a similar locale as their main events take place in Mount Lebanon away from the direct war zone, Beirut.

During most of the war, especially around the year 1982, the mountains were considered a place of refuge away from the heavy fire that Beirut was experiencing. Even though the novel’s and film’s main plot lines and focus take place in Mount

Lebanon, Beirut is shown in certain chapters or scenes as run-down, beaten, and destroyed because of the war's atrocities. Khatib states that "Lebanese filmmakers are compelled to dwell on the image of broken Beirut, even if the city is not the overt focus of their films" (61).

1982 does not disclose the exact geographical location of its events. The audience can only tell that the school is located on the outskirts of Beirut. It is obvious though that the location of the film is not a constructed set, but a real school. When the end credits roll out, the audience can see that the film was shot specifically in Brummana High School (*1982* 1:39:09). The school showcases an upper-middle class private school that seems well-funded due to the presence of an American headmaster, Mr. Brown, and the extracurricular activities shown such as music, swimming, and football as well as the school uniforms and decorated classrooms. On the other hand, Ruba's fictitious village "Ein Douwra" in *A Girl Made of Dust* is a place that does not exist geographically in Lebanon. The narrative describes the village as being surrounded by green forests and located on the mountain overlooking Beirut. The story is told from Ruba's perspective as she describes her village, her house, and the patches of nature that make up her daily space. Ruba's village is described as a middle-class suburbia with local shops and family homes.

2. Temporal Aspects and Age Dynamics

Both stories take place in the year 1982 which is primarily characterized by the Israeli government launching "a massive assault against Lebanon, aimed at terminating the activities of the Palestinian resistance movements and the Lebanese National Movement" (Hayek 63). *1982* portrays only one day, suggested to be June 6th, which

was the day Israel invaded Beirut at the beginning of that summer (Nassour 147). The time frame encompasses one single day which Mouaness stated was his intention “to go back in time to feel the moment the whole country was raped” (“And Now Where To...” 34:20), while in *A Girl Made of Dust*, the story takes place within a year “between August 1981 and September 1982” (Hout 118). Both stories share a similar timeline and depict the same historical event during the civil war. Nevertheless, the primary foci of both stories are not the accurate historization of the political and military events that took place during that time, but rather the portrayal of the young characters’ emotional and psychological developments that they experience in these timeframes.

Age is a relatively important factor to determine the rhythm of a child’s growth, since their age “positions them in relation to expectations about their competences, and their progress through childhood stages” (Woodhead 21). Every age has several general characteristics that categorize a child’s development within their childhood. An eight-year-old such as Ruba is “expansive, evaluative, and peer oriented” as well as tends to “eavesdrop on adults [and] challenge [their] parents” (Hawkes and Pease 322). Their intellectual skills start to take an interest in the past, collections, and dramatic play (323). Meanwhile, an eleven-year-old, such as Wissam, “shows considerable individual variations [and] strives for unreasonable independence” (328). Eleven-year-olds are also “highly critical of adults” and even challenge their knowledge as they become deeply interested in the world about [them]” (328-330). Although Ruba and Wissam have different characteristics because of their age difference, they are still children of/in war who are experiencing a collective social trauma. Additionally, children are not “simply passive beings at the mercy of some social and developmental trajectory” (A. James and

A. L. James 25). They are “social agents who can – and do – take decisions about what kinds of life-style behaviors they adopt” (149). Wissam and Ruba similarly adopt fictional characteristics and incorporate magical thinking into their lives to navigate their worlds.

The differences in temporal aspects and age dynamics are significant because a day vastly differs from a year, and an 11-year-old is much older than an 8-year-old. These differences create a limitation in the comparison that should be acknowledged in the thesis. However, while acknowledging these differences, I contend that each medium is a piece of art in its own right and can be subjected to interpretation. Both the film and novel portray stories that take the viewer and reader respectively on the characters’ journeys, and thus can be analyzed and compared with one another.

3. Types of Children and Gender Roles

There are children in Lebanese literature portrayed as child soldiers who took part in armed conflicts and carried weapons during the civil war. These children were often “boys of lower class” who were expected to work which included “soldiering” to support their families (Bramwell 28). In *A Girl Made of Dust*, Ruba’s father was homebound which “worsened the family’s finances to the point of making leaving the country impossible” (Hout 119). Ruba’s brother Naji, two years her senior, gravitates towards a group of older boys who are already in the militia which reinforces the notion of becoming a child soldier to seek financial support. Although Naji does not officially become a child soldier, exposing him to Phalange ideology establishes him as a child victim-soldier which “stunts his emotional and mental growth” (127). Although Naji and Wissam are both boys and close in age, I chose to compare Ruba to Wissam

because of how they act in their narratives. Naji is preoccupied with the war and inserts himself in situations that bring him closer to the action such as collecting bullet shells and sneaking out to hang out with his older friends in the militia. While Wissam thinks about how he will tell his classmate Joanna that he loves her and focuses on his drawings. Ruba is interested in playing in her village and cares about what is happening with her friends and her family. Therefore, Wissam and Ruba are similarly preoccupied with their daily lives, concerning their family and friends, and are not necessarily focused on the civil war.

There are also children who experience war by witnessing violence from a distance such as being “exposed to the periodic shelling of their communities” and witnessing “the intimidation or injury of family members” (Macksoud and Aber 82). Wissam and Ruba belong to this category since Wissam belongs to a higher middle-class tier of children and Ruba is a girl. Ruba witnesses her brother Naji being shot and hears escalating mortar shells exploding. Moreover, Wissam hears bombs, witnesses firefighter planes, and looks out on the destruction of Beirut. The public perception of children in war “identifies them as complete victims” and as “civilians” (Bramwell 24). Therefore, Wissam is protected by his social class and Ruba by her gender, two factors which portray them as the same type of children who witness the civil war but do not directly participate in it. The difference in gender between should be acknowledged but should not be a limitation in this analysis because the two children represent a similar type of child as normal civilians immersed in their daily lives while the Lebanese Civil War rages around them.

D. Theoretical Framework

1. *Spatial Theory*

a. Background

It is crucial to differentiate between space and place which are often used interchangeably. The concept of space is viewed as a general term that mostly refers to the abstract dimensions of a location within a story. On the other hand, place refers to more specific attributes of a location. Yi-Fu Tuan states that “place is a type of object... [which] define[s] space” (17). Places and objects then become points of interest that catch the viewer’s eye within the abstract space that is experienced (161). Space is also experienced “directly as having room in which to move” and “as the relative location of objects [...] as the area defined by a network of places” (12). Space is constructed by the presence of places and their relations to one another. Henri Lefebvre also defines space as “not a thing but rather a set of relations between things (objects and products)” (83). Space becomes an atmosphere in which people, events, and surroundings co-exist with one another.

Gaston Bachelard first introduced the theory of literary space in *The Poetics of Space*, which highlights the emotional and personal expressions in response to space in literature. Bachelard applies his analysis to poetry, but the theory could also be applied to all forms of cultural productions, such as novels and films. The theory focuses on intimate spaces which are portrayed to be part of a “psychic state” (Bachelard 72). Bachelard’s work focuses on internal spaces and states that “we do not live in a homogeneous and empty space” but in “a space thoroughly imbued with quantities and perhaps thoroughly phantasmatic as well” (qtd. in Foucault 2). Michel Foucault argues that this definition for internal spaces is also applicable to external spaces that have a

“set of relations by which a given site can be defined” (3). Therefore, the internal and external spaces overlap with one another based on the inhabitants’ reflections, desires, and relations to these spaces.

Moreover, space is characterized by representing a physical aspect while also experiencing a social position. Physical space is characterized by the ability of “individuated bodies [to be] – like things – situated in a locus” (Bourdieu 11). It is the space that a character inhabits physically and can interact with its locale and the other objects that exist in that space. On the other hand, “social space is an invisible set of relationships which tends to retranslate itself [...] into physical space in the form of a definite distributional arrangement of agents and properties” (12). The social space depicts the role of its inhabitants and places them in a social position within their community. Pierre Bourdieu argues that the social space is indivisible from the physical space because the latter is the space that people directly/physically occupy which ultimately represents their social standing. The social roles the occupants of the space take on become their characteristics and hence become their identifiers. The disruption of the physical space is then a direct disruption of role requirements that leads to the disruption of the organizational structure of the society occupying the social space (Bourdieu 16).

b. Thirdspace

External and internal spaces as well as physical and social spaces create a type of binary duality that was a concept mostly discussed in post-colonial studies. One of the most prominent critical theorists in this field is Homi K. Bhabha who first used the term Third Space in 1994 in his article titled “The Commitment to Theory”. He claimed

that “nationalities, ethnicities, and identities” are characterized by “hybridity” which in turn “emerges from Third Space – as what is new, neither the one nor the other” (Leitch et al. 2351). His theory draws on “language, structuralism, and deconstruction”, and he uses the term hybrid as a “synonym for cultural multiplicity” (Parker 296-297). Bhabha’s article focuses on the individual more than on Third Space, but he does claim that Third Spaces are located within “in-between forms of supposed difference” (Hollinshead 124). Bhabha established the foundational theory of Third Space, but in subsequent research Edward Soja extended the theory by introducing Thirdspace (one word as opposed to two) in the urban geography field and delved deeper into its intricacies.

Edward Soja was an urbanist, a postmodern political geographer, and an urban theorist whose work predominantly focused on geographical regional development as well as spatiality of social life. He published various books such as *Postmodern Geographies* (1989), *Postmetropolis* (2000), *Seeking Spatial Justice* (2010), and *My Los Angeles: From Urban Restructuring to Regional Urbanization* (2014). Despite his extensive repertoire, this thesis will primarily focus on his theory of “Thirdspace” that was proposed and introduced in his 1996 book *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real – and – Imagined Places*. The term “Thirdspace” is used “to refer to a particular way of thinking about and interpreting socially produced space” (Borch 113). Its definition falls in the binary nature of space between its material and mental aspects which combine to propose a hybrid space that is a product of the intersection of the real and the imagined. The exploration of space is then triangulated into three spaces which Soja claims to be “perspectives” as in “different ways in which observers look at and interpret space” (Bosch 114). Soja’s work is heavily based on Lefebvre’s book *The*

Production of Space and its three concepts that allow space to be produced. The first focuses on “spatial practice” which is defined as the “perceived space between daily reality and urban reality” (Lefebvre 38). Soja redescribes this space as “Firstspace” to encompass the “materialized, socially produced, empirical space” as it is “open to accurate measurement and description” (66). The second concept is “representations of space” which is a “conceptualized space” (Lefebvre 38). The conceptions of this space tend “towards a system of verbal (and therefore intellectually worked out) signs” (39). Soja ties the conceived space to the term “Secondspace” to describe this space as “the relations of production” and a “mental space” that is the “primary space of utopian thought and vision” (67). The third concept is named “representational spaces” in Lefebvre’s book and “spaces of representation” in Soja’s *Thirdspace*. Although the naming differs, the definitions remain the same in both works. Lefebvre describes the third concept to be “space as directly *lived* through its associated images and symbols, and hence the space of ‘inhabitants’ and ‘users’” (39). Soja defines the lived space as “Thirdspace” which combines “the real and the imagined, things and thoughts on equal terms” (68). Thirdspace becomes “a product of ‘thirthing’ of the spatial imagination” that “draws upon the material and mental spaces of the traditional dualism but extends well beyond them in scope, substance, and meaning” (11). Therefore, Thirdspace combines Firstspace (the material objects) with Secondspace (thoughts about the space) to create a newly designed space that is lived in and experienced.

In addition to linking Soja’s work with Lefebvre, Soja also relates Thirdspace to Foucault’s work in *Of Other Spaces* since Soja claims that the way “heterotopology” is described resembles his definition of Thirdspace (154). Foucault describes space as a “luminous illusion of transparency” that sees spatiality “as a dematerialized mental

space” and a “realistic illusion of opacity [...] which reduces spatial reality to empirically definable spatial practices, material, or natural objects” (Foucault 23; Soja 157). In his definition of space, Foucault focuses on the real and the imagined but additionally “opens his search for ‘other spaces’” which reinforces Soja’s notion of “critical thirding-as-Othering” (Soja 157). Soja states that “Foucault defines *heterotopias* in a conceptualization that resonates with what might be called the micro-site geography of Thirdspace” (157). Soja does admit that “Foucault’s heterotopologies are frustratingly incomplete”, but it is this “ambiguity that keeps Thirdspace open and inclusive rather than confined and securely bounded” (162). However, it is this ambiguity and vagueness as well as Thirdspace’s broad and all-encompassing paradigm that cause the theory to be difficult to operationalize.

Although Soja intended the theory of Thirdspace to be used in his field of study related to urban planning and geographical development, his theory has already been applied to the humanities. Few works of Lebanese literature such as Nada Jarrar’s novel *Unsafe Haven* (2016) and Jawdat Haydar’s poems in *Voices* (1986) and *Echoes* (1998) use Soja’s theory of Thirdspace. These analyses focus on how the spaces in literature, which are in this case Lebanon, fit in the mold of Soja’s Thirdspace theory. Luma Balaa argues that Jarrar’s novel views Lebanon as a Thirdspace “journeying between an imagined, utopian, picturesque, organized, structured space and a realistic, factual, and vulnerable space” (32). Jarrar’s novel oscillates between two contrasting stories about “the present Lebanon: a haven and a ‘geography of fear’” (Khalaf qtd. in Balaa 35). Thirdspace is predominantly lived in by the character Hannah who “resides in the midst of her geographical space, her imagined personal space, and the factual atrocities in her country” (36). The ambiguity of viewing Lebanon as home (safe space/the imagined)

and a warzone (fearful space/the materialistic) at the same time juxtaposes Hannah's reality with her imagination and places her in Thirdspace. In addition, Emile Whaibeh and Elie Mattar use Thirdspace in Jawdat Haidar's poems from *Voices* and *Echoes* to understand the reconstructions of Baalbeck's and Lebanon's spaces. In his poem, Haidar "dynamizes the place" as well as mystifies the space based on the speaker's emotions to create a "self-conscious reconstruction" of Lebanon (Whaibeh and Matta). In another poem about Baalbeck, the speaker juxtaposes the space as "the city of gods, and Baalbeck, the touristic location". The description and "depiction of Baalbeck" merged "with the imagination of the poet and the mythology linked to the place to create a Thirdspace that captures its dynamism" (Whaibeh and Matta). Therefore, these sources use the theory of Thirdspace to look beyond the hybridity of spaces and create a new in-between. Nevertheless, this thesis will go beyond simply explaining the spaces in *1982* and *A Girl Made of Dust* and apply Soja's theory of Thirdspace to highlight how the characters in each story are developing.

2. *Magical Thinking*

In addition to Thirdspace, this thesis relies on a combination of theories on magical thinking to be able to explore the cognitive mind of a child during their psychological development. The term "magical thinking" was first established by Jean Piaget, a Swiss psychologist, who closely related this concept to that of "animism" which is "the belief that objects have lifelike qualities" (Piaget and Inhelder 95). He even characterized children's thoughts as "illogical and irrational" which correlates with the notion of magic as it is something that is not definite (Rosengren and French 43). However, later studies have shown that children are not "globally poor at making the

distinction” between real and fiction as much as scholars have claimed (Woolley and Ghossainy 1496). Jacqueline Woolley, a professor of psychology with interests in fantasy-reality differentiation, claims that children are skeptics who do possess the skills to determine what is real and what is not starting from the age of three. The “different aspects of people’s situations will favor or elicit different ways of thinking” in a child’s mind to be able to process and decide between what is real and what is fictional (1497). Woolley also argues that “when children encounter an event that violates their expectations and for which they lack a physical explanation, they will attribute it to magic” (qtd. in Woolley and Cornelius 68). Magic becomes an answer to all that is ambiguous and strange which suggests that magical thinking is used by children as a coping mechanism.

Moreover, magical thinking involves “endowing the subjective self with the properties of the objective world” (Rosengren and French 50). It was also interpreted as a relationship between thoughts and things in situations in “which children believed their thoughts could alter reality” (Rosengren and French 44). Therefore, children’s processes integrate their beliefs in fictional characters and fairytales into their reality to be able to protect themselves from traumatic events such as a civil war. The lack of knowledge of a new environment and the developmental inability to cope with it causes fear and worry to arise within a child (Hawkes and Pease 189). Disintegrative responses that are “detrimental to the individual” also become present “in isolated periods of environmental stress such as war” (186). These feelings and responses then force the child to seek comfort through other methods, such as magical thinking. Myriem El Maïzi also states that the “poetics inflicted by youth blurs reality and fiction”, but eventually when the naked reality of the war erupts, it becomes “inseparable from the

loss of childhood” (qtd. in Hout 118-119). Magical thinking is viewed as “a universal aspect of a child’s cognition”, and it gradually fades as the child develops and matures by interacting with reality until magical thinking is “driven farther and farther out of the child’s mind” (Rosengren and French 48). As a result, as the child’s development progresses, their magical thinking starts to fade. Accordingly, if the child is not developing, then their magical thinking remains present and consistent.

The development of a child consists of moving through different life phases to eventually reach adulthood. In recent years, a distinction for the concept of childhood was established to be “seen as a particular cultural phrasing of the early part of the life course” (A. James and A. L. James 13). The developmental paradigm defines children as a human in “a state of ‘not yet being’”, viewed as “‘potentials’ [and] a ‘project in the making’” on their journeys to become “mature, rational, responsible, autonomous” and thus reach “adult competence” (Woodhead 27). Therefore, the concept of childhood becomes linked with “innocence which is equated with purity, naivety, selflessness, irrationality, and a state of unknowingness” (Robinson 42). This notion then claims that the more the child knows, the more they mature and leave behind the theory of innocence. The world and a child’s surroundings are the primary factors for the child to grow and develop. Martin Woodhead claims that children actively engage with their “physical and social environments, constructing cognitive models to make sense of the world” to be able to gradually increase their “intellectual and moral understanding” (22).

Jenny Nissel and Jacqueline Woolley propose that “imaginative fictions provide an outlet for exploration that is useful precisely when an individual's sense of external safety is threatened”. Despite loosely defining “imaginative fictions” as books and

stories, Nissel and Woolley also integrated into their claim the thought of fiction and applied it to reality such as a child dressing up as a character and believing they are them. Therefore, “fiction with imaginary worlds” serve as an “outlet for simulated exploration” and provide “psychological distance and deep processing [...] to uniquely confer adaptive outcomes in the real world” (Nissel and Woolley). This application of magical thinking helps the child to continue to function in their social space.

Additionally, traumatic situations that evoke fear and anxiety such as a civil war cause individuals to lose their sense of control over their space and circumstances. As a result, “when individuals are unable to gain a sense of control objectively, they will try to gain it personally” (Whitson and Galinsky 115). People tend to return to “illusory pattern perceptions” which include “images in noises, forming illusory correlations [...] developing superstitions” to be able to “make sense of events and develop predictions for the future” (115). The fictional characters that children choose to believe in correlate with them personally and become a subconscious action that they undertake within their imaginative space.

I feel it is crucial to point out that I will not be adopting a singular theory for magical thinking, but rather a combination of studies from Jean Piaget, Jenny Nissel, Jacqueline Woolley, and other scholars to establish this theoretical framework. To apply the theory of magical thinking to film and literature, I will acknowledge how the child protagonists implement magical elements such as fantasy characters, animations, personification, and magical descriptions in the imagined spaces of their cultural productions. Hence, magical thinking becomes a strategy that the characters implement in their stories to be able to cope with the civil war and its brutal reality. In addition, the

presence or absence of magical thinking will indicate if the child's character is developing or not.

E. Argument Statement

Literary scholars note that “space matters not for the trivial and self-evident reason that everything occurs in space, but because where events unfold is integral to how they take shape” (Warf and Arias 10). In the film and the novel, the realistic/materialistic spaces, the Firstspaces, are the fact that the civil war is underway in Lebanon. The imagined/thought-based spaces, the Secondspaces, are how Wissam and Ruba apply magical thinking in their narratives to transform the spaces to adapt to their imagined reality. The Thirdspaces emerge as a blend of the two as it merges the material and concrete reality with fiction and emotions. Conducting a spatial reading of works of fiction offers a deeper and more complex understanding of storytelling mechanisms attempting to convey the protagonists' developments.

I would like to acknowledge that this is not a digital humanities paper which could have included more advanced tools to create a digital rendering of spatial maps for each of these two stories. Perhaps a digital humanities approach could offer further insights into the analyses of different cultural productions. However, I have made the decision to pursue a manual mapping method to reflect my work within the parameters of my current capabilities.

Although the film is a visual medium where the spaces of the narrative are established and portrayed on screen, Appendix I showcases a map of the spaces in relation to one another. I will also be conducting a spatial reading of the novel by establishing a visualized map of the book faithful to its description (see Appendices II

and III). Appendix II portrays a map similar to the one provided for the film in Appendix I, but Appendix III presents the spatial features of the novel in a detailed map. Appendices I and II are maps that use basic shapes such as circles and squares existing within each other. The squares represent the central structures which are the school for *1982* and Ruba's house for *A Girl Made of Dust*, while the circles are the other spaces that surround them. All spaces are individually labeled in the Appendices to demonstrate where they are positioned in the grand scheme of the narrative. Each map also has a blue arrow that points towards the overall linear movement of the child protagonist in their stories. In *1982*, the arrow points outwards to illustrate a zoom-out-like perspective because the characters leave the central space which is the school to go to their homes offscreen. While in *A Girl Made of Dust*, the arrow points inwards to present a zoom-in-like perspective since the characters can no longer leave their house due to heavy shelling, and thus huddle in the house's corridor. These maps convey a basic rendering to visualize the spaces connected to each other in the grand scheme of the narratives in both the film and the novel.

The thesis will heavily rely on close reading and viewing with the use of the theoretical framework of Edward Soja's "Thirdspace" and a constructed concept of "Magical Thinking" by Piaget, Woolley, and others to analyze the film and novel. I am going to argue that the Thirdspaces in *1982* and *A Girl Made of Dust* highlight the child protagonists' characters' developments respectively marked by Wissam's retention and Ruba's loss of magical thinking. As opposed to relying on turning points in the stories to determine how the characters are developing, I will conduct a close analysis on the loss and/or presence of magical thinking in the Thirdspaces to highlight that Ruba goes through a character development while Wissam does not. My argument is further

reinforced by Wissam's retaining of magical thinking throughout the entire story, whereas Ruba gradually loses it as her narrative progresses. Therefore, retaining magical thinking in the Thirdspaces of the film highlights how Wissam does not have a significant character development while Ruba losing her magical thinking in the novel depicts her development.

After establishing the two primary sources, the two theoretical frameworks, and my argument statement, the subsequent chapters will delve into a closer viewing and reading to analyze the Thirdspaces in the film and novel while focusing on the evolution of magical thinking. Chapter two will revolve around the Thirdspaces presented in *1982* and examine key scenes and settings where Wissam retains elements of magical thinking throughout the story. Chapter three will then analyze the Thirdspaces in *A Girl Made of Dust*. This section will interpret how Ruba progressively loses her magical thinking, and thus starts to change her perception. Finally, chapter four will adopt a comparative approach to both cultural productions and showcase how differently Wissam and Ruba navigate their Thirdspaces which then highlights how differently these characters develop and change. This chapter will also rely on the spatial maps, found in the Appendices, that will provide a visual aid to help the reader conceptualize and follow my interpretation of the characters' journeys through their Thirdspaces. Through this structuring, this thesis aims to present a comprehensive analysis of the characters' developments within the Thirdspaces and through the retention or loss of magical thinking.

CHAPTER II

PERSISTENT IMAGINED REALITIES: MAGICAL THINKING IN THIRDSAPACES OF *1982*

When analyzing a novel, a scholar can reread and look at the linguistic elements to close read and infer how its thematic ideas work together within a story. However, thanks to “DVDs and streaming services”, a film is analyzed by “pausing and rewinding” which allows scholars to scrutinize frames, sounds, camera angles, and camera filters (Eisenberg 23). A close viewing of the film allows the audience to study its visual and audio elements that could be “actual places and fabricated creations” (51). The film’s imagined realities become a combination of real as well as constructed spaces that are portrayed on screen to be analyzed.

The film *1982* tells the story of students who are attempting to finish their final exams while the Lebanese Civil War escalates. The story oscillates between the perspectives of the children and the adults, but this thesis will solely focus on objective scenes with an omniscient perspective and the child protagonist’s, Wissam’s, point of view. The film uses Wissam and his friends to display how it is the adults who are initially worried about the war while the children are more concerned about their love interests and exams. Wissam’s best friend Majid even tells him “*Mfakir el hayet metel el aflem?* (Do you think that life is like the movies?)” (*1982* 00:25:01). Yet as the world around them continues to be disturbed by the encroaching war, Wissam integrates magical thinking in his Thirdspaces that combine the material elements and his mental state to be able to process the fear and threat that are present in the story with the escalation of the civil war. However, the film starts and ends with an integration of

magical thinking in its spatial elements which suggests that Wissam remains the same throughout the film and does not go through any character development.

A. Beirut

The film begins with a long distance shot of the coast of Lebanon that is being torn down by the war (1982 00:00:59 – 00:01:10). A grey and dark filter over the scene differentiates this first shot from the rest of the film as it portrays a sense of gloom and destruction. The sound of bombs in the distance is also present. The first shot shows the viewer the coast of Lebanon suggested to be Beirut being attacked by the war as it is well underway. In 1982, the war has been ongoing for seven years now, and the destruction of Beirut is the reality of Lebanon at the time. This scene lasts for ten seconds, and then the film continues by going back in time to begin the narrative. This allows the reader to follow along with the story of Wissam and to reflect on what happened before Beirut was invaded and how it ended up being destroyed. The jump towards a contrasting long distance shot of Mount Lebanon is bright and showcases vibrant green forests, a “picture” that distances itself from the greyness of the rubble of the first shot. The sounds of bombs disappear and are replaced by church bells and birds chirping. A sense of calm and a serene energy takes over the shot to suggest a normal day just like any other.

B. The School

After the opening title shot, the school is introduced with six static medium shots of different places that last for eight seconds each. The places are devoid of children and school personnel. The shots show in order the courtyard, the swimming

pool, the football field, the hallway, the classroom, and the sky (1982 00:02:29 – 00:03:44). These spaces emphasize their materialistic components such as the trees, the water in the pool, the football goal post, the walls, the chairs, the desks, and the clouds. Using an immobile shot establishes the Firstspace to only accentuate the objects and places that form the general space of the school in the narrative. The school's Secondspace generally reflects on children learning, playing, and forming relationships with their peers as well as teachers and administrators. The camera tracks Joanna moving back and forth holding a book and reviewing for her exam then jumps to Wissam whose gaze follows her (00:03:45 – 00:03:56). This exchange in shots suggests Wissam's Secondspace of imagining forming a relationship with Joanna, especially one of love as he later admits to his best friend Majid that he loves her. Wissam's purpose in the film is to tell Joanna how he feels about her and confess his crush. However, Wissam finds accomplishing this task to be difficult in his lived Thirdspace since he never explicitly tells Joanna his true feelings. He uses a note that he hides in her locker with the picture of his fictional character "Tigron" thinking about the words "I want to kiss you" (00:23:25). Wissam integrates magical thinking with reality to be able to express how he feels.

Wissam relies on the fictional character "Tigron", who is based on the Japanese animated television series' main character "Grendizer", in his magical thinking throughout the story. Grendizer was created by Japanese mangaka Go Nagai in 1975 and was internationally popular under different names such as Goldrake in Italy and Goldorak in France and Canada. Nevertheless, he was known as Grendizer in the middle east and was "first show on Lebanese channel Tele Liban in the 1980s" as a fully dubbed cartoon in Arabic (Tashkandi). Grendizer was a giant Robot who fought

off alien attacks and all threats to defend and protect the characters in the series. The animation became an escape for Lebanese children during the civil war and was extremely popular. “Tigron” is used to embody Grendizer in the film and Wissam’s fascination with “Tigron”, whom he describes as “*a’wa* (stronger)” than Grendizer because he has more protective powers, indicates how he makes him feel safe and protected (00:27:43-00:27:49).

The word “Tigron” derives from the combination of *tigre* (tiger) and *lion* (lion) in French. When translated to English, “Tigron” becomes Tigon which is a hybrid animal that is genetically man-made to encompass the characteristics of both tiger and lions which symbolize courage and strength (“Tigon”). Wissam constantly draws him in different scenes throughout the film, and some shots even use a cartoon animation over the image to suggest that Wissam is trying to insert himself in his fictional world. Wissam also draws “Tigron” to reflect himself such as in his love note to Joanna. When Joanna figures out that Wissam has a crush on her towards the end of the film, Wissam introduces her to “Tigron” (1982 01:29:00).. Besides Wissam’s drawings, “Tigron” is illustrated throughout the film with a twinkle that shines briefly on screen accompanied with the sound of soft chimes. The twinkle is seen in the sky (00:22:07; 00:50:45), on Wissam’s drawing (00:27:54), before and after “Tigron” appears at the end the film (01:32:15; 01:34:23), and on “Tigron’s” eye (01:33:16). The constant and sporadic twinkles exhibit that “Tigron” has been present for Wissam in the entire film, and when the situation of the war became extreme, he manifested him from the Secondspace to the Firstspace. The use of a fictional character suggests how Wissam keeps using his magical thinking to block out the reality of the war and to protect himself.

Attempting to establish a romantic relationship in childhood is viewed as an integral part in their cognitive development as they try out, “at a very rudimentary level, adult roles” (Rose qtd. in Rough). Wissam is trying to emotionally develop as he explores his love towards Joanna, but some scenes suggest how reality tries to halt this development. Wissam seeks the privacy of the school bathroom to practice in the mirror how he will tell Joanna that he loves her by repeating the words “*Joanna bhebik* (Joanna, I love you)” in different iterations (1982 00:28:50 – 00:29:18). Wissam cannot reach the bathroom mirror, and thus has to stand on the tip of his toes to barely see his reflection as he proclaims his love. The placement of the mirror high above Wissam’s head suggests that he could be over his head with his feelings that he has not even yet matured to fully experience. His red pen also explodes in his hand staining it with ink (00:29:23). His red-stained hand implies that Wissam is literally caught red-handed trying to grow up faster than he is supposed to, so the action stops him from achieving any growth.

In another scene, Wissam sneaks off to the high school building to find his brother. He gets entranced by someone playing the piano and follows the sound until he reaches the music room to watch the class through the doorway (00:41:25). Wissam is framed in a close-up shot with the door ajar allowing him to look inside as the music class resumes. The door is suggested as the passageway to grow up and move on past childhood which Wissam desires through his longing gaze and his feelings of love. Nevertheless, a teacher spots him and yells “*enta shu `am ta `moul hon?* (What are you doing here?)” and “*enta msh bl elementary?... enta hon bl high school, yalla nzal bser`a* (Aren’t you in elementary?... This is the high school building, go down quickly)” (00:41:42 – 00:42:02). Keeping Wissam outside of the doorway as well as below the

mirror and telling him to “go down” indicates how his reality stops him from growing up as fast as he would like to.

C. The Classroom (1)

A school’s routine and a classroom structure form a sense of safety and protection for a student in their development (Garcia Bacete, et al.). The classroom is a space where this structure is portrayed as students follow the advice and rules of their teachers for guidance and security. The Secondspace of a classroom consists of this power dynamic between teacher and student. The teacher stands up at the front of the class and can freely roam between tables while students have assigned seating and listen to instructions. The Firstspace involves the material objects that are found in the classroom from walls, to desks, chairs, lockers, and chalkboard. When the students are taking the first exam of the day, the Firstspace also includes the sound of Ms. Yasmine’s heels clacking on the classroom floor as she walks up and down the aisles between the desks (*1982* 00:13:14 – 00:13:42). The rhythmic sound is still ongoing even when the camera moves to a long shot of the outside of the classroom that introduces the sounds of birds chirping as well as jets breaking the sound barrier created by distant fighter aircraft and explosions (00:13:43 – 00:14:01). The steady clacks of the heels suggest being a sort of figurative metronome regulating the sounds of the outside world. The Thirdspace suggests that the teacher remains an authoritative figure in her classroom and controls the space for the students to be able to perform their exams as intended.

However, when the classroom structure is broken up by modifying the Firstspace, it creates stress and anxiety for the students which affects their development.

Wissam and his classmates see “*el bwarij* (warships/battleships)” from their classroom window which stops them from taking their exam. The intrusion of the war elements on the Firstspace alters the Secondspace that is based on students’ learning and testing their knowledge within a classroom. Ms. Yasmine no longer has control in the classroom, and the students are no longer focused on the exam but rather testing their war knowledge as Majid explains to Ms. Yasmine that she should not close the windows during missile attacks in order to prevent the glass from shattering (01:01:28). Ms. Yasmine also refuses to allow them to speak and tells them to pay attention to their exam all while yelling “*mafi shi* (There’s nothing)” (1:00:03). Ms. Yasmine’s refusal to acknowledge the warships and the explosions suggests her refusal to help with informing the students about what is going on, and as a result impacts the progression of their development. The sound of a sonic boom of fighter aircraft offscreen interjects itself in the Firstspace and causes the students as well as their teacher to look out of the window “*fi tayaran* (There are aircraft)” (01:00:12 – 01:00:21).

Noises in films function “to hold narrative space and time in place and sometimes to provide an interpretive or affective perspective” (Dyer 241). The sound is so loud that it takes over the scene and the audience is no longer able to hear Ms. Yasmine shouting even though the medium shot focused on her portrays her yelling (1982 1:00:19). The sound fills up the space of the classroom and does not allow for a school structure to exist as it literally drowns out the authority of the teacher and allows only the civil war to project its voice. The Thirdspace becomes a combination of the presence of military devices, the Firstspace, and the concern of the ongoing war, the Secondspace, which ultimately creates a space of anxiety and unrest.

For a child to go through character development, they have to learn more and become less naïve about the reality that surrounds them. However, the teacher Ms. Yasmine and the administrator Ms. Leila try as much as possible to shield the children from the reality of the war. They constantly reassure themselves and the children by stating “nothing is going to happen here (Ms. Leila)” and “*msh `am yo `sfo wala bl Hadad, wala bl Gharbiye. Hon ma fi shi* (They’re not bombing the city of Haddad, nor are they targeting the West. There’s nothing here) (Ms. Yasmine)” (00:49:29; 00:57:02). Refusing to let the children know about what is going on reinforces the notion that by not knowing the children are deemed safer. Nevertheless, the issue of trying to protect the children by keeping them in the dark is that it “does not develop children’s capacities to deal effectively with their experiences” (Erricker 5). These attempts are also futile since the children can see and hear the war. The Firstspace, which is the objectivity and reality of the ongoing war that can be heard in the classroom and seen from the windows, clashes with the Secondspace that is supposed to be a space of learning. The Thirdspace established shows a teacher/administrator dynamic who are unwilling to explain what is going on and negates reality by constantly saying “*mafi shi* (There’s nothing here/happening)”. Although their intentions to help the children not to worry are valid, ignoring the war, limiting their knowledge, and not allowing the children to express how they feel impedes them from using their space to psychologically understand their reality and develop as they should.

D. The Playground

The film uses sound to indicate the presence of an event or action happening offscreen that is not visually portrayed but affects the characters’ space. People are

usually “subconsciously aware of the sources of noise, and from such awareness they construe auditory space” (Tuan 14). For example, after Wissam attempts to tell his classmate Joanna that he has a crush on her, he is left alone in one of the school’s courtyards. We see Wissam in a medium close-up shot as we hear offscreen sounds of bombs, aircraft, and explosions which are “assumed to be in the space of a scene yet remain offscreen while the action takes place simultaneously” (Anglum). Wissam is then centralized in a long shot in an empty courtyard which suggests a feeling of isolation and being left behind (1982 00:19:46-00:19:50). After this scene the camera cuts to a long shot of an empty courtyard which is also a football field. The Lebanese flag is hoisted high on a pole in the middle of the field and screen. These objects categorize the Firstspace in this scene. A playground also suggests a time for play, creativity, and relaxation that forms the Secondspace. Wissam decides to work on his artwork to draw his fictional character “Tigron” in the middle of the field fighting off an alien attack (00:20:28). His drawing produces a parallelism between the reality of Lebanon being invaded and Wissam’s internalization of war through magical thinking. An animation filter slowly takes over the screen, as if it were Wissam sketching and drawing. The animated scene suggests the integration of Firstspace, reality, with Secondspace, what Wissam is drawing, to create the Thirdspace that Wissam is occupying. Thirdspace allows Wissam to comfort himself as a way to escape from the reality of what is going on around him.

The children are given recess breaks between exams to spend time in the courtyards to play sports and converse with one another. The courtyard is a space for relaxation and enjoyment since recess and free play “provide a unique contribution to a child’s creative, social, and emotional development” (Ramstetter et al. 524). These

preconceived notions of how a playground is used constitute the Secondspace. The Firstspace is composed by the objects in the scenes of the playgrounds such as the swing sets, the dirt floors, the fences that define the space, and so on. After Wissam and Majid get in a fight due to a misunderstanding concerning Joanna, Wissam goes over to the football field and joins in the game “*shabeb! `am bel`ab* (Guys! I’m playing)” (1982 00:46:48). During the game, Wissam gets in a shoving match with one of his teammates that eventually leads to a fight within the whole team. Instead of fostering a sense of community with his classmates, the Thirdspace becomes a social and physical space of turmoil that reflects their age-appropriate development.

The students’ recess is abruptly interrupted when they hear and see war tanks passing by the roads that are across from their playground. The appearance of war tanks modifies the established Firstspace of the scene due to the physical interjection of the civil war onto the space. Therefore, the Secondspace shifts to incorporate the thoughts of the children as they might be wondering about the conflict that is going on in Beirut. The children run towards the tanks and forget about their brawl, which shows how the children leave behind the matters that should concern them to witness the war. The Thirdspace is an incorporation of the physical elements of the war and the imagination of the children reflected in their attention shifting from playing to witnessing. The camera cuts to an extreme long shot to show the effects of the civil war taking over the space on the screen as the remains of the fumes of the explosion take up the top half of the screen and the kids watching the tanks take up the bottom half (00:47:02-00:48:37). The hybridity between the reality of the country and its imagined implications on the children causes the Thirdspace to reflect on the shift of dynamic and development for them. Recess ends early, and the children return to class which is seen through a

medium slow motion shot that pushes in while students run up the hallway to their classes (00:51:10 – 00:51:37). A static shot of closed doors in the hallway after the children go back to class remains for twenty seconds on screen (00:51:38 – 00:52:00). The chaotic/excited energy exuded by the kids differs from the camera's slow movements, the music's steady beat, and the changeless hallway to further suggest an internal shift of what might be occurring internally for them after the explicit intrusion of the civil war in the playground.

E. The Parking Lot and Road

When the war progresses too much, the school administration decides to send all of the students home. Ms. Leila claims that for the last seven years since the civil war had started, they had been able to “manage it, but not this year” (1982 01:18:00). A long-distance shot shows the parking lot jammed with cars and buses as students try to find their parents or find their respective school bus (01:09:50). The excess of tangible objects occupying the Firstspace in the scene showcases the commotion of the Secondspace since all the characters are thinking about leaving and going home. Wissam jokes around with Majid in the Thirdspace created and they continue to portray their childish characteristics within their emotional development (1:10:50). Nevertheless, tangible elements of the civil war break into the Firstspace as the camera cuts to an extreme long shot of the sky with fighter aircraft shooting at one another (01:16:17 – 00:16:58). Wissam points them out “*Shuf! Shuf!* (Look! Look!)” while Majid's mom exclaims “*ya `adra `am yet'etalo fo' rasna* (Oh Mother Mary, they're fighting over our heads)” (01:16:16 – 01:16:36). The Secondspace becomes filled with thoughts that the civil war is now well underway, and the fighting is escalating. Wissam

uses the Thirdspace to think about his relationship with Joanna who should be on the bus with him but is instead waiting with her best friend at the secretary's office, "Miss... Joanna lezim tkoun ma`na `al bus (Miss... Joanna should be with us on the bus)" (01:24:10). It becomes a space for Wissam to find courage to seek Joanna out even if that means that the bus will leave him behind and to confess his love for her before the school year officially comes to an end, even though he never does so.

While on the bus ride home, the bus stops on the side of the road with other vehicles gathered to witness the destruction of Beirut which is located right below Mount Lebanon. Wissam, his bus mate, and the adults all see the city of Beirut being destroyed by bombs and missiles that are shown through an extreme long shot (1:31:44 – 1:32:37). A medium slanted shot shows a diagonal angle to view the bus and the missiles shooting at a distance above it (1:31:28 – 1:31:33). The skewed frame visually represents a sense of disorder and suggests a sense of disorientation as well as unease which the characters are experiencing. Joanna asks Wissam "Shu `am bi sir? (What's going on?) to which he replies "Ma ba`rif (I don't know) (1:31:47 – 1:31:52). Wissam visualizes "Tigron" emerging from the ocean and standing over Beirut to protect it in order to protect himself from witnessing a war occurring in front of him. "Tigron" is slowly sketched on the screen which suggests that he is being drawn by Wissam's own imagination. The sun on his chest emblem glows and rises to meet the ocean wave and combine to create an orb that "Tigron" casts over Beirut. The orb deliberately alters the reality that is shown to project what Wissam is imagining and seeing. The orb also obliterates the fighter aircraft that are launching missiles and stops them from inflicting more destruction on Beirut. "Tigron's" protective powers envelop the city in safety and restore the city to its vibrancy with a sunset on its horizon (01:33:25 – 01:34:08). The

Firstspace and reality of what is actually happening to Beirut is erased by the Secondspace and what Wissam wants to happen which he applies through magical thinking. This image suggests that Wissam is trying to end the war in his imagination by using drawings and cartoons to comfort himself. The Thirdspace becomes a reflection of a space of relief and reassurance for Wissam to keep his magical thinking and the presence of “Tigran” alive. Wissam retains his magical thinking throughout the entire story and never once falters to use it as a defense mechanism. This scene suggests how Wissam remains the same and does not go through any character development because he retains the same magical thinking in the Thirdspaces of the film.

F. The Classroom (2)

The film concludes where it started with an empty school devoid of humans. The camera concentrates on two places which are the hallway and the classroom. A medium push-in shot slowly zooms in from the hallway into the classroom. The Firstspace is left in a state of mess with tables and chairs strewn around as well as pens and paper discarded haphazardly around the room and on the ground (01:34:34 – 01:35:30). The mess contrasts with the order and neatness that was portrayed at the beginning of the school day. The scene establishes the Secondspace to suggest that the school was abandoned and that no one will be returning for a while. Pigeons also occupy the space as they make a cooing sound and fly around the room. Wissam first pointed out the presence of these birds around the school “*mn aynta fi hamem bl madrasse?* (Since when do we have pigeons at school?)” (00:10:06). The comment suggests that they were not commonly sighted. Pigeons are usually portrayed in the arts “as a beacon pointing beyond the ordinary, a sign of that elusive ideal for which our

hearts long: freedom and peace” (Allen 129). The pigeons are a sign that this was no ordinary day after all and symbolize the desire for peace despite occupying a disordered space. Additionally, the windows show an animated sunset drawn in postproduction onto the scene to reflect the presence of magical thinking and its lingering effect in the film. The Thirdspace literally shows the real and the imaginative coexisting in one shot.

G. Conclusion

The Thirdspaces in the film are constructed by combining the visual and audio elements on screen with Wissam’s mental and emotional aspects that he attaches to the tangible. The imagined realities are the Thirdspaces that Wissam is navigating through along with his magical thinking that remains persistent throughout the story. This persistence in magical thinking in the Thirdspaces highlights how the imagined realities remain the same and how Wissam does not exhibit any signs of change and does not go through any character development in the story.

Wissam’s perception does not change and neither does his imagined reality because he continues to view “Tigron” as his protector who will help him through all the difficulties that he faces whether that be in telling Joanna that he loves her or by protecting him from witnessing the destruction of Beirut by the civil war. The Thirdspaces in the film suggest that Wissam does not go through any character development as he retains the same magical thinking and continues to navigate his world with the same mentality from the beginning to the end of the film. It suggests how the Thirdspace reflects that Wissam did not go through any development due to the continued presence of magical thinking in the film’s spaces.

The next chapter will similarly examine the Thirdspaces in the novel, *A Girl Made of Dust*, and examine how the protagonist, Ruba, progressively loses her magical thinking which suggests that she does go through character development unlike Wissam.

CHAPTER III

UNVEILING IMAGINED REALITIES: MAGICAL THINKING IN THIRDSAPES OF *A GIRL MADE OF DUST*

Unlike a film, a novel does not have the opportunity to show the audience the space within which its events unfold. Its imagined realities become a “semantic construct built with linguistic structures” (Ronen 421). The spatial concept in the narrative is formed by frames that relate to one another “according to an inherent logic of space, i.e., a topographical order” (435). Appendix III displays the global structure of the space of *A Girl Made of Dust* in detail faithful to the objective description presented in the narrative. The Appendix should be referred to in order to understand where the spaces are distanced and located in relation to one another.

A Girl Made of Dust focuses on Ruba’s life and the events that unfold during the year 1982. Ruba is adamant about discovering what happened to her father that caused him to change and led him to his depressed state. She is also curious about the world around her and wants to play with her brother and friends while the Lebanese Civil War continues to escalate and intensify. When events that are too complicated for Ruba to understand occur, she applies her vivid imagination and magical thinking to her reality. Nevertheless, the magical thinking starts to fade the more she develops throughout the narrative and becomes aware of her reality.

A. Beirut

Despite the events of the novel taking place in “*Ein Douwra*”, the city of Beirut is mentioned as only “twenty kilometers down the road” from the village (Abi-Ezzi 6). In the narrative, Ruba does not visit Beirut, but passes through it on her way to Jbeil on

a school trip and anticipates the experience “to be wonderful” (72). She recalls Beirut’s description from her geography books as “a beautiful Beirut with palm trees and orange-roofed buildings and a glittering blue sea” (72). The colorful imagery is what she associates with Beirut based on what she was told, and thus this description is imagined. The Secondspace is established at first in her mental space as the imagined old Beirut, before Ruba can see the reality of what Beirut has become. The Firstspace contradicts with the mental image of Beirut because Ruba only sees “greyness [...] rubbish” (72-73). The buildings she describes are “bent with black gaps”, filled with “holes where the walls on the right side had fallen away”, and “speckled with bullet-holes” (72-73). The juxtaposition between the mental image and the reality of the space creates a conflict in Ruba as she seems to not even believe that this is Beirut and asks “Naji, when will we get to Beirut?” despite already having passed through it (72). In addition, Ruba uses magical thinking to describe the huge block of flats that has “been burrowed into by giant mice” (73). The Firstspace is formed by buildings being destroyed due to bombings and shelling, but Ruba creates a reasoning for this by applying her imagination, the Secondspace, to lessen the harsh reality. The oppositions of the Firstspace, war-torn Beirut, with the Secondspace, beautiful Beirut, creates a Thirdspace of hybridity which highlights how Ruba’s thinking develops to deduce that “perhaps all beautiful things crumbled this way in the end” and “perhaps something happened that made them change [...] like Papi” (73). The Thirdspace, which combines reality with the imagined, retains Ruba’s magical thinking and suggests that Ruba starts to logically process that an event might have happened to her father that caused him to transform into a lifeless person.

B. The Forest

The forest is first introduced on the first page of the novel by contrasting the inside with the outside. Ruba describes the room in her grandmother's house as "darker and heavier" and contrasts it with the sight of the forest that she views out of her window as "white and light" (Abi-Ezzi 1). The distinction suggests that feelings of freedom, lightness, and positivity are associated with the forest. The Firstspace of the forest is established through the description of the fauna and flora that live there such as "an ant [that] climbed over [Ruba's] sandal", "a centipede wriggled under a stone as [she] passed", and "the pine trees, rock roses, and large anemones" (29-30). The material elements of the forest are vivid and lively and draw Ruba in as an inviting space for her to play. Ruba sees the "cicadas" as life-giving beings because her *Teta* told her once that "each time [the cicadas] stopped [humming] a person had died" (1). The constant hum of the cicadas and their description as beings that "throbbed on and on like blood pumping" (13) leads one to infer that the cicadas are the steady heartbeat of the forest. The Secondspace reinforces how Ruba imagines the forest to be alive, and thus the Thirdspace highlights the emotional connection that Ruba has with the forest. The forest is also where magical elements as well as thinking are presented in the narrative. Ruba finds a "glass eye" that she assumes belongs to the witch who cursed her father by placing the "the evil eye" on him (7). Ruba believes that the old lady in her village, who is her friend's, Amal's, grandmother is a witch to explain to herself why her father is depressed. The magical thinking enhances the imagined space, the Secondspace, and combines with the concrete aspects of the forest, the Firstspace, to create a Thirdspace reflective of Ruba's development. Therefore, the Thirdspace

reinforces the notion that Ruba freely expresses her imagination and feelings in connection with the forest.

As the narrative progresses, the civil war worsens with an increase of shrapnel and the torture and death of the Muslim village boy, Ali. After his death, Ruba goes back to the forest for the last time and buries the “glass eye” that she realizes belonged to him, “Ali had lost [it] in the forest” (212). Burying the glass eye suggests the burial of her magical thinking, and thus showcases how Ruba is aware of her disturbing reality. When she arrives, she “felt something different – something that made the air feel thin and dry” which suggests that the Secondspace of the forest reflects Ruba’s emotional state of being so fragile and lacking her imaginative vitality (212). The Firstspace describes the forest as almost “vanished”, “the trees had fallen away like blades of grass, leaving wounds of red earth”, and “all that was there were two big trucks, their backs piled high with rocks” (212). Ruba also notices that the “cicadas had stopped singing” (212). Thus, the forest had become silent and the constant hum of the cicadas which represents the steady heartbeat of the forest is gone. The Thirdspace created by Ruba’s feelings of sorrow and the disappearing physical elements of the forest highlight how Ruba has become disconnected from the space and has lost her magical thinking because of the traumatic incident of Ali’s death.

C. The High Road

The high road is located on the outskirts of “*Ein Douwra*” above the main road where all the shops of the village are found. On the road, there is a house that belongs to the grandma, Latifeh, of Ruba’s new classmate, Amal. Although Latifeh’s name translates to “nice” in English, Ruba claims that the old lady is a witch and blames her

for cursing her father with sadness, “we’d known she’d put a spell on Papi to make him the way he was” (Abi-Ezzi 7). The witch’s house reflects Ruba’s magical thinking because she believes that the old lady has magical abilities. She goes to her house to “show her the evil eye and tell her straight out to lift the curse off Papi” (67). When Ruba and her friend, Karim, visit the house, they stand outside of the house and peer through its windows. The Firstspace of the house consists of different windows where one of them shows “a kitchen” made up from “a sink, a bucket, a white tiled floor” (68). Ruba describes the space to be “strangely normal” which conflicts with her imagination of finding a witch’s lair. The Secondspace is the mental space that Ruba draws in her mind as a space where the devil was a friend of the witch whom she had “invited inside for a meal” (68). The Secondspace conveys Ruba’s imaginative perception of the house and her magical thinking projected in the narrative. The Thirdspace suggests how Ruba fears the witch, but how she is also trying to gain courage to confront the witch for cursing her father. Since she never talks to the old lady, she tries to punish her by releasing her chickens, “it would serve her right for everything she’s done” (69). The witch’s house reflects how Ruba’s mental space rationalizes her reality to blame someone for her father’s problem.

Ruba revisits the witch’s house with her *Teta* this time who explains that Latifeh was an old friend of hers. This time Ruba enters the house and describes the Firstspace as a large and empty room with sunlight flooding in and a “chair with an *argeel* standing on the floor next to it” (178). She clearly sees the space from the inside and does not apply any magical thinking onto the space, but rather uses her Secondspace to imagine how her mother would react to the space, “Mami wouldn’t like [the small balls of dust]” (178). When she sees the space for what it really is, Ruba rationalizes her

emotions of fear that she experienced when she was with Kareem, “a bubble burst in my head the way it does when you understand something suddenly” (178). She acknowledges that the witch was not a ghost they had seen but was only the old lady with smoke surrounding her as she smoked her *argeel*. The Thirdspace suggests that Ruba is transitioning from magical thinking to a reasoned understanding of the space and the characters associated with it. The witch is no longer referred to as a magical creature, but instead Ruba starts calling her the old lady. Ruba also claims that she “wished the witch really was a witch and that Papi had been cursed” because “a spell could be broken” but “now there was no way to save him” (192). She understands that in reality no one has cursed her father, but he was depressed because of a traumatic event of witnessing a child get killed by a sniper in front of him. Nevertheless, at the end of the novel, when Latifeh lets Ruba’s father rescue Amal to take her back to their house due to the explosions getting closer to “*Ein Douwra*”, Ruba’s father feels cured. Therefore, the old lady gives him a reason to feel better and to redeem himself for not being able to save the other girl “made of dust”.

D. The Main Road

Down the slope after the high road and atop of the hill from Ruba’s house, the main road is the central space of “*Ein Douwra*”. It is where all the businesses of the village such as the nut shop, the Khouri’s shop for pots and pans, and the church are located. As the narrative progresses, the events of the civil war escalate with an increase of “mortar shells” exploding, and the earth constantly shaking from the aftershock of explosions (Abi-Ezzi 138).

Ruba and Naji are no longer allowed “beyond the veranda [of their house] unless it was to go to Teta’s” (139). Nevertheless, due to Naji’s rebellious nature, he decides that he wants to go to the church to fly his kite on the veranda there instead of staying home, and Ruba follows him. The church’s veranda is described as a space that wraps around the church from the outside (139), and it is where Naji and Ruba try to play by flying their kite despite feeling no breeze (140). The wind suddenly picks up, and the kite described by Ruba’s imagination as a “paper bird” swoops up, but crashes against the church’s wall, foreshadowing how the children are about to crash against their reality. A “gunship helicopter” cuts through the main road “using the buildings as cover from the militia in the valley” (142). The Firstspace describes the aspects of the space that are based on reality, and thus the helicopter is located close to the railings of the church’s veranda where “Naji could have reached out and touched it” (143). Ruba’s description of the helicopter becomes the Secondspace where she applies magical thinking to the narrative as she paints the helicopter to be “a black metal giant, roaring the whole time” as well as “a bee” (142-143). She sees the helicopter in the Firstspace with a “big propellor at the top” and a “green tail”, but then she admits that the way she saw it changed “because now [she] was looking at two round glass eyes and it was an enormous bee with a dozen stings [...] whirry metal wings” (143). Her magical thinking is applied to be able to process how she reacts to the gunship, but she quickly loses it because the magical thinking flickers off and “it became a helicopter again” (143). The Thirdspace suggests how Ruba’s development is propelled forward because of how quickly her magical thinking fades away. She feels guilty for being in a space she was not supposed to be in, “they caught us” (143). Naji and Ruba run away from the main road and head home as the gunship helicopter starts “shooting the missiles” (144). The

civil war imposes itself on the main road and forces the Firstspace to take over the Secondspace which creates a Thirdspace that reflects how the brutal reality crashes into Ruba's emotional and mental spaces.

Furthermore, the torture of a bird and the death of Ali are two unsettling events that Ruba witnesses and learns about consecutively while occupying the main road. In front of "a wall marked with bullet holes", Ruba sees a group of boys and girls tying a brown bird to a metal pole and releasing a black cat to devour it (207). The bird attempts to fly away, but is jerked back by the string, "round and round it flew, its twittering faint among the laughter" (208). The Firstspace demonstrates a group of children torturing a bird for their entertainment. After seeing this, Ruba becomes paralyzed, "I couldn't move", but regains mobility once she can no longer see the space of torture, "blocking my view, I could move again" (208). Ruba's mental space, the Secondspace, that emerges from witnessing the bird suffer physically immobilizes her. The Thirdspace then suggests that the material space is too traumatic which halts her mental space from being able to develop. Once the Firstspace is blocked, her emotions take over and she expresses that she wants to "scream, knock them all down, and stamp on them" (209). Ruba is able to acknowledge her reality and expresses her emotions internally rather than resorting to magical thinking that she usually uses to rationalize her surroundings.

In literature, the imagery of a bird "presages danger or death" (Schwartz 497). Therefore, torturing the bird foreshadows the fate that was determined for Ali that eventually leads to his death. Ruba's mental space drifts away from the bird scene when she sees that the main road is emptier than usual. The Firstspace of the road is described as "streaked with brown and red" while villagers threw buckets of water that "lifted the

color a little” (Abi-Ezzi 208-209). The old man next to Ruba weeps and declares that “they killed innocence” because “God is asleep and having nightmares” (209). After realizing that Ali is dead, Ruba feels that the “air was pinched and black” (209). The statement suggests that her mental space is described to be constricted, uncomfortable, and gloomy. The Secondspace also represents the villagers’ shared perception of the unfairness of the incident as they work to wash away the blood-stained road. There is no mention of any magical thinking elements in the space to alleviate the description of Ali’s gruesome death. Therefore, the Thirdspace suggests how Ruba has developed to come to terms with the truth of the civil war. It combines the material aspects of blood and an empty road with her emotions of grief and sorrow to create a space reflective of how she is forced to evolve in a war-torn village to accept the truth of killing an innocent civilian.

E. The Scrub

The scrub in the narrative is a patch of greenery located above the main road and is first introduced when Ruba, Naji, and Karim go there to “hunt for snails” (Abi-Ezzi 113). There is no detailed description of how the scrub exactly looks like other than consisting of “grass”, “trees”, and “stones” (113). According to the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, scrub means “vegetation consisting chiefly of stunted trees or shrubs”. Therefore, the Firstspace of the scrub embodies a mini version of a forest that consists of trees and shrubs that have been prevented from developing properly.

The first incident that occurs in the scrub is when Ruba meets Naji’s new militia friends for the first time. While Ruba, and Karim are heading back home after gathering snails from the scrub, they encounter “three boys - two of them [...] were older” and the

third was Naji (Abi-Ezzi 116). They were handling and playing with a “rifle” and shooting at pine trees (116). Then, “the rifle” is pointed at Ruba, “the rifle swept round... to where I was standing, two black holes in the tip of the rifle-stem faced me like eyes” (117). The Firstspace is the reality that a gun is pointed at Ruba, and then she describes the holes of the rifle to be an imagery of black eyes that “grey large – became Amal’s eyes, Papi’s, watching from a place that was dark and silent” (117). The imagery of the eyes becomes the Secondspace in this scene that overcomes the material space with a mental one. The intensity of facing death and the boy’s teasing cause Ruba to run away from the space. She slips and falls onto the bag of snails and breaks them, “the ground came up to meet me. There was a crunch as the bag of snails hit the ground” (118). The Thirdspace emerges from trying to run away from the First- and Second- spaces. Because she falls, it suggests how she cannot escape the development that she is going through. Snails are characterized by being slow-paced creatures, and thus crushing them in the Thirdspace, where she is running back home, leads one to infer that Ruba’s slow development is also crushed. The Thirdspace is also devoid of magical thinking because when she hurts herself, her knee felt “burnt” (119), as opposed to the positive description that she used to describe her injury at the beginning of the novel, “it tickled” (6). The Thirdspace in this scene then suggests that Ruba’s development is accelerated due to the traumatic incident that she experiences of coming face to face with a deadly rifle.

The second incident that happens in the scrub is when Naji runs away from the house and Ruba follows him to “the patch of scrub [...] among the trees” (166). They go to the scrub to watch the celebrations on the main road after Bashir Jumayyil was “elected to become president” (163). The event consists of people expressing their joy

by using guns and bullets, “the black spikes of rifles and lumpier branches of machine-guns poked out of the windows [of cars]” (167). The description incorporates the Secondspace directly onto the Firstspace because Ruba uses nature imagery such as spikes and branches to describe the metal guns. Although guns were being fired on the main road, the scrub is located right at the edge of the road and overlooks that space. Nevertheless, the Firstspace of the scrub is affected as the bullets from the guns fired in the parade made “holes in the tree[s]” (167). Ruba describes the bullets as “wasps” that are “zinging among the trees” (167). The simile of a wasp and a bullet showcases Ruba’s magical thinking, but in a small dose that slowly fades when Naji is hit which causes him to “squeal and fall over” (167). In the Thirdspace created, Ruba becomes unable to “see, hear, or speak” (168), which suggests that Ruba has become temporarily impaired because she is unable to process what is happening around her. There are no elements of magical thinking in this scene other than describing the bullets as wasps which quickly fades because Ruba acknowledges the reality that Naji is hurt. Ruba declares “my brother is dead” when calling for help (169). Her mental space, the Secondspace, coincides with the reality of what is happening, the Firstspace. Therefore, the Thirdspace suggests that the material and mental space are being punctured by bullets and highlights how Ruba’s development is disrupted.

F. The Khouris’ House

At the end of the novel and as the events of the war escalate, the Khouris as well as their neighbors convene at their house located at the bottom of the hill leading to the main road (see Appendix III). The house consists of two apartment buildings where the Rose Man and his two daughters reside on the second floor and the Khouris reside on

the first. These apartments are separated by a veranda that wraps around the Khouris' house. The veranda is also described in the Firstspace where the Rose Man tends to his roses. After Naji is shot, Ruba waits for him eagerly on the veranda to come back home from the hospital. She sees the roses "lit up in the sun" and puts her nose into one and takes a deep breath to smell them which she describes as "candy floss, or honey dropped in cool water" (Abi-Ezzi 184). Her description showcases her magical thinking where the idealization of the rose fills her "slowly with happiness" (184). Her initial perception then shifts to create a Secondspace that shocks her because the roses start to look "like blood-soaked paper, and the sweeter than honey scent was sickly" (184). The Thirdspace correlates with the mental shift to suggest that Ruba is developing and transitions from magical thinking to an emotional state of accepting the reality that her brother was injured.

Ruba's character in the narrative showcases her as a protective daughter who wishes for her father to get better. She daydreams of lifting him from the curse and fantasizes about saving him to return to the person that he used to be. In a scene from the living room, Ruba watches her father sleep on his armchair first "from the doorway, then from the island of the rug" and progresses to move through the space to be next to him (104). She uses magical thinking to describe him as "wet dough" and insists that his "spiky thoughts that pricked him from inside had gone" (104). She establishes a mental space that makes her determined to wipe off the mark from her father's forehead, so, she would "free him; wake him up into the person he used to be" (105). The act of wiping emphasizes how Ruba's magical thinking tries to rationalize that her father's sadness could be simply cleaned or erased. The scene highlights Ruba's character of being a concerned child who wishes to solve her father's problems. Before she is able to

wipe the mark away, her father wakes up, his hand “[springs] up alive”, and “[bites her] hard” (105). Her vivid description and personification of her father’s actions are magical thinking elements that Ruba uses to protect herself from the disappointment of not being able to help her father get better.

After failing to magically save her father, Ruba sits in his armchair located in the middle of the living room. She attempts to occupy the space of her father since “his chair was empty for the first time in weeks” (108). The mental space that Ruba develops makes her think that maybe if she “sat in it [she] would understand” (109). She physically takes on his point of view which becomes the Firstspace as Ruba describes the material elements such as “the kitchen doorway on the far side of the dining room”, “a crack in the corner of the ceiling”, “the vase of artificial flowers” and “the sofa [that] was threadbare” (109-110). The Secondspace establishes that this point of view from her father’s chair “looked funny” and was “different from what it really was” (109). Ruba acknowledges that she “saw things from the chair that [she] had never seen from anywhere else” (110). Her perception of a change in how she viewed the space highlights how the Secondspace shifts when new elements are introduced in the Firstspace. The Thirdspace combines these two to create a hybrid space where the material elements exist because of Ruba’s subjective perception. The way she views her space changes which highlights a changing point in how her character is developing.

When she tries to think and take in the space around her, she finds an envelope describing “the girl made of dust” (111). When Ruba occupies her father’s space, she becomes vaguely aware of what has been troubling him, and when Naji asks her what she is doing, she quickly denies finding anything, “I had told my first lie to Naji” (112). There are no magical thinking elements in this scene which suggests that Ruba is

evolving to become independent from her brother and takes on a realistic ordeal to try to save her father by herself. However, when she lies, “suddenly the chair was uncomfortable” (112). The discomfort she feels reflects her internal conflict of lying which goes against her character. The Thirdspace in this scene becomes a vital space that showcases how Ruba’s perception of reality is evolving as she becomes more empathetic towards her father.

The events of the civil war continue to progress, and Ruba is no longer “allowed beyond the veranda, no matter how hard [she] begged” (131). She becomes limited to the space inside her house, and she describes the Firstspace to consist of “bedrooms, kitchen, dining room, living room, bathroom – and suddenly the flat seemed small” (134-135). Breaking down the Firstspace to tangible material spaces, she feels constricted and uses her imagination to project what she feels like doing such as “pretend to stand on the ceiling” and “running round the white walls like a spider” (135). The constrictiveness of the Firstspace leads to a Secondspace filled with magical thinking that enables a Thirdspace for Ruba to project as a form of escapism from her reality. Her mental space transcends the boundaries of concrete reality and, thus, the Thirdspace shows how Ruba has evolved to use her imagination to cope with existing in a limited material space.

After Ali’s death, “the shelling grew much worse” (213). Ruba retreats to the corridor with her family and neighbors, “we didn’t have a basement, so we sat in the corridor” (213). The corridor is the only room in the house that is not exposed to any windows, which makes it the safest room from shelling and falling shrapnel. The interior of the house becomes “old friends” to Ruba, and she states how she sees the walls and furniture as “the crack running the length of the corridor [...] the hole in the

low chair [...] the loose bathroom doorhandle” (219). Ruba’s description of the space connotes a broken imagery to the material aspects and projects her mental state where she feels that “the house is going to collapse on our heads” (219). The Thirdspace showcases the hybridity of her imagination and the material aspects of the space and how she incorporates them to reach a logical conclusion that there is a chance that an explosion will fall on the Khouris’ house. The material and imagined spaces contribute to Ruba’s evolving perception of the house as a space that the civil war has taken its toll on.

After saving Amal and bringing her back to their house, Ruba’s father thinks that he has saved “the girl made of dust”, because Amal came with a jar of *keshek* that resembles white dust. Two explosions erupt right outside of the house and cause the walls to shake and the characters to be “sent back into the darkened corridor” (233). The tangible elements of the civil war, such as the explosion, literally force the characters back into the corridor. Although Ruba’s space is limited, she finds solace “burrowed in the quiet place where the wall met the floor” and feels “glad” that her father “was no longer a cactus standing motionless in a pot full of dry cracked earth” (236). Ruba becomes grounded in the concrete space of the corridor, and she lets go of her magical thinking. The Thirdspace highlights how Ruba has reached a resilient and realistic understanding of her father as well as of her environment. The corridor filled with the people she loves being all safe becomes a safe space amidst the civil war that allows her to evolve and express her feelings and mental images freely despite being physically limited.

G. Conclusion

Since the novel is told from Ruba's point of view and not from an omniscient perspective, the description becomes subjective for the character, especially as she associates feelings and emotions with her surroundings. Therefore, the Thirdspaces in the novel emerge by combining the objective and the subjective descriptions which are respectively the Firstspaces and the Secondspaces. As the narrative progresses, Ruba's Thirdspaces start to lose their magical thinking in their description, because she becomes more aware of the reality around her, and thus she starts to unveil her imagined reality and views the truth.

Ruba's perception of her world changes as she no longer believes in the witch as well as realizes that people can get hurt and killed such as her brother Naji and the Muslim boy in her village Ali, respectively. She becomes aware of the dangers of the civil war and takes on the role of protector when she steps up to help her father save her friend Amal. The Thirdspaces in the novel suggest that Ruba does go through character development because her views on her spaces change, and her magical thinking fades away at the end of the story.

The next chapter will further compare the film and novel in terms of common symbolism, the different character developments in their stories, and the difference in navigating the Thirdspaces. Chapter four will also discuss how imagined realities are constructed and how the characters' developments are highlighted by the spatial trajectory represented in the film and novel and conceptualized by the spatial mappings in Appendices I and II.

CHAPTER IV

REVISITING IMAGINED REALITIES: A COMPARATIVE EXPLORATION OF *1982* AND *A GIRL MADE OF DUST*

The previous chapters elaborated in detail on how each space in the film and novel establishes their own Firstspaces and Secondspaces to create their Thirdspaces. They demonstrated the Thirdspaces and explored the presence and absence of magical thinking in tandem with Wissam's and Ruba's developments. This following chapter will now focus on comparing both mediums and navigating the differences in the characters' experiences in the Thirdspaces and magical thinking to reflect their implications on the characters' developments. This section will also elaborate on the symbolism of the eye, the characters' developments, the imagined realities, and the spatial mappings of both mediums.

A. Common Symbolism: The Eye

Both the film and novel integrate the motif of the eye in their stories despite having different connotations related to its symbolism. However, a common perception related to the concept of the eye is that child protagonists are often used as an "effective defamiliarizing device" because they are considered "the Eye among the blind", meaning that they experience the world without being "jaded" with the "customs" of the world (Pinfold 5). Cultural productions use children to tell their stories as perceptive characters who will gain a deeper understanding and perceive the imagined realities of the film and/or novel. Despite this commonality, the theme of the eye in connection with Wissam and Ruba vastly differs in *1982* from that in *A Girl Made of Dust*.

In the film, the eye is introduced when “Tigron” makes its appearance above Beirut to protect it from the aircraft missiles and the series of intense explosions. While Wissam is located on the road viewing at Beirut in a downward fashion, a close-up shot of “Tigron’s” eye with a glimmer in the corner is presented in the scene with a follow-up close-up shot of Wissam’s face and eyes (1982 1:33:14 – 1: 33:16). This parallelism in shots leads one to infer that “Tigron” and Wissam are connected. The glimmer is also associated with “Tigron’s” eyes which reoccurs in other scenes in the film. The audience hears but does not see the glimmer at the beginning of the film amidst the sounds of sirens, aircraft, and explosions (00:00:30). The glimmer is also seen and heard two more times independently in the sky, but only during the second scene does Wissam notice it and pauses to squint at it (00:20:10; 00:50:45). The glimmer is a representation of “Tigron’s” eyes which finally appears at the end when “Tigron” becomes the guardian and protector who emerges amidst the conflict to provide peace and security.

In addition, while the end credits of the movie roll, the audience hears a radio switching channels between different news broadcasts reporting on the Lebanese Civil War. The radio finally settles on the song “The Eye in the Sky” by The Alan Parsons Project that was released in 1982 and plays out till the end of the credits (1982 1:36:17 – 1:40:01). The mention of an “eye in the sky” reflects on the glimmer previously heard and viewed in various scenes and its correlation with representing “Tigron”. The song’s lyrics “I am the eye in the sky, looking at you, I can read your mind” lead one to infer that “Tigron” is Wissam’s protector who is always looking out for him. The eye’s location in the sky also suggests that “Tigron’s” watchful gaze becomes an influence of positivity and a continuous pursuit of peace.

In the novel, the symbolism of an eye is introduced in two forms: linguistically and as a material element. The first is the name of the fictional village in the story which is “*Ein Douwra*”; that means “round eye” when literally translated from Arabic into English. A figurative translation could also mean a water spring that is usually located in Mount Lebanon and might suggest what the fictional village was named after. Its name “round eye” could lead one to infer that the village is a witness to the civil war just like Ruba since the civil war does not primarily take place there but rather in Beirut.

Moreover, the eye is brought up again as a motif when Ruba is playing in the forest and finds a “glass eye” which she shares with her brother Naji and describes it as it “looked funny lying in his hand without a body around it” (Abi- Ezzi 7). Ruba concludes that the glass eye is in fact “the evil eye” that belongs to “the witch” (7). The evil eye is defined as “an eye whose powerful glance or gaze can harm or destroy any object, animate or inanimate” (Elliot 3). Ruba believes that it is the “evil eye” of the witch that “had put a curse on” her father, but perhaps the same “evil eye [...] could undo it” (Abi-Ezzi 64). Ruba’s belief in the eye suggests how she uses her magical thinking to protect herself and thinks about protecting others such as her father. However, after learning that the glass eye belonged to Ali, who was brutally murdered, Ruba takes it to the forest and buries it in the ground, “dropped [it] into the earth” and “covered it” (212). She marked the spot with a colored wheel that spun in “flashes of red and yellow” (212). The burial of the eye suggests that Ruba leaves behind her thoughts of the witch and magical thinking. She accepts the brutality that has occurred against Ali and acknowledges her new reality. Her old perception of the world is buried and marked by the color wheel which suggests a dynamic movement and progress as it spins in the wind.

B. Character Development

Character development is when the protagonist progresses after experiencing a series of transformative moments in the plot that influence how they behave or think to achieve at the end their desires and accomplish their goals. The protagonist has no choice in the matter because “reluctant or not they plunge into a new world or else there is no story” (Myers 7). Character development is also an aspect of storytelling that allows the reader to connect with the protagonist and understand them on a deeper level. Writers and directors usually follow a “character arc” by dividing the plot of their story “into four parts: setup, complicating action, development, and climax” (Thompson 28). Both *1982* and *A Girl Made of Dust* follow this plot organization in the following manner.

For the film, the setup is the school in Mount Lebanon, and the escalating civil war’s events are the complicating actions. The plot develops as the students and school faculty must evacuate to be able to go home and then the climax is that the civil war is well underway, but Wissam uses his magical thinking and integrates “Tigron” to save himself from witnessing the destruction of his country.

For the novel, the setup is the village “*Ein Douwra*”, and the escalating civil war’s events are also complicating actions. The developments are that Naji gets shot and Ali is murdered, and the story ends with the climax of saving “the girl made of dust” as well as hunkering down to wait for the shelling to stop.

I acknowledge that I have simplified the plot lines of the stories and did not mention any subplots in order to keep them concise and to fit them into the model provided so that I can elaborate on the character developments of the child protagonists.

Despite an organized plotline, Wissam does not experience any turning points and remains the same throughout the film as his desire and goal to tell Joanna how he feels never changes. Hence, Wissam goes through a static character development where he remains unchanged and unfazed throughout the story. However, Ruba's goals in the narrative transform from reversing the curse on her father to helping him save her friend Amal from the bombings. Ruba progressively showcases development in response to the story's turning points.

One could argue that Ruba goes through her character development while Wissam does not due to the different temporal frames between the two mediums. Ruba has 364 days more than Wissam to be able to process all the events and all of the disturbances of the civil war, a much longer timeframe than Wissam's that amounts to not even a full day. According to Robert Scholes et al., there are two types of character development. The first is "the developmental" which is established when the character's "personal traits are attenuated so as to clarify his progress along a plot line" (169). The second is "the chronological" which is established when the character's "personal traits are ramified" to make shifts in a plot that "has a temporal basis" (169). While I acknowledge that there is a type of chronological character development, I have chosen to focus on the developmental aspect due to the timeframe differences. The developmental aspect reinforces the notion that the lens of Thirdspace and magical thinking is needed to analyze the story and highlight Wissam's and Ruba's character developments to transcend the constraint of time.

C. Imagined Realities

My definition of “imagined realities” encapsulates a synthesis of the two theoretical frameworks – Thirdspace and magical thinking – established earlier in the thesis and used to analyze *1982* and *A Girl Made of Dust*. The term “imagined realities” literally combines the real with the imagined, which in turn create spaces integral to the mechanisms of storytelling. Imagined realities are also spaces that integrate magical elements with the real world while also representing allegorical meaning and psychological states. When characters engage with their space, the “spatial imagery is no longer a separate set of illustrations” but instead becomes “capable of telling a story” (Mucignat 162). Therefore, there is a correlation between the imagined realities and the trajectories of character development in stories. The construction of an imagined reality with existing magical thinking elements leads to a static character development where the character does not go through any growth or change. On the other hand, the dissolution of an imagined reality with fading and/or totally even lost magical thinking leads to a progressive character development. I will highlight a scene that exemplifies the association of imagined realities with character development from each of my primary sources.

The scene I examine from *1982* is from the playground when Wissam is sketching “Tigron” in the middle of fighting off an alien attack (00:20:28). The reality of the space is that Wissam is sitting in the playground drawing, but the screen projects an animation lens that reflects how Wissam’s space is being sketched. The magical thinking portrayed by the sketching animation on screen depicts Wissam’s feelings of living in the land of animation with “Tigron”. The imagined reality integrates the elements of magical thinking with Wissam’s Thirdspace that offers him comfort and

escape. His magical thinking remains intact in the film and is reinforced at the end, when the animation lens remains permanently on screen (01:35:46). This suggests that Wissam does not undergo any character development because his imagined realities persist.

The scene I will examine from *A Girl Made of Dust* is when Ruba was flying her kite with Naji on the veranda of the church on the main road when they encounter a “gunship helicopter” (139-144). The reality is that there is an existing “gunship helicopter” posing a life-threatening danger to Ruba while she uses magical thinking to see it as a “giant roaring” that then shifts to become a “bee with a dozen stings” (143). The imagined reality is constructed by combining her Thirdspace, which reflects the brutal reality impacting her emotional state, with aspects of magical thinking. At first, Ruba fails to see the space for what it really is by leaning into her magical thinking. However, the magical lens fades, and as a result, her imagined reality diminishes, which suggests that Ruba’s character is evolving and changing.

D. Spatial Readings

Reflecting on stories entails spatial readings which is characterized as “a mode of attention that treats a text like a multidimensional structure” (Leypoldt 159-160). Hence, conducting a spatial reading to read works of fiction offers a deeper and more complex understanding of storytelling mechanisms. Moreover, a spatial reading offers a richer and more nuanced understanding of how the story is attempting to convey the characters’ developments. I have taken the spaces that were discussed in chapter two and three and placed them in maps, as presented in Appendices I and II, to be able to specify where they are in the grand scheme of the story. The position of each space in

the map “corresponds to its narrative function and the plot is based on the character’s itinerary from one place to the other” (Mucignat 82). In *1982* and *A Girl Made of Dust*, the characters’ journeys are not a linear process because they oscillate between spaces as they go back and forth from one space to another. Wissam repeatedly visits the classroom and the playground while Ruba persistently moves from, and to, her house, the forest, and the different roads in the village. While acknowledging this constant shift in movements in both mediums, I have chosen to assign a linear path of movement for both Wissam and Ruba to portray in the maps the overall paths that they each take from start to finish in their plots. The maps represent frameworks of thought and further reinforce my argument that the Thirdspaces and their navigation highlight how Wissam and Ruba develop throughout their stories.

In the film *1982*, Wissam’s spatial journey is portrayed on the map as seen in Appendix I, which also presents an arrow that reflects Wissam’s linear journey from the center to the outskirts. Wissam moves from the confined spaces of his classroom and playground in his school to an open space on the road to eventually reach the unseen homes they hope to reach but which remain off screen. This movement creates a map that portrays a zoom-out effect of the story, and thus suggests that the film leads the audience to perceive the world around Wissam instead of solely focusing on him as the protagonist. This notion is further reinforced by the fact that the film ends with a zoom-in shot of the classroom after everyone has left and its windows that show an animation lens of a colorful world outside (*1982* 1:34:44 – 1:35:49). In addition, Wissam retains his magical thinking in his Thirdspaces which have been established in chapter two. This emotional response in all of his imagined spaces showcases a lack of character development and even impairs Wissam’s ability to grow in the film because he remains

the same. His navigation through the Thirdspaces represents a centrifugal journey which tends to depart from the center and move towards the peripheries. This journey presented makes the audience focus on the events themselves rather than on Wissam's static character development.

In *A Girl Made of Dust*, Ruba's spatial journey is portrayed on the map as seen in Appendix II, which also presents an arrow that reflects Ruba's linear journey from the outlying areas of the village to the center of her space which is her house. Ruba moves from the open spaces such as the high road, the main road, the scrub, and the forest in the village to eventually gather with family and neighbors to huddle in the tiny corridor of the Khouri's house. The movement reflects (on) the zoom-in effect portrayed in the map and by the arrow. According to Scholes et al., "the close-up provides a way of revealing more of the psyche," and this is more common in narratives because in novels "only [...] the inward life of the characters [is] really accessible" (171). Hence, zooming-in on the center suggests a deeper reflection on Ruba and her inward state. Ruba progressively loses her magical thinking, especially at the end of the novel which shows how she is growing and developing through these changes. Her navigation through the Thirdspaces represents a centripetal journey which tends to move from the edges towards the center. This movement makes the reader zoom in on Ruba, and thus focus on her character development.

I do not mean to pass a valued judgement on the characters of the stories and on whether the children develop or not, but this thesis focuses on using the spatial readings with Thirdspace and magical thinking to highlight how characters' developments progress or remain stagnant. The research provides a framework of analysis to use space to map out a character's development in literature as well as in film.

The spatial maps show that the opposition in movement mirrors the difference in the child protagonists' developments. Ruba learns certain facts and goes through material discovery which allows her to overcome magical thinking. Her centripetal journey shifts the focus towards her and suggests an internal reflection that brings out her development. On the other hand, Wissam's centrifugal journey shifts the focus away from his development and instead the film visually reflects on the cinematic world of fiction and reality coexisting in the same shot. Therefore, the navigation through the Thirdspaces in both mediums highlights how their character developments are distinct from one another.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

This thesis aimed to analyze how the spatial aspects of the film and the novel highlighted the characters' growths and developments. One important contribution of this thesis is that it combined the theoretical frameworks of Thirdspace and magical thinking to analyze and highlight the characters' developments in two different cultural productions. This thesis was the first to apply these theories to the primary sources *1982* by Oualid Mouaness and *A Girl Made of Dust* by Nathalie Abi-Ezzi.

The Thirdspaces were characterized by combining the Firstspaces which were the tangible and the objective elements in the space with the Secondspaces which were the mental and emotional spaces that were formed by the child protagonists. The Thirdspaces were interpreted as spaces that allowed Wissam and Ruba to apply their magical thinking as a coping mechanism to be able to resist the escalating events of the civil war.

This thesis explored the Thirdspaces in the film within the cinematic aspects regarding visual and audio elements. It also demonstrated how magical thinking remained persistent in Wissam's spaces, which suggests that he remained the same throughout the story. Hence, Wissam did not go through any character development because he remained stagnant in his journey. In addition, it explored the Thirdspaces in the novel while relying on linguistic prose to be able to illustrate the spaces in the novel. It explored the gradual loss of magical thinking for Ruba in her spaces, which suggests that she progressively underwent character development in the novel.

This thesis also conducted a spatial reading for both cultural productions which established maps that demonstrated the linear movements of the characters. Wissam's revealed a centrifugal journey which allowed the audience to focus on the outside world of the film instead of focusing on the centered space which reflects Wissam and his static development. On the other hand, Ruba's indicated a centripetal journey that moved towards the center, which displayed a reflection on Ruba's inward state and showcased her character development. Due to the different temporal timeframes between both stories, the Thirdspaces and the magical thinking became crucial lenses that offered a new understanding of the characters' developments. Analyzing how the characters navigated their Thirdspaces in both mediums reflected how the child protagonists, Wissam and Ruba respectively, remained the same or developed in their stories.

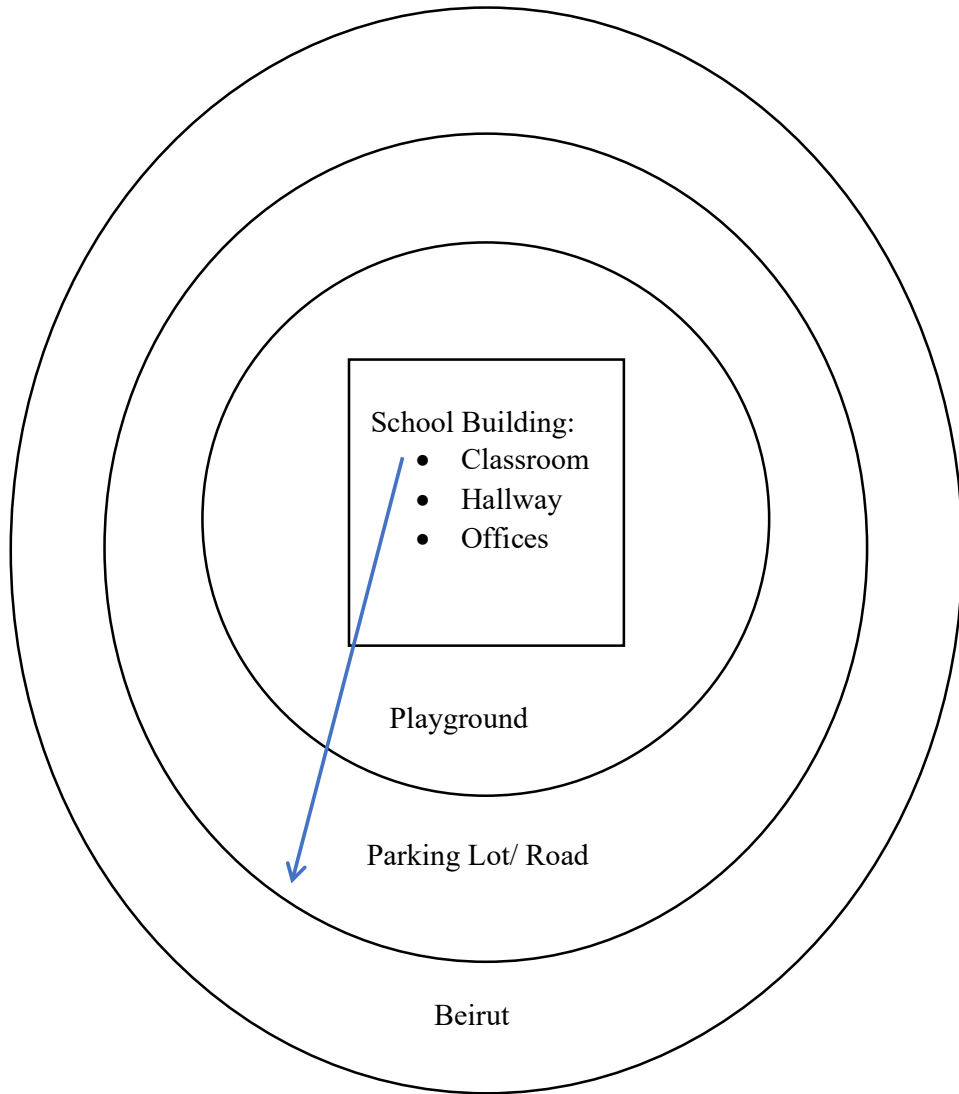
This thesis also suggests that similar research can be conducted with technological tools from the digital humanities field to create a more advanced mapping of the spatial features of the novel and film. Such software and techniques can eliminate any human error unintentionally made when mapping out the spaces and can also create a new perspective from which to visualize space in both mediums.

Moreover, further work to cement the compatibility of using the two theoretical frameworks of Thirdspace and magical thinking in other cultural productions would enrich the research done in this thesis. Combing these two theoretical frameworks provided a new approach to analyze a character's development in stories. Thirdspace is a really broad theoretical framework which I paired with magical thinking as a new methodology to analyze a film and a novel. However, Thirdspace could potentially be

paired with other theories to propose even more methods to study literature pieces as well as films.

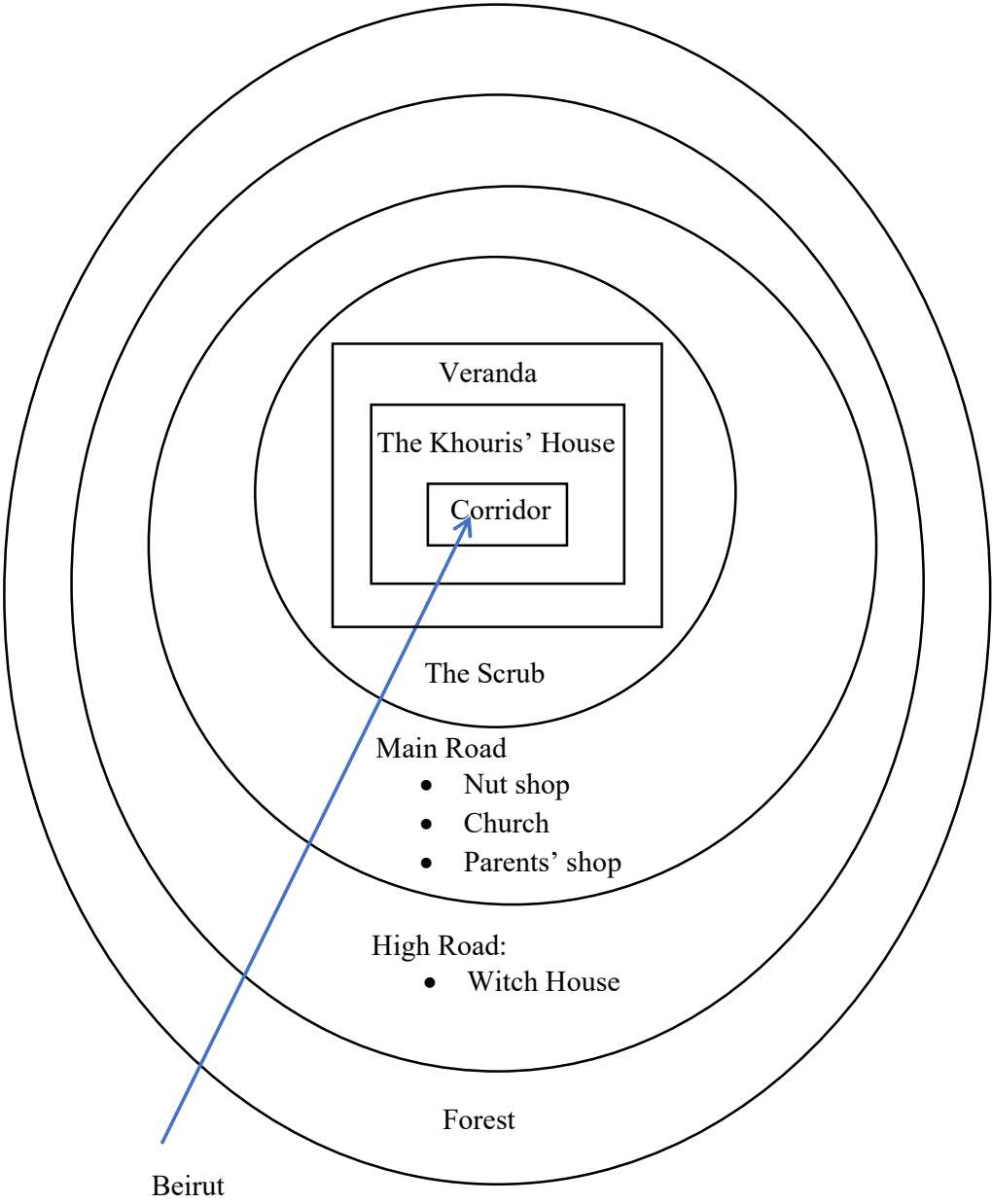
Finally, the imagined realities explored by combining the Thirdspaces of the stories and the magical thinking portrayed contributed to the understanding of how, and if, the protagonists underwent any character development. This thesis provided an analysis that delved deeper into the stories and explored the intricacies of the real and the imagined as well as the intertwining of the tangible and fantastical elements.

APPENDIX I
MAP FOR 1982



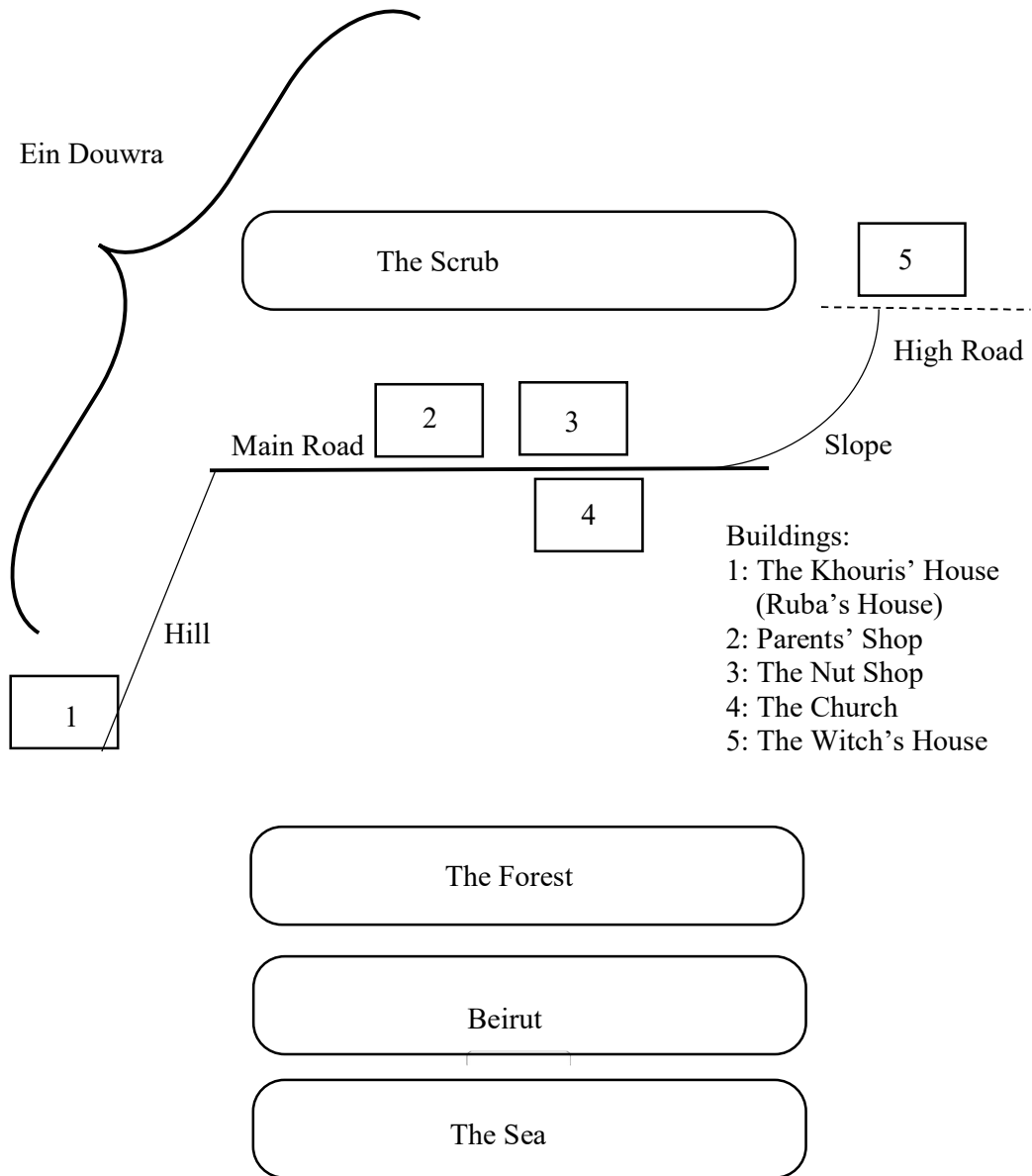
Unseen Homes

APPENDIX II
MAP FOR *A GIRL MADE OF DUST*



APPENDIX III
DETAILED MAP FOR *A GIRL MADE OF DUST*

This map is an overview of Mount Lebanon and the village based on the description extrapolated from the novel.



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