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Bernadine M. Hernández,
"Rewriting Space in Ruiz de Burton's *Who Would Have Thought It?*"
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Abstract: In her article "Rewriting Space in Ruiz de Burton's *Who Would Have Thought It?*" Bernadine M. Hernandez analyses María Amparo Ruiz de Burton's text in the context of Mexican American and US-American literary history. In her novel published in 1872, Ruiz de Burton creates a space of racial and class difference that is a direct response to Mexicano displacement after the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed in 1848. She develops three distinct spaces within her novel that complicates the space Americans felt they had power over. These three spaces are the "savage" Indian space, the uncivilized-U.S. citizen space, and the genteel-citizen space. She uses the language that displaced her to reconstruct her own genteel space within the terms "savage" and "citizen." Ruiz de Burton had a direct impact on recreating the Mexicano presence in the United States, and not only does she transmit a history of displacement and dispossession onto a literary document, she embellishes in the Mexicano presence and critiques the legacy of the United States government and their workings. Ruiz de Burton acts as a mediator between the Mexicanos and the Anglo-Americans to generate a literary, linguistic and physical space while actually rewriting her history where Mexicanos fit into an American history. The literary characters that she creates in *Who Would Have Thought It?* create spaces within dominant society for the Mexicano presence to flourish.

Bernadine M. HERNANDEZ

Rewriting Space in Ruiz de Burton's *Who Would Have Thought It?*

Defining space is relatively easy. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary* space is a "certain stretch, extent, or area of ground … and expanse," or as "the place where one takes up a position, a residence" (1372). Or, Henri Lefebvre maintains in his *The Production of Space* that space is simply that of an empty area. These definitions suggests that space is something stagnant or inert; something that is waiting to be occupied. What the *Oxford English Dictionary* does not define for readers is "occupied space." If space is always waiting to be occupied, what is the definition of space when it is already occupied? Before 1848, "occupied space" could be defined as a place where Mexicanos were living. While the definition suggests something inert, pre-1848 space was productive, producing, and produced. Before the United States conquered southwest territory in 1848, Mexicano space represented life and growth; however, this was essentially ignored by Anglo-Americans who wanted the occupied land. After the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed in 1848, the place where Mexicanos lived became contested space and land of these subjects were penetrated, conquered, and colonized without the hope of regaining power or agency over land, status, or area. This newly deemed "opened" space was reconstructed via a literary legal document written to benefit Anglo Americans and displace Mexicanos. While many Mexicanos were being displaced from their land, Maria Amparo Ruiz de Burton, who was writing during this dispossession, develops three distinct spaces within her novel *Who Would Have Thought It?* written in 1872 that complicates the space Americans felt they had power over; the "savage" Indian space, the uncivilized-U.S. citizen space, and the genteel-citizen space. She uses the language that displaced her to reconstruct her own genteel space within the terms "savage" and "citizen" that came from the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Ruiz de Burton creates a space of racial and class difference that places Mexico and the Mexicano within and simultaneously against the United States.

On 2 February 1848 the Treaty was signed in Guadalupe Hidalgo, a city north of Mexico City where the Mexican government had fled as U.S. troops advanced. Its provisions called for Mexico to cede 55% of its territory, including present-day Arizona, California, New Mexico, and parts of Colorado, Nevada, and Utah, in exchange for fifteen million dollars in compensation for war-related damage to Mexican property. As Richard Griswold del Castillo states, "The Mexican War (1846-1848) and the treaty that ended it were undertaken against the backdrop of Manifest Destiny, the body of ideas and sentiments by which English speaking Americans justified territorial expansion into lands held, occupied, or claimed by Mexicans and Indians" (4). As Griswold del Castillo continues, he claims that this idea of expansion would have great repercussions because it was immoral to "buy" the land of a defeated nation. The United States government did not acknowledge the fact that they were stealing land from their neighbor and annexed northern Mexico into the United States. Although the U.S government did not acknowledge the backdrop of Manifest Destiny written into the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, the document is packed with convincing rhetoric that promises to protect Mexicanos. Article V's provision stipulated the Texas border at the Rio Grande, while the most commonly noted articles when examining Mexicano protection are articles VIII, IX, and X, which call for the protection of property and civil rights of Mexicanos living within the new United States border. These three articles affected more than 100,000 Mexicanos. Article VIII states that Mexicanos had one year to "elect" to become a citizen or not and absentee landholders would have their "property inviolably respected" and others land would "be maintained and protected in the free enjoyment of their liberty and property (Griswold del Castillo 190). The article did not protect Mexicanos and their land.

Article IX states that Mexicanos would be granted full U.S citizenship and their property, lifestyles, and religion would be protected at all times. This provision did exactly the opposite of what it promised to do. This provision linguistically calls for the protection of Mexicanos, yet it historically does something completely different. The provision actually did not protect Mexicanos and their property because without written legal documentation, which most Mexicanos did not have, their property was taken over by the U.S. government and they were sitting on "open"

space. Thousands of California gold-rush migrants violated the treaty by squatting on land they did not own. The Land Act of 1851 blurred the lines of property ownership and occupied land that was deemed "open" space. By claiming Mexico's sovereignty over the land because of the treaty, many Mexicanos begin fighting for their land. Because of litigation and legal fess, many Mexicanos were displaced from their land. The provisions not only displaced people, but it completely erased an occupied place. Furthermore, when the U.S. Senate ratified the treaty in March, it deleted Article X which guaranteed the protection of Mexican land grants. As Griswold Del Castillo states, "In the end the U.S. application of the treaty to the realities of life in the Southwest violated its spirits" (63). Article XI promised to protect the Mexicanos, who were named U.S. citizens after annexation, from Indian tribes. Through the linguistic legalese of the Treaty, the priority of Mexicano space became obsolete.

The 1848 annexation of former Mexican territory as a result of the Mexican American War is the moment when the general oppression of Mexicanos became apparent. This displacement and dispossession dates far before 1848, yet the direct dispossession of Mexicano subjects became de jure with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. While taking this historical time period into consideration, one must also look at the direct displacement of Mexicano subjects and consider the transformation of space. As Lefebvre explains in *The Production of Space*, "Since in spatial practice, the reproduction of social relations is predominant," Mexicanos were thrust into US-American space, for the most part without ever leaving their previous native places (50). Space becomes a foundation for the process that shapes communication and is not just a backdrop for buildings, people, and transportation. Lefebvre maintains that space is always active in social relations and through these social relations, it constructs how places are defined and identified. The Mexicanos were left to construct their own idea of space after they were dispossessed from their land. The political language of the Treaty and the social relations that took place forced space to be reconstructed. Raul Homero Villa notes in *Barrio-Logos: Space and Place in Urban Chicano Literature and Culture*, "The consequences of deterritorialization for Mexicans in the newly annexed territories literally put them in their designated place within the emergent social space of Anglo American capitalism" (2). Deterritorialization literally means to take over the land or a place (territory) that is already established. It is to undo what already existed. For the Mexicanos that were living in Mexico's far northern territory in 1848, spatial consciousness meant little to Anglo America and as long as the Treaty linguistically stated that Native subjects would be safe, fulfilling those requirements went no further than the written word.

Ruiz de Burton utilizes the written word that displaced her in the first place as a powerful tool in reconstructing the places and area she writes about. Language is a calling into being and whether it is used to displace people via a Treaty or regain a certain space or consciousness via literature, language is the precursor to a historical process that claimed agency and ownership over space which was already occupied by Mexicanos. Language is the defining moment of action, and through language, space and place are created, either negatively or positively. As Mary Pat Brady suggests, spaces are constantly changing from the living, embodied kind to other types. When looking at the situation of Ruiz de Burton, living area was turned into capitalist U.S. places. The "abstraction in the service of capital flows entailed a shift from the differentiated spaces conceptualized by … Mexicanos to the conquered and closed frontier -- a shift from the lived and sacred to the measured and homogenized" (Brady 4). This shift in space was due largely to the Treaty between the United States and Mexico. Historically, Mexicanos had already established their space in the newly annexed territory; however, land dispossession by Anglo America clarified that Mexicanos did not have a place in the United States. Just as the literary document literally erased people from their lands and gave Anglo America free range to take over property, Ruiz de Burton recreated herself within a literary context, constructing her presence in the United States through Lola Medina. Kate McCullough explains "Just as becoming citizens of the new state of California reconfigured rather than resolved the terms of Californios' conflicted position in relation to American centers of power, their figurative relocation within national borders also reconfigured rather than erased the Californios' relationship to the restructuring American discourses of race and region" (135).

By the time Ruiz de Burton had published her first novel the spaces of Mexicanos had already been prescribed and formed. She tackled US-American history via her literature and reshaped the spaces of Mexicanos living in the United States. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo reconfigured space, and Ruiz de Burton took this reconfiguration a step farther by rewriting the Mexicano past and rewriting herself into literary history. The space that she constructs for herself is more than just a literary one. She creates characters that represent the Mexicanos space through class and race. *Who Would Have Thought It?* retrieves a certain sense of space by creating literary documents that position its author within dominant society. Ruiz de Burton had to create a place for herself, not only in American space, but in the literary world as well.

Ruiz de Burton was a resident of Loreto, Baja California, and experienced firsthand how language redefines territory. In 1846, she witnessed the U.S. invasion of La Paz, Baja California at the start of the Mexican War. She was from an elite, upper-class ranching family and married Henry S. Burton, a Captain in the United States Army. The couple moved to the east coast in 1859 and in 1872 she published *Who Would Have Thought It?* When they returned to California in 1869, she found US-American squatters claiming her land as their own. Jesse Alemán notes that the Land Act, which Congress passed in 1851, claimed all Mexican land grants public domain and open for resettlement until the Land Commission could verify the legitimacy of the land title (64). Ruiz de Burton was being erased from her land as an occupant while the protection of Mexicanos was legally guaranteed. Ruiz de Burton tried to reclaim her land but lost most of her money doing so. She had to resort to planting castor beans on the rancho and start up a cement company just to make ends meet after litigation fees. The manner in which Ruiz de Burton challenges American literary history is the same manner in which she recreates a space for Lola in New England. By challenging these histories, Ruiz de Burton reverses the literary process that was thrust upon her in 1848 with the Treaty of Guadalupe. She manages to write herself back into her space by creating *Who Would Have Thought It?* and although the book was originally published under Mrs. Henry S. Burton, the message was clear. This novel reconstructs the dominant United States myth of US-American exceptionalism and reconstructs a Mexicano space within an Anglo American place.

Ruiz De Burton uses three distinct spaces in her novel to portray multiple spaces of class and racial difference; the "savage" Indian space, the U.S. uncivilized-citizen space, and the genteel-citizen space. She is able to do this by placing Mexicanos within and against the Unites States. *Who Would Have Thought It?* is a direct critique of the whites who are in the novel, making a mockery of the United States ideals. Ruiz de Burton witnessed physical space changing through capitalism and observed developmental changes that transformed the geography of the land as well as the social relations. From the savage nation where Dr. Norval finds Lola and Doña Theresa to a nation of "pure" genteel citizens in Mexico, Ruiz de Burton defines spaces of racial and class difference to convey superiority over Yankee whites who dispossessed Mexicanos from their land. She uses this model to convey a tainted space, a space that was ostensibly pure and religious before the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848. At the beginning of the novel, Lola and Doña Theresa are living in the space of the "savage" Indians in open space. This notion of "open" space was inclusive of the environment that the Native people were living in before the lived and embodied area became subject to capitalism. This open area can be regarded as absolute space and as Henry Lefebvre states, "Absolute space was made up of fragments of nature located at sites which were chosen for their intrinsic qualities but whose very consecration ended up by stripping them of their natural characteristics and uniqueness" (48). This sacred and open area was untouched by modern civilization and turned from a lived space into a space of complete reversal. When Lola gets into New England she moves from absolute space with the savage Indians to abstract space within modern society. Lefebvre defines abstract space as a disconnect from natural space to modernized space and states, "It was during this process of reproduction with perpetual social life; but, in becoming independent of the process, labour fell pray to abstraction, whence abstract space" (49). The counter area that Lola is thrust into is abstract. She went from an area of absolute space that was untarnished and untouched to an area of abstract space where the forces of capitalism destroyed the sacred land. It is a complete disconnect and disruption of this area; a disruption that Ruiz de Burton clearly addresses is her novel.

After the United States annexed northern Mexico, the place where Natives once lived became foreign ground that was dissimilar to everything the Natives once knew. Michel Foucault theorizes, "The space in which we live, which draws us out of ourselves, in which the erosion of our lives, our time and our history occurs, the space that claws and knaws at us, is also, in itself, a heterogeneous space. In other words, we do not live in a kind of void, inside of which we could place individuals and things" (123). Space can be diverse and mixed according to who occupies it. While one can occupy empty space, contested space is a very different matter. The area that was once Mexicano space became contested space post-1848. The displacement of Mexicano subjects transformed the once familiar and growing area into space that was no longer home. Ruiz de Burton acknowledges this difference and uses this to create a nostalgic past where land was safe and life was satisfying. Ruiz de Burton is thrust into a space of difference in 1848 and the only way for her to overcome this is to create a different space of familiarity. She achieves this in her literature and takes it a step further. She creates a whole new area for the Mexicano presence and generates a new American ending that includes them.

Who Would Have Thought It? delineates a place for itself in US-American literary history, but more importantly to note, it allows the projection of a fictional future where Mexicanos can create a superior role within their embittered US-American process. The novel is a savvy satire of northeastern Yankee culture and lifestyle. It is set during the Civil War and Reconstruction era and is a social allegory that comments upon modernization that is achieved only by U.S. corruption and deceit. The historical novel follows Lola Medina, an "Indian girl," who ostensibly comes from an inferior race because she is dyed black along with her mother, Doña Theresa Medina. Lola serves as a catalyst to unmask the racisms Northern people had regarding people of color. She is taken to New England and raised by the Norval family, where the space of class and racial difference is predominately racist. But more importantly than looking at racism, Ruiz de Burton conveys a hidden agenda of recreating space through this passive female character. Although Lola looks like a poor, "black girl", she comes from a wealthy Mexican family that is genteel and her hidden identity creates an alternative ending in US-American society. The novel follows the raise and fall of Mrs. Norval, Dr. Norval's pretentious and prejudice wife, while commenting upon the Anglo-Americans who have fallen from Republican grace. The novel ends with Lola re-uniting with her father in Mexico and the United Stated stands to represent dishonesty and corruption in the novel. Ruiz de Burton navigates Lola throughout different locations in this novel and though she is always segregated and mistreated, she establishes a certain identity because of her class. Although Mrs. Norval and her daughters mistreat her because they think of her as a little "black girl", Lola creates a space of racial and class difference by obtaining her money and leaving with Julian to a better "space": Mexico. Through class, Ruiz de Burton is able to establish Lola's superiority as a Mexican woman.

When Dr. Norval finds Lola and her mother Doña Theresa they are in a savage and unruly space with the Indians. Dr. Norval states, "We were on our way down the Colorado River, intending to follow its course to its junction with the Gila, or perhaps to the Gulf of California, and we had encamped to take a two days' rest, when we were surrounded by a large party of Indians" (Ruiz de Burton 34). The space that Ruiz de Burton is constructing here is savage; a space of Indians. Lola Medina was born in Indian captivity, held hostage with her mother Doña Theresa, and dyed black. The indication that the Indians were savage people rests in the notion that they were violent and they lived off the land. The land that the Indians occupied was, as Henri Lefebvre theorizes, sacred natural space where they worshiped and practiced ceremonial rituals; abstract. This area was untouched by the white man and was therefore holy. Though this was ceremonial grounds of the savage Indians that lived there, they were uncivilized by Anglo-American standards. Lola and her mother come from a genteel family and show their class difference from the Indians by collecting wealthy items and minimizing interactions with them. As Anne Goldman states, "Ruiz de Burton's revision is less interested in foregrounding the relationship between Lola's ever-civil mother and her savage captors (although indeed, native Americans are throughout Ruiz de Burton's writing are demeaned as such) than using it to critique the uncivil behavior of Major Hackwell, the ex-Presbyterian divine who in attempting to carry off Lola demonstrates a licentiousness in excess of Doña Theresa's Indian captors" (64). Although we

first find Lola and her mother in a savage area, it cannot be compared to the deceitful and staggering space of New England. This is a space when savage and citizen collide.

After moving from the pure savage space of the Indians in the Southwest, Ruiz de Burton moves Lola to the semi-savage, uncivilized U.S. citizen location in New England. Lola is introduced into the Norval household where she is not received well by the northern New England family. Rescued by Dr. Norval from the southwestern borderland, Lola comes from the southwest to New England space. When Lola arrives into the Norval household, Mrs. Norval exclaims, "How black she is!" and readers get a quick sense of Mrs. Norval's impression of Lola (Ruiz de Burton 17). Lola's segregation is exemplified when the doctor insists that Lola sleep in Julian's room or share a room with one of the Norval girls. Mrs. Norval is completely appalled by the idea of having a black girl in her house and sends Lola to sleep with the chambermaid, Hannah, and the Irish cook.

From savage space to an uncivilized U.S. citizen space that is dishonorable, Ruiz de Burton critiques the people who are making a mockery of the United States ideals; she is not critiquing the government itself. She is challenging the people to live up American ideals but instead they are money hungry, cheating, deceitful, rogues who try and manipulate the people around them. This is a space of difference for Lola because she comes from a genteel family where Mexicanos are morally and socially superior to the type of behavior exhibited in New England. As Lola moves into New England space, she begins to get lighter in skin color. This precursor shows that the Mexican "citizen" is better than the New England rogue and Ruiz de Burton exemplifies the class difference through Lola and the transformation of space. Ruiz de Burton is able to rearticulate all the stereotypes of the Yankee and uses caricatures to completely reverse the positive stereotype of the white man. While the women of New England were supposed to be modest, religious, and feminine, Ruiz de Burton manages to flip that stereotype around as well. In self absorbed language regarding the Misses Norval the text reads, "It was the anniversary of some great day in New England when the Misses Norval were to make their farewell appearance in church before leaving for Europe -- some great day in which the Pilgrim fathers had done some one of their wonderful deeds. They had either embarked, or landed, or burnt a witch, or whipped a woman at the pillory, on just such a day" (Ruiz de Burton 83). This text shows how egocentric the Norvals are and Ruiz de Burton classifies the women not as full savages or as citizens: they are not worthy of full citizenship status because they are hypocrites.

While Lola confronts the space of the lower class help, the louder the Irish women became the "more terrified Lola felt at the darkness and silence beyond the discordant noise, until almost frantic with terror and desolation, and almost stifling with the foulness of the air, the child, trembling with fear, staggered out of the room and went to lie in hall -- anywhere, only as far from the Irishwomen as possible (Ruiz de Burton 31). The agency Lola has created within this New England household seems to be removed and segregated from the rest of the dominant society, but as readers can see, Lola is not comfortable with her space within the household. Lola is threatened by the Irish help and finds herself disgusted with their sleeping habits. The unfamiliar grotesqueness of the people Mrs. Norval aligns her with are contradictory to what Lola stands for; elitism. Lola establishes an area for herself, on the threshold, by Mrs. Norval's door. Ruiz de Burton is writing Lola into a segregated area which is far too elite to sleep with the maids, but also too elite to be aligned with Mrs. Norval. Mrs. Norval does not understand Lola's elitism at this point and the space that Lola established has everything to with class difference. Ruiz de Burton makes Lola's class difference known within Yankee territory. Lola refuses to sleep with the chambermaids and through her class difference, Ruiz de Burton is re-writing Mexicano space. Ruiz de Burton is taking control of her position and regaining historical agency. Abstract space took over from absolute space, which lives on through the modern and tainted New England. The forces of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo diminished naturalness all together and through the destruction established an area of accretion. This space of accretion encompassed wealth, resources, and technology that were not present in absolute space. The abstraction of New England is negatively informed by the religious natural absolute space.

Although not Mexicano himself, Isaac Sprig traverses from New England to the United States south and then farther south to Mexico creating yet another form of agency that follows a method Ruiz de Burton was clearly devoted to conveying. In Sánchez's and Pita's analysis of Ruiz de

Burton's letters they state that she "sympathized with the defeated Confederacy, seeing in the South's defeat a mirror of the defeat of Mexico on 1848, and in Reconstruction, a clear imposition of Yankee hegemony in the Southern states" (Ruiz de Burton 195). Her contempt for reconstruction while linking Mexico to the Southern states creates a pro-confederate space that is clearly anti-Yankee. The space Isaac creates is a prime example of Ruiz de Burton sympathizing with Southern states as a means of confronting Mexico's conquest by the United States. Isaac is of a white New England race and he creates a Mexicano centered agency even though he is not of Mexican decent. Through a New England Anglo man, Ruiz de Burton is able to establish a place for Mexico and her aristocratic identity. The Mexicano presence is being written into the history of the Confederacy. As we can see in her portrait of Lola, Ruiz de Burton uses her as an outlet to portray dispossession and loss; everything the Confederacy stood for. Lola was once a Mexican aristocrat who was disposed because of Indian capture reducing her to a second-class citizen. Through Isaac, Ruiz de Burton is able to rewrite Mexican history and allow a space for herself that sided with the confederacy.

From the United States south, Isaac travels to Mexico to find a space that is morally and socially opposite from that of New England. Isaac arrives in Mexico in search of Don Felipe de Almenara and Don Luis Medina, Lola's father and grandfather. When readers get a glimpse into the life of these two gentlemen, we get a sense of elitism. The Mexican space we find here is ideal. The two gentlemen "are sitting in the library by a table loaded with papers, books, reviews, pamphlets, etc. They are reading letters of great interest, to judge from the eagerness and attention with which they read them, and these letters have arrived by the last mail from Europe" (Ruiz de Burton 194-95). Clearly redefining the terms of elitism vis-à-vis Mexicanos and people who reside in Mexico, Ruiz de Burton portrays the land as nationalist, genteel, and refined; unlike New England. These two men are clearly educated and have much more class than the people of New England. Ruiz de Burton is propping the Mexican American space above Anglo Americans. Ruiz de Burton is interpreting the Mexicano plight and above all she is recreating the dominating system which forced her out of her place. Mexico and the United states are complete opposites of each other in this novel. By positioning Mexico and the Mexicano presence above the Yankee Anglo-Americans, Ruiz de Burton is calling attention to a diminished United States that displaced her from a cultured and gracious Mexico. As Anne E. Goldman states, "*Who Would Have Thought It?* literalizes this redress [of moral character] through representation whose oppositions turn the 'contradicciones' of racist discourse on its head … Aesthetes belongs to Mexico; New England, by contrast, is home for the vulgar" (73). Goldman's point that New England cannot compete with the well-mannered, high-brow Mexican exemplifies the fact that Ruiz de Burton takes readers through different spaces to convey a difference in race and class. The United States is populated with people who are vindictive, uncaring, and "social climbers." By not forgetting that she has been dominated, Ruiz de Burton is able to paint a picture of a better place, a better time. She is able to create a space that is a point of return. The memory that lies in her mind and her physical space allows Ruiz de Burton to navigate history to recreate a positive future.

Lastly, the method in which Ruiz de Burton mirrors her male character Julian Norval is a direct push for authoritative Mexicano space in America. When Julian is wrongly dismissed from military duty, he goes directly to Washington D.C. to speak with the President about the matter. After many days of being misled regarding the President's meeting schedule, Julian gets angry and states, "I will not leave this house alive until this man rescinds his inhuman order, or at least gives me a fair trial!" (Ruiz de Burton 213). The literary meeting between Julian Norval and President Lincoln parallels Ruiz de Burton's meeting with President Lincoln and ties her historical presence to her fictional characters. During her meeting with President Lincoln, she persuaded him to promote her husband, Henry S. Burton. While Julian does not negotiate his promotion, he is offered one by the time he is done in Washington D.C. This play on power conveyed through Ruiz de Burton's writings is a direct comment on the insubstantial way the government deals with issues. Conveyed through Julian's meeting with President Lincoln, Ruiz de Burton made a blatant presence to recreate space in the U.S. for the displaced Mexicano.

Ruiz de Burton has been widely recognized as a prominent Mexicana female who created foundational literary texts about Mexican Americans. Yet, when one thinks of great canonical US-

American literature, Herman Melville, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Edgar Allen Poe come to mind. Ruiz de Burton conveys the truth about the minority experience and creates a space for the minority in American literature; she creates a space of race and class difference through the Mexicano characters in her novel. Vincent Perez explains that "Contesting dominant accounts of Southwest history during an era of consolidation of U.S. hegemony in the region, [Ruiz de Burton] was among the first by members of the Mexican (American) 'colony' in the newly annexed territory to examine the repressive social, political, and cultural impact of conquest that has formed a lasting historical legacy for the regions Mexican American population since mid-nineteenth century" (27). As we can see, Ruiz de Burton was writing about a historical event. However, before this historical event could take place, the literary evolution of the history was first and it is no coincidence that Ruiz de Burton used the same literary manner to recreate a space that was taken away from her. The space that Ruiz de Burton creates is very distinct. She does not try to align the Mexicanos in her novel with the white Yankees characters, but rather creates a space of superiority to the white characters in the novel and places the Mexicanos higher than the rogue Yankees.

Norma Alarcó writes, given the circumstances, certain creative and angry artists, "have an urgent need to overhaul our political vocabulary and grammar, to create a t(r)opography for a new world knowledge" (138). Ruiz de Burton is a prime example of this tropography. As Mary Pat Brady goes on to further explain, "The word t(r)opography indicates the interanimating relationship between places (topos) and metaphor (tropology being the study of metaphors, of words used in ways that extend past their literal meaning.) … [and] also incorporates geography, admitting through such wordplay the crucial battle over space (for both material control and representation)" (138). By writing her way back into US-American history, Ruiz de Burton recalls the events that disposed her and fights for a chance to re-enter United States history as more than a displaced minority. There was not enough "space" for both Mexicanos and Anglo Americans; one had to indefinitely leave. While she was displaced off her land, Ruiz de Burton retaliated and struggled to establish her voice within the newly annexed territory. Jose F. Aranda states that Ruiz de Burton creates an "imagined intervention" by penning her novel (61). Ruiz de Burton is not only imagining an intervention, she is imagining a space within literary America and is also creating a superior space in the U.S. for Mexicano subjects. By negotiating her newly emerged status as Mexicana, Ruiz de Burton is reconstructing her identity as "dispossessed" while at the same time distributing space to the refined Mexicano characters within her novel.

By creating a linguistic and literary space that was her own, Ruiz de Burton imagined a community of space that embodied the Mexicano presence within it. As Benedict Anderson explains "The idea of a sociological organism moving calendrically through homogenous, empty time is a precise analogue of the idea of the nation, which is conceived as a solid community moving steadily down (or up) history" (26). The simultaneous activity of Mexicano presence in Ruiz de Burton's writings is what allows her to create linguistic and literary space within the text. This imagined nation is a solid community to Ruiz de Burton and this solid community moves in a linear fashion. Ruiz de Burton is creating space by imaging the cultural system of her place prior to 1848 when she was dispossessed from her land. Before this, Anderson states that "nationalism has to be understood by aligning it, not with self-consciously held political ideologies, but with the large cultural system that preceded it, out of which -- as well as against which -- it came into being" (12). The cultural system prior to 1848 included Mexicanos in the bigger picture. Mexicanos were still owners of their land and had their place in society. The political ideology of the United States entered Mexico's world and forever changed the Native space. The Mexicano space, or nationalism, that Ruiz de Burton conveys in her literature is one that prior to 1848 had a positive outlook on space and place. Ruiz de Burton tries and most importantly succeeds in rewriting a past that the U.S. forcefully took away. The linguistic and literary spaces Ruiz de Burton controls within her literature demand the attention of Anglo America.

Overall, Ruiz de Burton had a direct impact on recreating the Mexicano presence in the United States. Not only does she transmit a history of displacement and dispossession onto a literary document, she embellishes in the Mexicano presence and critiques the legacy of the United States government and their workings. Ruiz de Burton acts as a mediator between the Mexicanos and the

Anglo Americans to generate a literary, linguistic and physical space while actually rewriting her history where Mexicanos fit into an American history. The literary characters that she creates in *Who Would Have Thought It?* create spaces within dominant society for the Mexicano presence to flourish. Ruiz de Burton takes Lola, the protagonist, through many different spaces but the space where she ends up is Mexico; a space of superiority and class. The linear model that Ruiz de Burton creates moves the novel from savage, to uncivilized U.S. citizen, to complete genteel citizen. Today, her books are well known and scholarship regarding her literature is found with ease. Ruiz de Burton's work helps to recreate a past and a future for a more mindful American audience. By rewriting herself into US-American literary history, Ruiz de Burton opens up the literary world to encompass a new perspective on history while producing a space for and giving a voice to the Mexicanos who literally became dispossessed subjects without place.

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