

ABSTRACT

La Llorona is a significant figure in the region of South Texas and can be of even greater significance to South Texan artists as well. Utilizing qualitative research methods, including literature reviews, previous interviews, and personal interviews with three artists from South Texas, this research explored how the tale of La Llorona can impact an artist in South Texas. This impact specifically targeted their artistic expression, their art process, and how they interpret art. By uncovering the connection of folklore, identity, and artistic expression in South Texas, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of how storytelling traditions can influence an artist. Findings suggest that an artist with a personal connection to the tale of La Llorona will show a more intense impact in their work and have a positive effect regarding decision-making, their art process, and how they interpret their own as well as others' artworks. Interviewing three artists and reading literature were the references in the study regarding the expected results. Additional art pieces were created for the study as a visual representation of how an artist might be impacted. This research holds relevance for researchers in folklore, cultural identity, and fine arts by giving insights into forces shaping artistic expression for an artist in South Texas. It also sheds light on the importance of passing down generational storytelling. Through this research, the study aimed to unravel the significance of the legend of La Llorona in shaping and affecting artistic expression and process.

PURPOSE

Can learning the story of La Llorona have an impact on an artist from South Texas regarding their expression, research, and interpretations?

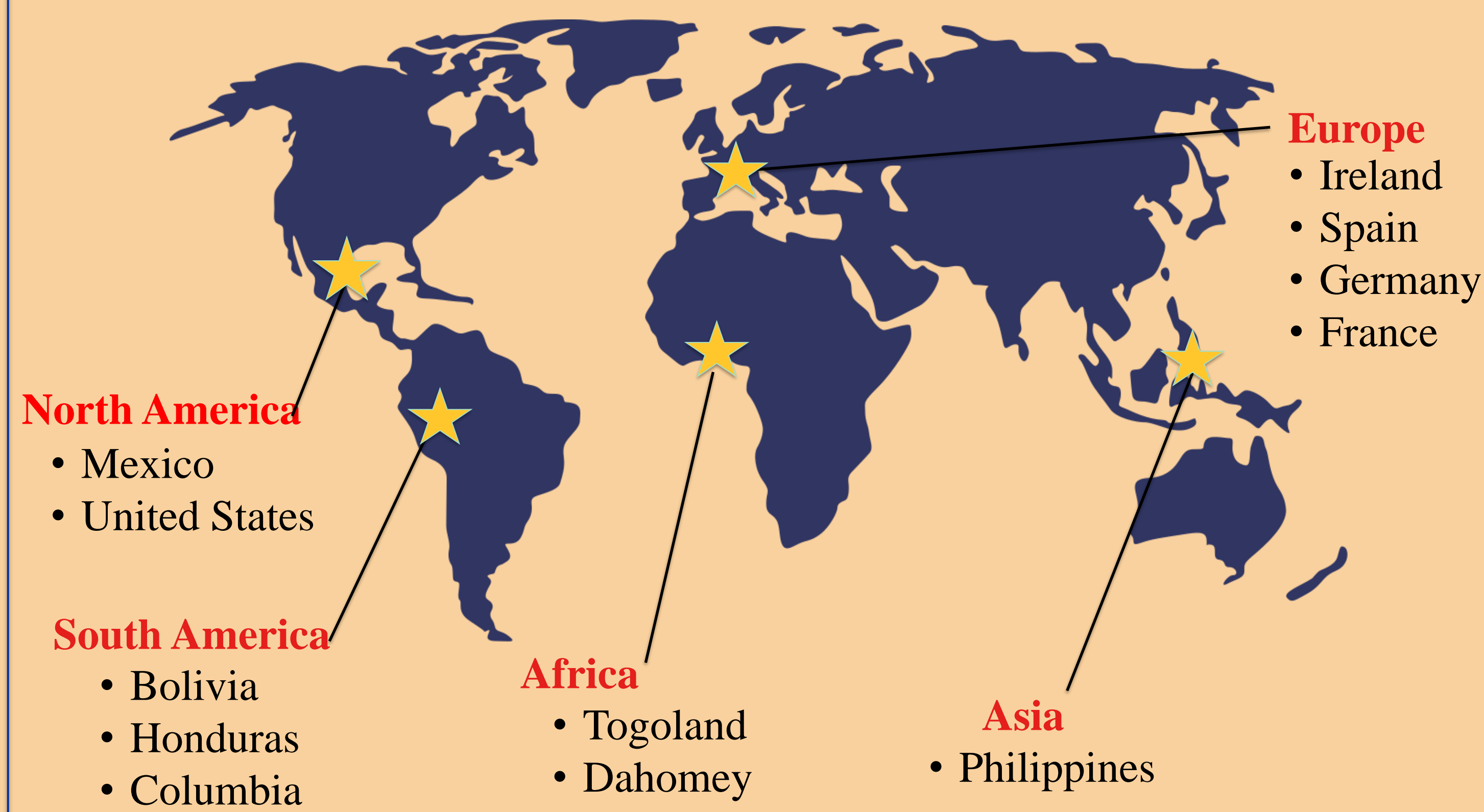
INTRODUCTION

- La Llorona is a folktale figure who wanders while weeping for her children after having killed them because of the betrayal from the man she loved (Fuller, 2017). She is said to be wandering specifically around bodies of water such as rivers and lakes.
- The tale captures themes such as love, betrayal, and the supernatural (Tomio-Armorer, 2020). These themes were considered key factors in whether learning the tale can impact an artist in South Texas.
- Although most literature about La Llorona depicts her as an evil being, there have been recent works that have made her out to be a more positive protector of sorts for women and children (Anzaldúa, 1995)
- Previous art depicting La Llorona connects her to many other figures such as La Malinche and Coatlicue (Carbonell, 1999; Barraza, 2001)
- Though the story is well known throughout the South Texas region, Mexico, and various parts of South America, some stories can be related to her worldwide (Kirtley, 1960; De Aragon 1980; Argueta-Mata, 2020).

INTRODUCTION, cont.

World Map:

Possible Relation to La Llorona



METHODS

Study Design

- The study's design consisted of qualitative research methods. This includes having a literature review and conducting structured personal interviews.

Participants

- The participants consisted of three artists from South Texas who knew of the legend of La Llorona and could be contacted via email.

Procedure

- Approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB)
- Participants who agreed to be a part of the study agreed upon a date and time that the interview would take place.
- Once the interview was over and properly audio recorded, they were transcribed using the non-verbatim transcription method.
- The interviews were then cross-referenced with the literature review.
- Results and conclusions were then drawn by comparing the interviews and literature review with one another

Interviews

- Each interview consisted of 7 questions
- Planned to last no longer than an hour
- Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed via Word

RESULTS

- The interviews took a total of 55:54 minutes on average (not counting the written interview)
- All participants believed learning the story of La Llorona can only have a positive and beneficial impact on artists
- Learning the legend of La Llorona can encourage the artist to look more into their own culture and find a deeper connection with it, thus creating art with deeper meaning and background

RESULTS, cont.

- The impact of La Llorona is dependent on how the artist relates to her. The more personal the connection between the artist and the figure/story, the deeper the impact can be

Participant Quotes:

- “The legend offers complex emotional and psychological layers that can inspire creativity and deepen the narrative quality of an artist’s work.” – **Artist 2**
- “By doing that little bit of research, you start thinking - expanding how you want to represent her...” – **Artist 1**
- “...making lots of sketches and just playing with different ideas...”
- “I feel like, especially as I’ve gotten older, I understand the emotions more... Now that I’m older, I portray her more as, not a hero but just somebody who had sad circumstances and then overreacted in that emotion.” – **Artist 3**

Artworks created by the Student Investigator with the assistance of the Principal Investigator.



DISCUSSION

This study aimed to find out whether La Llorona can have an impact on an artist from South Texas regarding how they express themselves, the research they do for future works, as well as how they interpret their own and others' art. The findings show that learning the story of La Llorona can give an artist more emotional ground to work with for their art. It also has the potential to provide more insight into what certain pieces are trying to communicate.

Limitations

- One out of the three interviews was written rather than done orally
- No previous research has been conducted on the topic
- Limited literature review

A major strength of this study was that the artists had plenty to say about the subject and thus provided a great deal of information. Because the tale is not exclusive to South Texas, the study can be further explored to determine whether the story can impact artists outside of the South Texas region.

REFERENCES

