

PEACE AND CONFLICT STUDIES AND THE TROUBLE WITH HISTORICAL EXAMPLES IN PEDAGOGY: AN INTROSPECTIVE ANALYSIS

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Abstract

Examples are critical elements in transmitting knowledge because of their role in facilitating learning and understanding. In Peace and Conflict Studies (PACS), particularly, historical examples of conflicts help in bridging the gap between theoretical and practical knowledge. However, when used insensitively, historical examples can be problematic, harmful, and capable of disrupting PACS classes. Drawing from lived experiences and secondary sources, the article examines the challenges in the use of historical examples as explainers in PACS pedagogy. Findings suggest that historical examples are critical memories that are capable of being politicised or strategically used to cement certain prejudices or notions held against certain groups or individuals. To this end, historical examples could become a weapon of memory thereby counteracting the explanatory purpose for which it was deployed. There is, therefore, a need to use historical examples very cautiously and sensitively as explainers in PACS classes. Doing so would require adhering to some pedagogical principles that must, *inter alia*, be conflict-sensitive.

Keywords

PACS; history; historical examples; PACS pedagogy; conflict sensitivity; history and PACS

Introduction

During my four years as an undergraduate student of History and International Studies at the University of Calabar, I was exposed to the wealth and labyrinth of information about Nigeria's and Africa's past. History was quite illuminating and triggered a lot of curiosity which attracted me to books, atlases, journals, and records. While *Tariq* was in short supply, *CAJOLIS* and *Ndunode* were within reach with lots of contributions from my department's scholars. I benefited greatly from the dexterity of Professor Okon Edet Uya whom I read and mimicked. His protégé, Dr David Imbua, was very inspiring. Professor Patience Erim and Dr Ekwutosi Offiong made African History a delight to learn. Professor Frank Enor, S. Ekoma, and Boypa Egbe made economic History and international political economy a coveted area for me. While Abu S. Edet decorated archaeology, in particular, and ethnology in general, as the most crucial scientific source of History, Prof. Winifred Akoda and Dr Obar Irom amplified the field of historical research and historiography that it became so pleasing and enticing to all. The dilemma of focusing more on one area became unrealistic – a situation that was further complicated by the depth and expertise displayed by Prof. Michael Bonchuk in teaching military History and strategic studies. Indeed, I was confused about which area to major in, for all were exciting and enticing.

Amidst the plethora of enticing options, however, one thing was quite obvious. My experience with most of the courses I took revealed that Nigeria's history is synonymous with the history of conflicts in Nigeria. Furthermore, many themes in Nigeria's history are quite conflicting: precolonial inter-state rivalries, slave trade, jihads, amalgamation, colonialism, constitutional development, colonial boundaries and delineation/delimitation formula, quest for national independence, preferred system of governments, party politics/alliances, elections, population census, state creation, military coups, civil war, ethnic militias, resource nationalism, secessionist movements, religious extremism, insurgencies etcetera, are all conflicts that are mutually and historically inclusive.¹

Hence, I was interested in analyzing these problems not just as historical themes that primarily track societal trends and changes over time but in a multi-disciplinary lens with flexible methodology and structuring that interdisciplinarity can allow. This drive took me, in 2017, to the Institute for Peace and Strategic Studies, University of Ibadan, for an M.A. programme in Peace and Conflict Studies. In an earlier article,² I documented my experiences which tracked the intersections between History and context in conflict analysis. Drawing from my experiences, I argued for "the introduction of courses that address specific themes of the history of conflict with peculiarity to various specialisations in peace studies programmes."³ In this paper, I depart from my previous analysis, which focused on the importance of historical 'knowledge' (referring to students) to appreciating specific analytical themes in PACS, to my observations on problematic in the deployment of historical events as explainers in PACS classes. While these examples were often necessary, I observed that some were delivered in a harmful manner to a segment of the class who were either primary parties or possessed some level of interest or emotional attachments to the issues or parties in the conflict. But are examples necessary in pedagogy? Could historical examples counteract their intended purpose in PACS classes? How could historical examples be best used as explainers in PACS classes? I proceed to answer these questions, employing my PACS classroom experiences with supporting data from extant literature.

Examples as Inevitable Explainers

Teaching and/or lecturing is both an art and science of formal knowledge transfer and curiosity management between instructors and their learning audience. It is never a unilateral exercise but involves a constant and persistent negotiation of expertise in knowledge capacity, debate, counter-debates, and other kinetic engagements to impart knowledge or guide the students to the path of knowledge. Unlike classical and medieval universities, the 21st-century classroom is hybrid, dynamic, and often semi-structured. Albeit there is an imbalance in the power relations between teachers and students, globalisation and innovations in information and communication technology have destroyed the hitherto tyranny of access to information. It has reduced the thousands of miles to reputable libraries and repositories to a click of a computer mouse and a touch on a phone screen. Hence, 21st-century students have access to a pool of theoretical and

¹ C. E. Ekpo. "Examining the Place of History in Peace and Conflict Education – Experience from Peace and Conflict Programme, University of Ibadan – Nigeria," *American Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, Volume 4, Number 1, 2019, 80.

² Ekpo, "Examining the Place of History in Peace and Conflict Education," 75-85.

³ Ekpo, "Examining the Place of History in Peace and Conflict Education," 75

empirical resources. But theories are mere abstracts and may appear complex or fail to make sense at first encounter. This is why teachers or lecturers simplify or disambiguate the appreciation and understanding of theories for curious but 'fresh' minds. Hence, the roles of teachers are being increasingly redefined from 'manufacturers' of knowledge to facilitators who primarily stimulate intellectualism and guide students across this avalanche of knowledge.

Nevertheless, negotiating expertise in knowledge capacity between the lecturer and the students is still hinged on the classical model of persuasion developed by Aristotle about a millennium ago. The ingredients of ethos, logos, and pathos must manifest in an argument to make it 'superior,' appealing, convincing, and persuasive to an audience. Ethos refers to "the speaker's power of evincing a personal character that will make his speech credible," pathos captures "his power of stirring the emotions of his hearers," and logos connotes "his power of proving a truth or an apparent truth by means of persuasive arguments."⁴ Providing requisite examples, therefore, in an attempt to explain or clarify principles, demonstrates the teacher's capacity, depth, and intellectual prowess (ethos). Certain examples, such as wars and genocide, can also stimulate emotions (pathos). Corresponding examples or cases also offer some degrees of validation which may find footing in correspondence truth theory (logos). According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 'example' refers to "an instance serving to illustrate a rule or precept or to act as an exercise in the application of rules". Examples are either presented first before principles (example-rule strategy) or given after principles (rule-example strategy) to aid students' understanding.⁵ In PACS lectures, I noticed that examples were curled mostly from documented or undocumented historical cases of conflicts or issues.

My experience in the classroom also revealed that most lecturers do not necessarily 'teach' but weave principles around their lived experiences for better contextualisation and understanding by their students. These lived experiences, I believe, are derived from their observations as individuals in their society, involvements in civil leadership and community development services, and accounts of historical scenarios that they may (not) have witnessed or read. Historical or fictional instances of corresponding conflicts to specific issues or principles discussed often facilitate more profound understanding and appreciation by students.⁶ In our conflict analysis classes, Professor Isaac Olawale Albert drew from many historical antecedents and examples to explain most principles and theories. His contributions in facilitating the peace processes in the Ife-Modakeke conflict offer classical insight into mapping and penetrating or entering into a violent conflict as a third party. Dr. Nathaniel Danjibo, in his seminars on ethnic and religious conflicts, equally blessed us with a myriad of historical cases of ethnic and religious conflicts across the length and breadth of the country. Dr. Ishola Ishola was outstanding in seasoning his

⁴ G. B. White. "Analogical Power and Aristotle's Model of Persuasion," *The American Journal of Bioethics*, Volume 6, Number 6, 2006, 65; see also C. Amos, L. Zhang, S. King and A. Allred "Aristotle's Modes of Persuasion and Valence Effects on Online Review Trustworthiness and Usefulness," *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 2021, 3, DOI: 10.1080/13527266.2021.1881806.

⁵ C. Kulgemeyer. "Towards a Framework for Effective Instructional Explanations in Science Teaching," *Studies in Science Education*, 2019, DOI: 10.1080/03057267.2018.1598054.

⁶ See R. Sugden. "How Fictional Accounts can Explain," *Journal of Economic Methodology*, Volume 20, Number 3, 2013, 237-243, DOI: 10.1080/1350178X.2013.828872.

conflict sensitivity in project development's classes with peculiar historical cases, which made conflict impact assessment a compelling area of interest for students in Human Security. Dr. Adekule, Aluko, and Agbaje also utilised a chunk of historical cases to exemplify the philosophical and practical dimensions of traditional African conflict resolution approaches. I was thrilled by the cases of Mato Oput among the Acholi of northern Uganda and the Gacaca system in Rwanda. Furthermore, the crises in the Niger Delta, the Congo and the Mano River regions presented soluble historical cases for Dr Stephen Faleti, who never hesitated to use them as explainers in establishing the intersection between the environment and conflicts.

Although lecturers of PACS possess some phenomenological rights to their lived experiences as sources of cases or examples, historical examples deal with impacts and experiences that cut across larger populations who may analyze and understand specific events based on their vantage point. To this end, subjective and biased use of historical cases as explainers may be insensitive and capable of fomenting multi-dimensional conflicts in a PACS class. I will explain how this could manifest drawing from my PACS classes' experience.

The Trouble with Historical Examples

Since historical events are inevitable in explaining or illustrating principles, terminologies, and theories in PACS, they are also potential sources of discord and fracas in a class with relative symmetry in power relations between the students and the lecturer. Why so? History deals with the memories of past activities between man and man and man and his environment. By memory, I refer to “what is transferred from the past into the present reality of a group” – it is a historical knowledge or collective memory.⁷ While some memories are good, civil, and celebrated, others are negative, political, and subject to controversy. Bad memories are often subjective as different parties in a single historical event share divergent views and perspectives of what happened and its cause-and-effect connection. The politics of memory emanates from the selective exploitation of memory by experts such as lecturers in the humanities. According to Elżbieta Hałas, historical knowledge is always used selectively in collective memory, leading to fragmentariness of commemorations that often culminate in conflicts of memory.⁸ Wang further argued that “powerful collective memories—whether real or concocted— often lie at the root of conflicts, nationalism and cultural identities.”⁹ “In most societies,” he further argued, “history textbooks are the ‘agents of memory’ and function as a sort of “supreme historical court.”¹⁰ The lecturers and the general school system may be passive or active agents of the state “whose aim is to ensure the transmission of ‘approved knowledge’ to the younger generations.”¹¹ Ueno Chizuko and Jordan Sand questioned thus: “Why have the acts of the powerful been selected and the experiences of

⁷ E. Hałas. “Symbolic Construction of “Solidarity:” The Conflict of Interpretations and the Politics of Memory,” *Polish Sociological Review*, Volume 170, 2010, 228.

⁸ Hałas, “Symbolic Construction of “Solidarity,” 228.

⁹ Z. Wang. “Old Wounds, New Narratives: Joint History Textbook Writing and Peacebuilding in East Asia,” *History and Memory*, Volume 21, Number 1, 2009, 101.

¹⁰ Wang. “Old Wounds, New Narratives,” 101.

¹¹ Wang. “Old Wounds, New Narratives,” 104.

those whom they oppress not? Why is a privileged position granted to political events, while the everyday is treated as unworthy of consideration?"¹² Leo Tolstoy further queried thus:

Why remember that which has passed? Passed? What has passed? How could it have passed—that which we not only have not started to eradicate and heal but are even afraid to call by its name? How could a brutal illness be cured only by our saying that it is gone? And it is not going away and will not and cannot go away until we admit that we are ill. In order to cure an illness one must first admit that one has it. And it is precisely what we are not doing. And not only not doing, but aiming all our efforts at not seeing it, not calling it by its name. And, consequently, it is not going away but only mutating, only penetrating deeper into our flesh, our blood, our bones, our marrow.¹³

Possible answers to these questions may reinforce the position of Wang that:

Political leaders as well as many citizens have a vested interest in retaining simplistic narratives that flatter their own group and promote group unity by emphasising sharp divergences between themselves and other groups; they are highly resistant to histories that include the presentation of the other side's point of view. The manipulation of the past often entails the use of stereotypes and prejudice in describing the "other."¹⁴

Consequently, selective use of memory could serve intended purposes such as manipulation, efforts to secure political power, legitimation, and shaping the thoughts of laypersons,¹⁵ but to the other party, the politicisation of such memory may be a source of trauma¹⁶ that is capable of triggering or escalating emotional responses and debates that may deteriorate to tantrums. Again, such use of memory on "wrong kind" is capable of stoking "the fires revenge."¹⁷ An excellent example of 'a bad memory,' in the case of Nigeria, is the Nigeria-Biafra War (1967-1970) which culminated in a web of problems that transcended the post-war efforts and lingered until this day in the form of pro-Biafra secessionist movements. In his article titled "Shared Histories, Divided Memories", Godwin Onuoha dissected the politics of memory in the

¹² U. Chizuko and J. Sand. "The Politics of Memory: Nation, Individual and Self," *History and Memory*, Fall/Winter Volume 11, Number 2, 1999, 140.

¹³ Quoted in L. Aron. "The Politics of Memory," *American Enterprise Institute for Public Research*, 2008, 1. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.com/stable/resrep03048>.

¹⁴ G. B. White. "Analogical Power and Aristotle's Model of Persuasion," *The American Journal* Wang. "Old Wounds, New Narratives," 104.

¹⁵ J. Olick and J. Robbins. "Social Memory Studies: From "Collective Memory" to the Historical Sociology of Mnemonic Practices," *Annual Review of Sociology*, Volume 24, 1998, 108.

¹⁶ L. D'Orsi. "Trauma and the Politics of Memory of the Uruguayan Dictatorship," *Latin American Perspectives*, Volume 42, Number 3, 2015, 162-179.

¹⁷ C. E. Cochran. "Joseph and the Politics of Memory," *The Review of Politics*, Summer, Volume 64, Number 3, 2002, 421.

documentation and historiography of the Nigeria-Biafra War. He noted that the memories of the war “continue to be highly divisive and deeply contested.”¹⁸ According to him, a state-centric narrative of the war as a war of “national unity” dominates discourses but at the exclusion of the Igbo and other groups’ accounts of the war as national liberation. Official accounts also fail to capture the Igbo’s tales of massacre and atrocities committed against them by the federal troops. Accordingly,

What emerges is a mutual delegitimisation of one another’s narratives, as one party to the conflict tries to invalidate another’s description, narrative, and interpretation. This reciprocal delegitimisation becomes even more crucial by virtue of the fact that it hardens and intensifies opposing positions and “bolsters a group’s self-identity and justifies its role in the conflict,” as it invalidates the narrative and role of other groups: “if ‘we’ are right, ‘they’ are surely wrong, and if ‘we’ are victims, ‘they’ are obviously the perpetrators.”¹⁹

The above suggests that the Nigeria-Biafra War may be the most contentious memory in the entire collective History of Nigeria. Therefore, it is a very sensitive theme but fits as an explainer to disparate levels of conflicts and, from my experience, is often used by lecturers in PACS to explain several themes, principles, and theories of violent conflicts. As Onuoha noted, most lecturers of PACS, while demonstrating or explaining certain theories and principles in internal conflict/security discourses, often tread the path of the official account. In one of the international conflict courses, a PACS lecturer averred that the Igbo’s caused the Nigeria-Biafra war and, by implication, deserve every blame and consequence that accompanied the war and its aftermath. This did not go well with some students who debated until the lecturer angrily excused himself. I did not attend that class but joined the post-class discussions on that very theme that led to the premature abortion of the class. In some of the courses I audited in Human Security and Internal Security, some PACS lecturers took some rather too critical stands against the Igbos and one overtly declared that the “Igbo’s were foolish”. While this may understandably be a deduction derived from the nature of literature the lecturer is exposed to, it is a mere inference which, of course, may be based on a one-sided collection of state-centric literature about the war. The proliferation of state-centric narratives on the war blurs perspectives, and creates a thin line between facts and analyses, culminating in the engagement of the war debate in the realm of nationalistic ideology but critical intellectualism. Such aligns with the submission of Confino that “the problem with memory defined in terms of politics and political use is that it becomes an illustrative reflection of political development and often is relativised to ideology.”²⁰

¹⁸ G. Onuoha. “Shared Histories, Divided Memories: Mediating and Navigating the Tensions in Nigeria–Biafra War Discourses,” *Africa Today*, Volume 63, Number 1, 2016, 3.

¹⁹ Onuoha, “Shared Histories, Divided Memories,” 4.

²⁰ A. Confino. “Collective Memory and Cultural History: Problems of Method,” *The American Historical Review*, Volume 102, Number 5, 1997, 1393.

However, the problem identified above is not totally out of place and is traced to the fact that just as PACS is interested in everything,²¹ it is also interested in anyone. Hence, the terrain is not exclusive to historians trained to be conscious of, treat facts with suspicion, and separate them from analyses or inferences. As Edward Hallet Carr in his celebrated *What is History?* iterated, even facts are not sacrosanct. How much more deductions, made from them? Indeed, History as a collective memory, as Chizuko and Sand put it, "is a continuous trial"²² since it may have to be rewritten as times and interpretations change – and I add, as new 'facts' emerge. But the multi-disciplinary nature of PACS entails that it will always attract scholars from all disciplines and walks of life. But how can memories be used as explainers by all and sundry in PACS classes in a more conflict-sensitive way? I curl from my initial paper²³ to demonstrate that in the next subhead.

Towards a Conflict-sensitive Use of Historical Examples in PACS Pedagogy

Being conflict-sensitive in selecting and using historical explainers in PACS classes may sound redundant to an avid reader who may wonder why experts in the field of PACS may have to be reminded to practice or demonstrate their speciality even in the process of grooming new sets of experts. But if conflicts could erupt in heaven filled with angels according to Christians' Holy Book, then no mortal is insulated from its inevitabilities. Ayuba Mavalla's *Practical Mediation* demonstrates that even on the verge of mediating a solution to an existing conflict, a new conflict could emerge or an existing conflict could escalate if the mediator negates some sensitive protocols which he labelled as "rules for mediation and peacebuilding."²⁴ There should, I also argue, be some rules to guide the use of History as explainers in PACS classes.

In an earlier work,²⁵ I borrowed from the ideas of Korostelina,²⁶ Noddings,²⁷ Manojlovic²⁸ and, Bekerman and Zembylas²⁹ to propose that:

'bad memories' in discussing conflict history can be well managed if instructors (i) do not treat loved memories with scorn; (ii) pay attention to both feelings and facts; (iii) discuss both what happened and how people felt/feel about such event; (iv)

²¹ I. O. Albert. "Concepts and Methods in Peace and Conflict Studies." In *Conflict Resolution, Identity Crisis and Development in Africa* edited by C. O. Basse and O. O. Oshita (Lagos: Malthouse Press Limited, 2007).

²² Chizuko and Sand, "The Politics of Memory: Nation, Individual and Self,"

²³ Ekpo, "Examining the Place of History in Peace and Conflict Education,"

²⁴ A. Mavalla. *Practical Mediation: A Guide for Learners and Professionals* (Wurukum, Makurdi: Old Press, 2016).

²⁵ Ekpo, "Examining the Place of History in Peace and Conflict Education,"

²⁶ K. V. Korostelina. *History Education in the Formation of Social Identity: Toward a Culture of Peace* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

²⁷ N. Noddings. *Peace Education: How we Come to Love and Hate War*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

²⁸ B. Manojlovic. *Education for Sustainable Peace and Conflict Resilient Communities* (New Jersey: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018).

²⁹ Z. Bekerman and M. Zembylas. *Teaching Contested Narratives: Identity, Memory and Reconciliation in Peace Education and Beyond* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

discuss the reasons for the feelings generated then and now (v) understand and honour the multi-perspectival nature of the past and realise that different groups experienced the same event differently and (vi) observe absolute symmetry of victimhood.³⁰

These recommendations could also facilitate a smooth use of memories as explainers, especially controversial collective histories such as the Nigeria-Biafra War. Firstly, treating a controversial but cherished memory such as the Nigeria-Biafra War,³¹ my experience revealed sparked emotions and sentiments that made some PACS students either question the lecturer's intentions or their capacity or expertise on the subject matter. This was more so as some students tended to have been exposed to both official or state-centric accounts and the positions of the Igbo and other minority groups, as demonstrated by Onuoha's study. Irrespective of the popular tales or narratives in popular accounts, efforts must be made by lecturers of PACS to ensure such examples are used sensitively and respectfully, especially in a diverse class with multiplicity in religious, ethnic, regional, cultural, and class affinities.

Secondly, sensitive intercourse of both feelings and facts in the use of memories as explainers could go a long way to appeasing the sentiments and emotions of some students who may agree to the fact but within a particular context which ultimately shapes their inferences. Hence, while stressing facts, carping phrases or strong criticism should be avoided since the essence is not to pass judgment but to facilitate learning. Hence, statements such as "the Igbo's were foolish", even though a valid conclusion, must be avoided for it could, and was indeed, disruptive to a category of students who were Igbo as well as non-Igbo's who shared contrary opinions. This necessitates the third point, which emphasises the need to discuss what happened and how people felt or are feeling about it. In this lies the scorn antidote since it invokes the subject of empathy which draws from a critical consideration of the feelings of students who may be a primary party to the contentious memory used as explainers.

Furthermore, connecting antecedents with present trajectories of events could give a clear compass of the feelings generated and sustained by old memories. This, particularly, is important in highly contentious collective memories. The resurgence of Biafra secessionist movements, for instance,³² presents such an instance. In deliberations in one of my internal conflict classes, students were given opportunities to present their thoughts on the issue. An overwhelming number of students who contributed based their analyses on the triggering factors of the problem, thereby negating its structural and proximate causes. The avoidance of the PACS lecturer to call attention

³⁰ Ekpo, "Examining the Place of History in Peace and Conflict Education," 83.

³¹ See Onuoha. "Shared Histories, Divided Memories..."

³² See C. E. Ekpo. "Explaining the Resurgence of Biafra Radicalisation and Nationalism in South-East Nigeria," *African Journal on Terrorism*, Volume 8, Number 1, 2019, 92-121; C. E. Ekpo and C. A. Agoye "The Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) and the Setting of the "Jubril Al-Sudani" Agenda: A Qualitative Review of a Failed Securitization Move" *International Journal of Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methods*, Volume 7, Number 2, 2019, 1-17; C. E. Ekpo and C. A. Agoye. "A (un)Just and (un)Holy War? The Theme of Imagery and Symbolism in the IPOB Secessionist Struggle" *International Journal in Management and Social Science*, Volume 6, Number 6, 2018, 28-55.

to or amplify voices that attempted to call attention to the structural and proximate causes of the issue created a gap in connecting old memories to present actions. The implication was the creation of a polarised class of those who understood the root causes of the issue and those who were convinced of the temporary nature of the neo-Biafran movements. This, rather than facilitating learning, counteracted by creating more problems which often time escalated into heated debates beyond the four walls of the lecture hall.

Importantly also, receptivity to rivalling perspectives could be very instructive in shaping varying positions that may be drawn from a common 'fact.' Overtly blaming the Igbo, for instance, for the Nigeria-Biafra War, and prematurely ending a lecture upon being challenged, demonstrates intolerance for informed and critical perspectives, which in this case, was essential to weighing the PACS lecturer's intentions. Some students insinuated that the PACS lecturer 'knows what he is doing,' stylishly accusing him of disinformation, but this may not have been the case. Nevertheless, this may never have been a contentious issue had the PACS lecturer been receptive to a divergent perspective of the collective memory of the war. Hence, respecting parallel perspectives, especially from primary parties to the conflict, could go a long way in balancing opinions with opportunities to challenge existing narratives that, though mainstream, may be capable of fomenting discord in a PACS class.

Lastly, accepting that in a collective memory of violent conflict, for instance, there are bound to be victims from both sides could be very helpful in explaining that dimension to a historical explainer in a PACS class. But as Onuoha³³ has argued of the Nigeria-Biafra War, there is an asymmetry in the definition of victimhood and this, as I have demonstrated earlier, influenced the perspective and positionality of some PACS lecturers. However, acknowledging symmetry in victimhood across parties is capable of generating empathy and presenting a historical explainer in a matter that is befitting for a diverse class who may share a strong interest in or feelings toward the collective historical explainer.

Conclusion

In this paper, I have attempted to present the limitations or problems in using historical examples as explainers in PACS classes. I draw extensively from my M.A. class experiences and observations as a student of PACS but with a background in History and International Studies. My observations, which align with earlier works of Aron³⁴ and Wang,³⁵ reveal that though collective History or memory is essential in explaining principles, theories and concepts in PACS classes, it could be politicised or arbitrarily used but with (un)intended consequences. Numb usage of historical examples by PACS lecturers without recourse to the emotions, perspectives, or general feelings of some students who may be primary parties to such conflict negates the basic requirements for the use of 'bad memories' as explainers. I have demonstrated such cases with strong examples which I drew from classes in which I directly participated. I used the theme of the Nigeria-Biafra War to demonstrate a few cases of such instances where the probable good intentions of localising concepts or theories boomeranged and escalated to tantrums and premature endings of PACS classes. I also mentioned of how the inappropriate presentation of historical

³³ Onuoha, "Shared Histories, Divided Memories,"

³⁴ Aron, "The Politics of Memory,"

³⁵ Wang. "Old Wounds, New Narratives,"

opinions as facts and asymmetric blaming of parties by some PACS lecturers generated avoidable feuds.

Consequently, I have suggested that if PACS lecturers pay more attention to students' emotions and other sensibilities while employing historical examples, collective memory could be invaluable explainers. A conscious balancing of perspectives and evisceration of analyses from 'facts' may be the antidote to the trouble with the use of historical examples as explainers in PACS classes. Sensitive examples must be used sensitively to avoid disruptions in classes. Thus, the findings of this paper are very relevant to the lecturers of PACS, especially those without prior background in History and historiography. Deductions from the findings have been used to recommend ways through which historical examples could be more efficiently and effectively used and communicated as explainers in PACS classes with diverse students without engendering disruptive sessions.