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Antiheroes in African Literature: A Study of Obi Okonkwo in Chinua Achebe's *No Longer at Ease* and Baako Onipa in Ayi Kwei Armah's *Fragments*

Chuks Iloegbunam
Department of English
Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam
chuks.iloegbunam@gmail.com

Abstract
This study develops *Dimkpa*, a theory for classifying antiheroes grounded in the Igbo worldview of heroism. Applying *Dimkpa* to Chinua Achebe's *No Longer at Ease* and Ayi Kwei-Armah's *Fragments*, the paper analyses protagonists Obi Okonkwo and Baako Onipa through the lens of Igbo communal values, spiritual obligations, and social expectations – criteria often marginalised in Western critical frameworks. The analysis shows that Obi and Baako function as antiheroes not merely through individual moral failure, but through a breakdown in their relationship to communal norms that define personhood in Igbo thought. This study points to Western education as the key factor responsible for Obi and Baako's alienation and their disconnection from traditional norms. The findings demonstrate that *Dimkpa* offers a more culturally coherent framework for reading African protagonists, and suggest that integrating indigenous value systems can correct blind spots in dominant literary theory while instituting more effective ways of teaching African literature.
Keywords: Antihero, African Literature, Ambition, Achievement, Dimkpa

Introduction
The exploration of protagonists' character in African literature has always been in three categories: the heroic, the antiheroic and the villainous. Although novelists or playwrights hardly tag their protagonists with any of these labels, the perceptive reader

invariably knows how to classify each character in any creative work he reads. It is easy and noncontradictory to characterise Okonkwo in *Things Fall Apart*, Ezeulu in *Arrow of God*, and Chris Oriko in *Anthills of the Savannah* as heroes. All three are characters that pursued their purposes in Achebe's creative imagination with missionary zeal and unquestioned steadfastness. Although they each ended up tragically, the heroic nature of their circumstances is all too glaring. The point here is that a protagonist's heroic attributes are not determined by how a novelist finally contrives their end, but by their thoughts, actions or inactions. A man who is loved by his community because of his contribution to their peace, welfare and development will still be considered heroic even if kidnappers or terrorists tragically snuffed out his life.

In real life, Nigeria still sees General Murtala Mohammed in a heroic light. For that reason, it placed the former Head of State's image on the nation's N20 currency note and renamed the country's busiest international airport after him. Yet, the man's life had ended when coup plotters rounded up his convoy and pumped bullets into his state car and his frame. On the contrary, Lieutenant Colonel Buka Suka Dimka is consigned to the scrapheap of the villainous. He and thirty-eight other middle-ranking Army officers and some civilians were tried for the 1976 coup d'état that cost General Mohammed his life. They were found guilty and executed at the Bar Beach in Lagos. The facts of Dimka's excellent military training in Australia and his rise to the position of the Director of the Nigerian Army Physical Training Corps did not constitute extenuating circumstances to his ascribed villainous pedigree.

As it is in real life, so it also is in fictional works. The antiheroes may not be involved in conspiracies that end human life or upturn community stability. But their stories are often laced with complex and questionable decisions, some of which are downright objectionable. They may be cast in moulds that lead to decisions

that impact negatively on themselves or on those around them. Such scenarios could be undesirable without rendering them repulsive.

African literature teems with antiheroes. Two popular examples will suffice. In *Efuru*, by Flora Nwapa, the eponymous protagonist means well and is too trusting, to the extent that she ends up in hopelessness, which she was trying to evade. And in *Purple Hibiscus* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Eugene Achike uses scripture to mask his predilection for anti-Christian traits but domestic cruelty lurks beneath the veneer of his acclaimed goodness. The objective of this study is to employ the concept of Dimkpa to examine the lives of Obi Okonkwo and Baako Onipa, and to identify the attributes and traits that classify them as antiheroes.

Theoretical Framework

Various theories and perspectives have shaped how characters are assessed and understood in creative works. They include Formalism/New Criticism, Marxist Criticism, Historicism, New Historicism, Psychoanalytic Criticism, Reader-Response Theory and Feminist Criticism. All literary theories of criticism have their strong and not-so-strong points. The Dimkpa Theory is common among the Igbo ethnic group of Nigeria. It is the most common lens employed by Ndigbo to view and analyse characters in real life and in fiction. Yet, this study is unaware of any critical text that pointedly examines literary works through the Dimkpa lens.

The Dimkpa Theory has its values. Foremost is that, because it is earthed in the worldview of the Igbo, it resonates in their interpretation of character, using the critical and established indices of contemporaneous, cultural, economic, historical, material and spiritual considerations. The result of any study based on the Dimkpa Theory can only produce comprehensive and convincing conclusions. It asks searching questions such as these: Is the protagonist acting in accordance with the established

practices of his people? In terms of religious beliefs, are there aspects of his personal life that are sacrilegious? The African believes in work and abhors laziness and idleness. Thus, it becomes apposite to ask where the protagonist belongs in the critical matter of earning a living for himself and for those under his care. Answers to these questions will pigeonhole the protagonist as a dimkpa or otherwise

The term Dimkpa is an Igbo word that refers to a man who lives up to the expectations of his people. It is composed of two words: *di*, which means master, and *mkpa*, which signifies essential priority. At the basic level, dimkpa is used to describe a full-grown male adult. But from the Igbo cultural viewpoint, the word denotes an achiever, someone who is the master and superintendent of the household. Efulefu is the word that describes a worthless person. It stands in contradistinction to dimkpa. An efulefu cannot be a dimkpa, even if there is no doubt about his adulthood, as both terms are mutually exclusive. Some other Igbo words are rooted in the word *di*. They include *Di nta* for hunter, *Di nka* for craftsman, *Di ochi* for wine tapper, *Di opi* for flautist, *Di nkwa* for dancer, and *Di ogu* for warrior. Each is spelt as one word thus: Dinta, Dinka, Diochi, Diopi, Dinkwa, and Diogu. It is impossible among the Igbo to see an efulefu characterised as a master of anything, not even of their worthlessness.

Thus, in using the Dimkpa Theory for analysing a protagonist's character, care is taken to examine the protagonist based on the culture, traditions, norms, mores, and values of Ndigbo. Any healthy adult incapable of earning a living is not a dimkpa. Convincing answers are obtained for searching questions before the title of Dimkpa, which is something of an accolade, is bestowed. Does the fellow in question play his expected roles in community affairs? Is he circumspect or a mere chatterbox with a proclivity for rumour mongering? Is his loincloth properly girded, or is licentiousness his stock in trade? Is he the epitome of

sobriety, or is he a faithful devotee to Bacchus's altar? Is he a double-tongued man, who changes positions with every swing of the pendulum, or is his word his bond? Is he "double-handed" to the outcome that, wherever he visits, denizens of the place report that one or two items have gone missing? Or is he honest and trustworthy?

Because the Dimkpa concept is special to this researcher, there are no earlier works, whether verbal or written, to cite. But the concept, unmentioned by name, is adequately developed in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*. Chapter one paints epic verbal pictures of a Dimkpa and an Efulefu, the antihero. The first paragraph of this monumental work points to Okonkwo, the protagonist, as a Dimkpa:

> Okonkwo was well known throughout the nine villages and even beyond. His fame rested on solid personal achievements. As a young man of eighteen he had brought honour to his village by throwing Amalinze the Cat. Amalinze was the great wrestler who for seven years was unbeaten, from Umuofia to Mbaino. He was called the Cat because his back would not touch the earth. It was this man that Okonkwo threw in a fight which the old man agreed was one of the fiercest since the founder of their town engaged a spirit of the wild for seven days and seven nights.

Elsewhere, in this opening chapter, Achebe lists other attributes for which Okonkwo was a Dimkpa. He had no patience with unsuccessful men. He was ashamed of his *efulefu* father. Apart from his physical prowess, he was a successful farmer and owner of two barns full of yams. He had three wives and many children, all of whom were properly taken care of. He had exhibited valour in two inter-tribal wars, and he had taken two titles.

Achebe also portrays the antihero in this chapter. He is Unoka, Okonkwo's father:

> Unoka, the grown-up, was a failure. He was poor and his wife and children had barely enough to eat. People laughed at him because he was a loafer, and they swore never to lend him any more money because he never paid back. But Unoka was such a man that he always succeeded in borrowing more, and piling up his debts... When Unoka died he had taken no title at all and was heavily in debt (4).

Any Igbo hearer of Okonkwo's story would inevitably pronounce him a dimkpa. He will also pronounce Unoka an efulefu, an antihero. The points that mark out Okonkwo as a dimkpa and Unoka, his father, an efulefu, are the sorts considered in situating Obi Okonkwo and Baako Onipa as antiheroes in this study.

The Illusory World of Obi Okonkwo and Baako Onipa

Baako Onipa and Obi Okonkwo are from Ghana and Nigeria, respectively. Obi is the protagonist in *No Longer at Ease*, Achebe's second novel; Baako is the protagonist in *Fragments*, Armah's second novel. That Obi and Baako come from different countries does not mitigate the sharp coincidences in their stories. Both are children of Africa's dawn of political independence, the great hopes of the Black man. Achebe and Armah, their creators, are accomplished observers of the movement of transition in their home countries. They are talented writers who created rounded characters that tell all but the happy ending of their stories. Obi Okonkwo and Baako Onipa are tragic characters.

Obi Okonkwo was not born with a silver spoon in his mouth. But his origins were not wretched either. His father, being an employee of the early missionaries, earned a tidy monthly stipend as a catechist. Added to farming, which was generally practised in the rural settings of his time, there was no question of his family living from hand to mouth. The family was forward-looking enough to

ensure that Obi benefited from a Western education at a time when his mates were idling about, scraping a living by doing odd jobs or petty trading.

Because he is a great student, his community grants him a loan to help him earn a university education in Britain. He succeeds. On returning to Nigeria, he gets a high-ranking position in the civil service, a preferment previously reserved for white colonialists. His society looks up to him.

Baako Onipa's story is silent on his childhood and adolescent years. But the narrative shows that his mother is a schoolteacher. For a son of the educated, it is unsurprising to see him at the novel's beginning preparing for higher education in the United States of America. Although unstated, Baako's university education could not have been self-sponsored. The portrayal of his family indicates that they could not have sponsored him either, unless they took a loan or mortgaged a significant property to be able to do so. Maybe he earned a scholarship. After five years in New York, Baako returns to Accra and, despite initial frustrations spanning a mere three weeks, gets a scriptwriting job with Ghanavision, his country's television service. His people look up to him.

As educated people holding down good jobs, those who are family members or closely associated with Obi Okonkwo and Baako Onipa have great expectations of them. The duo is considered to be messianic, deployed as it were by providence to wipe away the tears and shame of colonialism from the brows of the suffering masses, pioneers of a new dawn of African emancipation to place the people on a pedestal of meaningful existence. Many reviewers have posited that the central tension in the two novels is the overwhelming pressures that ultimately floored the two protagonists.

In "The Intellectual at the Crossroads: An Analysis of Ayi Kwei Armah's *Fragments*," Kasimi Djiman says that:

> The intellectual is commonly seen as an instrument whereby the material needs of his immediate family are covered, a sort of living god bringing quick and sudden wealth where misery is rampant. This popular perception is at variance with that of the scholar, who, armed with his ideas, wants to provide a global answer to the scourges of his society (1).

The blatant clash between Baako Onipas's outlook and that of a great part of his society accounts for his uneasiness, culminating with his final dementia. Of Obi Okonkwo, Onuora Ossie Enekwe argues in "Chinua Achebe's Novels" that:

> Obi had been sponsored by the Umuofia Progressive Union in the understanding that he would repay the money spent on him. The society in which Obi finds himself upon his return has been fragmented by cultural clash and weakened by acquisitiveness and corruption. He is determined to fight against corruption, inefficiency and other social vices, but he is unable to reconcile his values with those of his people, who put extreme pressure on him... He has fine ideas, but when it is time to act, he crumbles because he lacks moral strength and conviction (31).

What is obvious from the views of Djiman and Enekwe is that, after their education abroad, Obi Okonkwo and Baako Onipa found themselves in strange and mystifying situations that were impossible to master. This cannot be altogether true because countless others with similar education and foreign exposure, like Onipa and Okonkwo, survived the novel and outlandish experiences that they encountered on returning to their home countries, and thrived! The blame on intractable pressures only

achieves one result: it masks the censure that should attend character diffidence and moral turpitude. The Dimkpa Theory unmasks the antihero's negative qualities.

The Antiheroes

Obi Okonkwo's childhood memory forbids him to forget that, as a child, he always looked forward to his mother's return from the market. This is because, invariably, she brought home chewables like bean cakes and plantain chips for her children. Every mother does that. If Obi remembers this, it should have imbued him with a sense of generosity. Throughout the novel, there is no mention of a single instance when he sent home goodies for his younger siblings or relations. This cannot be explained away with the excuse of a lean purse or financial pressure because the goodies in question, like biros, toilet soaps, vests, panties and shoes, cost a pittance in comparison to his earning power. This hints at selfishness. No Dimkpa should be trapped in introversion.

Obi's tight-fistedness is even more regrettable when the sacrifices made by poor and lowly people before he departed for England are remembered:

> The gathering ended with the singing of 'Praise God from whom all blessings flow.' The guests then said their farewells to Obi, many of them repeating all the advice that he had already been given. They shook hands with him and as they did so they pressed their presents into his palm, to buy pencil with, or an exercise book or a loaf of bread for the journey, a shilling there and a penny there — substantial presents in a village where money was so rare, where men and women toiled from year to year to wrest a meagre living from an unwilling and exhausted soil (10).

It never occurs to Obi that, by giving a loaf of bread or a tin of sardines, he could have put a smile on the faces of those poor,

village-bound folks who had pressed coins into his palm half a decade earlier. He worked at the Scholarship Board. It cannot be suggested that, after him, Umuofia never begat another son or daughter who is blessed with cleverness. Yet it never strikes him as reasonable to explore the possibility of using his good offices to influence the award of a scholarship to one or two of them. Instead, he went about collecting bribes and sleeping with young and desperate women in exchange for unearned scholarship slots.

Etched in Obi Okonkwo's memory is the fact that he did not proceed to the United Kingdom on a grant. What the Umuofia Progressive Union gave to him was a loan. This loan was tied to considerable expectations. Umuofia is surrounded by quarrelsome neighbours. His townsfolk in the urban centres often have disputes with coworkers and allied troublemakers. They, therefore, taxed themselves heavily to send one of their sons abroad to study Law and return home to defend them whenever legal challenges and sundry disputes surfaced. But what did the arrogant Obi do? Once he was done with university enrolment, he switched courses. In this respect, he has defaulted on the tacit agreement he reached with his people. As far as he was concerned, they could further tax themselves and hire legal experts whenever they had the need.

If Obi's tertiary education is through self-sponsorship, he would have been entitled to the latitude of changing courses on a whim, even studying to become a trapeze artist if the dizzying profession took his fancy. But he settled for English, without bothering to explain things to his sponsors and, upon his return to Nigeria, without also bothering to offer apologies for being a monumental disappointment. Pressures, be they peer, cultural or colonialist, cannot excuse his behaviour.

Obi Okonkwo could be considered to be absent-minded, for he paid scant attention to how his people perceived him. That explains the less-than-hearty applause that followed his speech at Umuofia's

party to welcome him back to Nigeria. The town union's secretary, a non-graduate, employed elevated language in his welcome address to Obi. He deployed elegant sentences like "Sir, we, the officers and members of the Umuofia Progressive Union, present with humility and gratitude this token of our appreciation of your unprecedented academic brilliance" and "The importance of having one of our sons in the vanguard of this march of progress is nothing short of axiomatic." But when Obi stood up to respond to the welcome address, he forgot all the polysyllables he had crammed into his brain in England and addressed them unimpressively with clutters of "is" and "was". Feeling cheated out of their deserved oratorical excitement, the audience only "clapped from politeness" when his drab speech ended.

"Charity begins at home" is a popular saying. This means that a person's first responsibility is for the needs of their own family and friends. Obi Okonkwo professes grandiose plans for saving Nigeria, if not humankind as a whole. He would rid the entity of bribery and corruption. He would also see that people carried out their responsibilities to the letter. But on his home front, he singularly fails to match his words with action. His poor mother is a sickly, old woman. A sensible son would take her to Lagos, where expert medical attention is guaranteed. Obi Okonkwo does nothing of the sort. He barely manages to send them a feeding allowance. As for promptly paying his siblings' school fees, that is a tall order. Why is he unable to meet his financial obligations? It is not because white faces still peopled the Nigerian civil service, It is because, not being a Dimkpa, he cannot prudently manage his finances.

He bought himself a brand-new saloon car used mainly for frequenting nightclubs and eateries with his girlfriend. He got himself a cook, as if his kitchen would protest if he prepared his meals. Cruising Lagos streets, he cast baleful glances at pedestrians, bribe-taking characters, possibly, the owners of

Footwagen and *Legedis Benz*, while recoiling from gutters brimming with sewage. In the kingdom of his imagination, he would clear all such mess. But he pays no attention to upholding honour. At the Umuofia reception for him, the union's secretary had obliquely referred to the loan that earned Obi Okonkwo a university place abroad. The man described it as "an investment," an "arrangement whereby the beneficiary from this scheme was expected to repay his debt over four years so that an endless stream of students will be enabled to drink deep at the Pierian Spring of knowledge" (29).

Obi Okonkwo's awareness of this arrangement is undeniable. Yet, he defaults on the loan and is rude about the shortcoming. A possible interpretation of this behaviour is that, since he is already a graduate, every other Umuofia student may end their education at the level of a school certificate holder. What is swallowing his earnings? Going to Kingsway departmental store to buy engagement rings and fripperies, and visiting dubious clinics in seedy sections of the Lagos metropolis, seeking unscrupulous doctors to procure the abortion of innocent, unborn babies! In what ways can his profligacy possibly be seen as the consequence of culture clash or the mountainous pressure of institutionalised corruption?

Obi Okonkwo's crisis points are compounded by gutlessness. His claim to be in love is questionable. Once the mother threatens to commit suicide if he marries a girl classified as an "osu" or outcast, he ditches the unfortunate lady. The objection of his parents and most members of the Umuofia Progressive Union is partially understandable. His parents, though Christian, are old-fashioned and unable to discard at an instant a centuries-old customary practice that is antithetical to their new faith. Even to this day, a lot of those hollering their Christianity the loudest will not recognise Christ even if He stood in their front.

They are dyed-in-the-wool traditionalists tied to the ways of their forefathers while hypocritically fantasizing about the imperatives of modern times. That should not be the case with Obi Okonkwo, who professes to have seen the light.

Comeuppance is the consequence of the unexamined life. Obi Okonkwo, having boxed himself into a tight corner, is left with no option but to grope about in a futile attempt at salvation. His groping leads directly to the jurisdiction of Mr. Justice William Galloway, Judge of the High Court of Lagos and the Southern Cameroons. Although the judge's summation of Obi Okonkwo's terrible fate betrays incomprehension of causation, it has the weight and destructive force of a hammer blow: "I cannot comprehend how a young man of your education and brilliant promise could have done this" (2).

For the Igbo, the exponents of the Dimkpa philosophy, there can be no grey areas in the set of circumstances that demolished a brilliant promise. Obi Okonkwo is no Dimkpa, only a pretender to the ideal. *No Longer at Ease* discusses many instances of his utter disdain for bribery and corruption. He berates a clerk who solicited a bribe as his ship docked at the Apapa quay. He is scandalised when, during his job interview, an official suggests that his interest in the appointment is probably informed by a desire to join the bribery train. On his first trip to Umuofia after his stint in the United Kingdom, he thwarts traffic policemen who tried to demand a bribe from the commercial vehicle driver. He chases a man from his office who offers bribery for a favour. Then, at the slightest existential tug, he turns around and feasts sumptuously from his own vomit.

Baako Onipa scoffs at anything and everything around him. Flying from New York to Accra after a stopover in Paris, he thinks his fellow passengers are unreal. He sees Brempong, who explores the possibility of a new friendship, as a pest riddled with materialism. Brempong's wife is also an offender because her wig is elaborate.

For him, it is out of place for a dancing party to have stormed the airport to welcome Brempong home. Only he, Baako, knows where the sun rises from each morning. Brempong mentions that he had bought her mother a deep freezer, which is coming by ship. He has ensured that most of the things he would need in Accra have been arranged. To Baako, who had arrived with only his suitcase and a second-hand guitar, the man was an exemplar of unbridled acquisitiveness.

Baako does not seem to notice that those welcoming him back home are surprised that he came home almost empty-handed. At the office where he went to see FiFi Williams, a bank executive, the man is surprised that Baako had not arranged to bring a car with him from America. Mr. Williams is surprised because that was the habit of "been-tos" returning students to the mother country. Baako did not fund his university education in America, a country where opportunities abound for part-time work for those who are not indolent. He did not earn a dime doing part-time work as an undergraduate. He just flew into Accra, knowing that his mother owned a house where he could forever live free of charge.

He comes from a matrilineal society, meaning that his home was with his mother's people. In the house, there were other people like Naana, his blind grandmother, Efua, his mother, Araba, his sister and her husband, Kwesi. He brings absolutely nothing home, however tokenistic, for them. His old, sightless granny could do with a walking stick or a hat to cover up the tuft of grey over her skull. Of course, that is improbable to Baako. Yet, this woman had rendered the most fervent of prayers for Baako's success, moments before he enplaned for further studies. The poetry of her supplications is haunting:

Where you are going,
go softly.
Nananom,
You who have gone before,

See that his body does not lead him
Into snares made for the death of spirits.
You who are going now,
Do not let your mind become persuaded
That you walk alone.
There are no humans born alone.
You are a piece of us,
Of those gone before
And who will come again.
A piece of us, go
And come a piece of us.
You will not be coming,
When you come,
The way you went away
You will come stronger,
To make us stronger,
Wiser,
To guide us with your wisdom.
Gain much from this going.
Gain the wisdom
To turn your back on the wisdom of Ananse.
Do not be persuaded you will fill your stomach faster
If you do not have others to fill.
There are no humans who walk this earth alone. (5/6)

From the way Baako carries on, it is easy to adopt the attitude that the gods had turned a deaf ear to Naana's impassioned prayers. Baako secures a job at Ghanavision Television. But he soon resigns, saying he was frustrated by institutionalised crushing of his unique dreams of transforming Ghana through scriptwriting and the production of earth-shaking films.

This portrays him as someone bereft of wisdom, a non-Dimkpa. Where is his Plan B upon abandoning his well-paid job? Does he plan to team up with individuals of the same mind to set up a film-making company? Does he see teaching at some secondary school

as a last resort? No! He has a ready-made home to which he contributes precious little. He is unknowingly preparing for a trip to the asylum. Fifi Williams, his bank executive relative, is there. Is it out of place to expect him to approach the man with a proposal for a bank loan for independent TV and film production? He does not consider that line of action. Are Nollywood and Ghallywood (the Ghanaian film industry) not producing excellent films funded from bank loans?

Of course, there is a distraction preventing him from finding an alternative way of earning a decent living: his Puerto Rican mistress, Juana. The woman is a gainfully employed medical doctor at Korle Bu, Ghana's premier teaching hospital. She occupies a decent accommodation. She owns a car, an invaluable means of transportation whose importation into Ghana Baako found reprehensible. The woman, running away from demons in her own country across the Atlantic Ocean, is ever-present and always willing to meet all of Baako's needs, including being something of a sex toy to him. Thus, they are often to be seen splashing about beachfronts, sparsely dressed and, on the tiniest whim, engaging in marathon sex. Meanwhile, Baako is not earning a dime from anywhere and is, therefore, behaving antithetically to a Dimkpa.

Conclusion

In summary, Obi Okonkwo and Baako Onipa are bereft of the confidence and moral authority required by patriotic citizens of their countries. They sentenced themselves to the status of tenants in settings over which they should be presiding as landlords. This failed duo based their operations on illusory premises, imagining Eldorado without exerting as much energy as could move the first of the countless stones required for building a crime-free society with skyscrapers and streets paved with gold. The high point of the unseriousness of their fantastic postulations is the absence of any sense of giving in their ethos. Is it not always said that charity

begins at home? Yet, Obi Okonkwo cannot take care of his parents and siblings, and Baako Onipa cannot take care of his mother, grandmother and sister.

How can a man who is yet to commence work on the foundation of his proposed personal bungalow be sounding off on the multi-storeyed mansion he envisages for his first cousin once removed? It is said that education is an investment, and nothing can be truer. But here are two academically brilliant young men trained at public expense who repay their society with impossible theoretical formulations rather than leading from the front by instituting concrete, identifiable landmarks.

Instead of acting like Okonkwo, an exemplary Dimkpa in *Things Fall Apart*, they are depictions of the eponymous protagonist in Nkem Nwankwo's *Danda*. Danda is a trickster who loves to dance, sing and entertain people with his antics rather than settle down and bring honour to his family and community. As if prayers are powerless, Obi Okonkwo and Baako Onipa bring nothing but disgrace to their families. Just as Naana, the traditional worshipper, had prayed for Baako's success, invoking the gods and her ancestors, so also had the Reverend Samuel Ikedi of St. Mark's Anglican Church, Umuofia, prayed for Obi.

Obi and Baako represent darkness rather than light. As this assessment of their worth with the Dimkpa Theory amply demonstrates, the duo are members of the class of antiheros.

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