

**The “Bigmanism” or the “Big Man Syndrome”  
As an Optical Lens to Understand African “Democracies”  
- A “Case Study” in Zimbabwe-**

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**Abstract:** This research analyzes the so called “Big man syndrome”, discovering the origin and etymological meaning of this definition. But “big man syndrome” is not only a journalistic definition but a precise socio-anthropological phenomenon in Africa. The paper describes its development and different stages from an initial “nationalism” to “neopatrimonialism” system as model of “democratic” government in “a one party system” in some African countries. Even if in contrast with the essence of Africanism of the Ubuntu philosophy, the Big man syndrome still influences most of the complex African politics. The phenomenon had been largely anticipated by Frantz Fanon, the inspirer “muse” of the anti-colonial wars and also “prophet” of the post-colonial African politics. To better understand the Big man syndrome from a sociological and political point view, Zimbabwe case study is reported, a country where the “Big Man” Robert Mugabe has been uninterruptedly ruling since 1980, for almost forty years. The hidden “facts and sheet” behind the first and second Chimurenga, the Zimbabwe civil war who brought Mugabe to power, are narrated in “We are alla Zombabweans” novel. The paper concludes highlighting the importance of the African novels in understanding the dilanating African wars and the Big man syndrome itself.