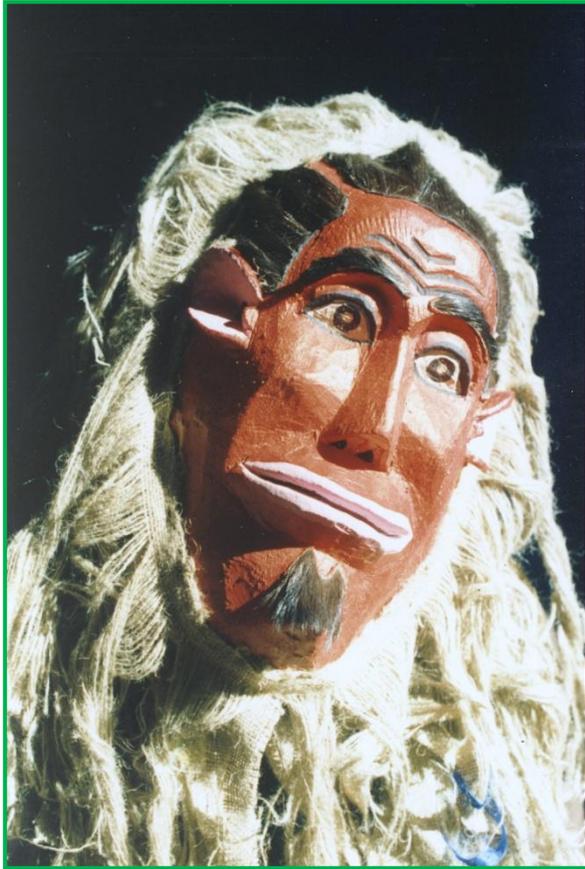


# Chinsunamo

(A red day mask from the Mua area)



## Themes

1) Aggressiveness 2) Frustration at not getting one's own way 3) Gluttony 4) Hospitality & sharing 5) Selfishness/self-centredness

## Etymology

**Chinsunamo** means, 'the big sulk'.

## Description

The Mua mask (25 cm.), red with anger and frustration, portrays a person who is quick to sulk. Feathers and rags make up the headgear of the mask, stressing internal conflict and a divided personality. He dances with a ceremonial axe or flywhisk, moving backward and forward and moving his hands as though he were pushing away those who contradict his plans. People sing: 1) "Oh, Mr. Big sulk, oh, Mr. Big sulk!" He cannot be contradicted and does not accept criticism. He becomes moody and withdraws into himself. He expresses his frustration through aggression. He wants to lead and to impose his will at all costs. He is unable to understand that people can have different opinions. **Chinsunamo** is cross with his wife because she refuses him his conjugal rights.

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He takes a small axe and threatens to hit her if she does not comply with his wishes. One song says: 2) "**Chinsunamo**, why doesn't he leave her?"

The character of **Chinsunamo** mocks those who sulk: those who always like to have their own way and are unreceptive to other points of view and ideas. **Chinsunamo** stresses the mutual respect between husband and wife that is necessary to make a marriage work.

Another version of **Chinsunamo**, from north of Mtakataka, portrays him as a selfish glutton. The song from this area says: 3) "**Chinsunamo**, when he has plenty of food, he doesn't smile, Mr. Big sulk." (He refuses to share what he has, because he is a greedy glutton, eating alone and not welcoming visitors to his home.) The red mask portrays someone who, when visitors come, puts on a long face because he thinks that sharing is a waste. This version of **Chinsunamo** teaches that hospitality is a core value for the Chewa and that selfishness and greed lead only to unhappiness.

### Songs

1) "Ede tate a **Chinsunamo** tate de a **Chinsunamo**."

2) "**Chinsunamo** (2x) alekerenji kuwaleka e kuwaleka e eae... alekerenji kuwaleka?"

3) "**Chinsunamo**, akaona dzawo, saseka eae a **Chinsunamo**."

### Source

Interviews in 1983, 1993 and 2000