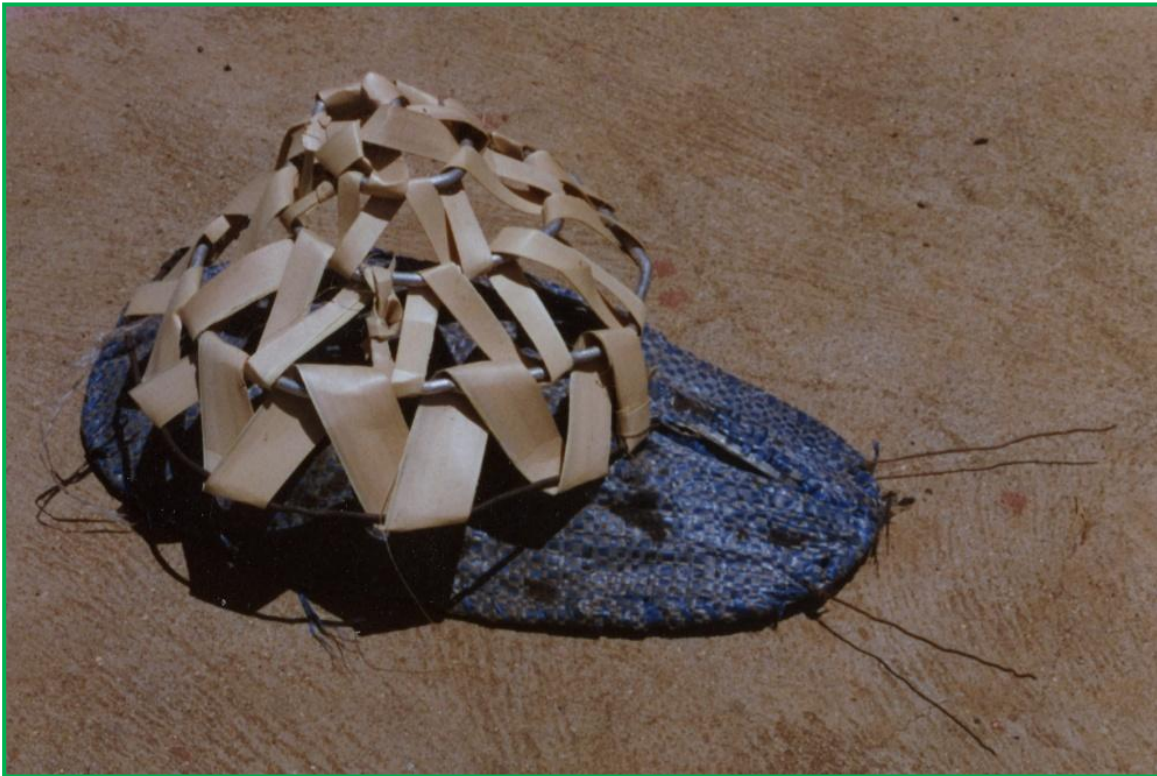


# Nkhono

(A night structure from the Ntchisi area)



(miniature model)

## Themes

1) Evil reaps its just desserts (*choipa chitsata mwini*) 2) Lies, trickery & deception

## Etymology

**Nkhono** is a snail.

## Description

A junior member of *gule* dances this small one metre high structure in the form of a snail. The child drives the snail structure backward while he marks his trail with the water in which the maize has been soaked. He circles in the arena and imitates the behaviour of the snail. The men sing: “*The snail went (died), leaving a trail behind!*” This structure is performed on the occasion of a funeral, reminding the mourners that each person is like a snail. He or she leaves their evil deeds behind after going to the grave. This is a lesson for the mourners. The Chewa have a proverb: “*Ukayenda yenda, siya phazi. Ukasiya mlomo, udzakutsutsa!* – *It is better to depart from this life having left a footprint. A*

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*mouth print will follow you!"* A footprint is a reminder of an enjoyable social visit, whereas a mouth print indicates lies, backbiting, discord and quarrels, which follow you to the grave and spoil your reputation forever.

### **Songs**

*"Idanka ilemba **Nkhono** (2x), yalemba **Nkhono!**"*

### **Source**

Interview in 1991