

Editorial

This issue of Utafiti is devoted to the question of cultural development and the contributors are mainly drawn from the Department of Art, Music and Theatre in the University of Dar es Salaam. We hope that readers will respond to the articles presented here and engage in a debate on promoting cultural work. In particular, we hope that Party and Government leaders will review their own activities in this field and begin to respond to the challenges thrown out by our contributors.

For example, Jengo takes issue with the National Arts Council on the lack of sufficient support for the promoting of the visual arts in Tanzania and calls for a national cultural policy for the promotion of art in Tanzania.

Mlama also laments the lack of a coherent cultural policy aimed at the promotion of socialist development in Tanzania. She criticizes the petty bourgeois ruling class in Tanzania for exercising censorship over cultural expression and points out that to date the Party and Government do not seem to have any clear understanding of the potential contribution of culture to socialist development.

Molle reviews the development of an indigenous East African theatrical movement which covers experiences from Zambia, Tanzania and Kenya. He shows how efforts to develop a relevant kind of theatre in East Africa have had to resolve contradictions with inherited colonial theatrical forms. However, he is optimistic about the future of theatre in East Africa, given the development of experiences with popular theatre in Kenya around the work of artists like Ngugi wa Thiong'o.

Lihamba analyses the specific characteristic of the performing arts in a development context. She stresses the importance of achieving artistic and aesthetic quality at the same time as presenting relevant social themes. Underlying her analysis is the quest for a vibrant and aesthetically uplifting performance.

C. Mbulikazi reports on the failure of the Paukwa Theatre Association's production of *Chuano*, based on Rugyendo's *The Contest*, to achieve this kind of performance and analyses the reasons for this failure. In his analysis he also points out the importance of the aesthetic and sensuous nature of the performance and its ability to communicate to the audience in such a way that the audience is uplifted and genuinely able to participate.

Ola's review of Ekwensi's *Iska* also takes up the issue of the quality of the literary creation in this novel about life in Lagos as does Mbise, who focuses on the need to maintain artistic quality despite the political requirements of socially progressive literature. Mbise argues that even Marxist leaders in China have recognized the need for artistic quality in cultural work. Masanja's review of *Falsafa ya Sanaa Tanzania* poses some relevant questions which cultural workers in Tanzania still need to address.

The articles in this special issue on culture provide a useful basis for developing a clearer understanding of cultural work in socialist construction and we hope that readers will respond with their own reactions and views.