

## STUDENTS REVIVE KISWAHILI SOCIETY

Among the greatest things to happen recently in the theatrical circles of this University is the renaissance of the Kiswahili Students Society-Chakina which put up two varied sterling performances at the Education Theater II and other campuses.

The first show was *Neno na Tendo*—(Word and Action) a repertoire of dramatized poetry accompanied by traditional dancing. It was directed by Kithaka Wa Mberia, lecturer in the Department of Linguistics. This was followed by Ali Mazrui's play, "Kilio cha Haki" (-a lamentation for truth or justice-) directed by Eric Muhindi.

Wangai Mwai. The dancing troupe 'imported' from Huruma was a complete failure and ruined what was otherwise a splendid performance.

'Kilio Cha Haki' was an excellent play. The play showed that talent had been hidden in "some waste paper basket". poor attendance was probably due to the neocolonial student attitude of not wanting to watch "Kiswahili" plays. The actors showed that with time, they can put up a splendid show. Muhindi should get another experienced director to help him perfect the play, and then have it taken to secondary schools where the text is a set book.

Earlier, the Literature Students 'opened' Education Theatre II by staging 'Bushboy', an Expert from Trevor Rhodes's "Smile Orange" and Nigerian Charles Umeh's "Double Attack". Both were directed by Wilfred Machuah.

'Bushboy' is a light script and kept the audience laughing whenever it was staged. "Double Attack" proved hard to grasp by the audience seeking entertainment rather than outright education. Rhode's play featured Machuah and Michael Maina while Umeh's script had Matende Ronald, Mutua Nzioki Abukutsa, Muindi, Gatanfi, Nderito and this writer.

Literature Students Association(L.S.A.) which is keen in promoting talent, followed this up by inviting Joseph Kamaru for a live performance in college. Kamaru's performance in late January was his first in a University. The 1, 000 students audience shows Kamaru's popularity in college. The show was also attended by Lecturers: Owuor H. Anyumba, Kavetsa Adagala, Prof. Chris Wanjala and Wanjiku Kabira - all from the Department of Literature.

Kamaru's popular hits like "Gathoni", Mumunya' and Jerusalem sent students wild'. There are plans to have Kamaru perform in college later in the year, due to public demand.

LSA organized a poetry evening in honour of the late postgraduate student Thomas Odinga Odingo, 38. Odingo was a building poet. During that evening of solemn poetry tributes to the fallen student and special poems were recited.



*Traditional dancers entertain members of the university community at Taifa Hall.*

*Neno na Tendo* was shown to audience at Parklands, lower Kabete, main campus and Kenyatta University. The poetry is "liberal" and does not follow the rigid rules and regulations put down for the composition of Kiswahili poetry. In the same breath, Kithaka should leave the beats in the poetry. In the same breath, Kithaka should leave the beats in the poetry to dictate how the poetry should be recited.

Ordinary Kiswahili poems have a set type of recital tone and delivery, which is not exactly what Kithaka has professed to do. An attempt to serialize the poetry killed the flavour of the 'beats'. Otherwise the performance was very good. theatre fans wish such performances are shown more often than not. Among those who starred in the cast were J. Akumasa, Debora Minayo, O., McOnyango and



*"Back to my roots?" Students perform African traditional dance at Taifa Hall.*