In spite of longstanding economic straits, Cuba boasts a world renowned dance establishment that has played an important role within Cuban society and in Cuban international relations. This study explains why. It examines the development of Cuban dance from 1930 to 1990, particularly the connection between dance and politics over the decades and how this relationship changed over time. The seminar will begin with an overview of this larger project and then focus in on materials regarding the politics of dance patronage in the Cuban Republic. Starting in the 1930s and continuing through the 1950s, dancers, supporters, and government officials debated the social and cultural value of dance and the ideal scheme to financially support its growth. As the 1950s drew to a close, questions remained regarding these issues and uncertainties informed the improvised and contradictory approach to dance funding after 1959.

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