



Eastern Christians in Spain under Franco: Political Interests and Propaganda in the Reception of Lebanese Maronite Seminary Student (1947-62) [

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Analítica

In 1947, Maronite Patriarch of Antioch Anthony Peter Arida wrote from his official office in Lebanon to request a number of scholarships for Lebanese seminary students to study in Spain under Francisco Franco. The request arrived at a time when the Franco dictatorship was subject to international isolation, the result of the position adopted by the country during World War II and the new international order established by the United Nations. The regime did not hesitate to take advantage of the opportunity offered by Beirut. At play was a complex intersection of interests that went beyond any political motives that Spain or Lebanon may have had, extending to larger regions like the Arab world and Latin America. This article analyses the role accorded to Catholicism as yet another element of cultural diplomacy and foreign policy from the perspective of Spanish interests. To that end, it addresses issues like the interpretation of the past at the service of political interests, the role of propaganda, the evolution of scholarship policy and the results of that policy when it first began, at its height and during its decline

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