TRADE AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE BETWEEN ANCIENT THRACE AND EGYPT

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***Abstract*:** From the Hellenistic Period on there are certain evidences for trade and cultural exchange between Thrace and Egypt probably as a result of the expansive policy of the Ptolemies, the rulers of Egypt after the death of Alexander the Great in 323 BC. The Macedonian Pharaohs even started to mint coins in the Thracian town of Perinthus probably to establish their power in the Thracian lands but also to facilitate the commerce relations. The Egyptian cults of the divine family of Isis and Sarapis were also introduced to the local population and spread very quickly. So different kinds of Egyptian goods were imported to the coastal cities of Ancient Thrace in the most cases luxury products and jewelry with more or less religious connotation. With the imposition of Roman rule on the Thracian lands and the strong relation between the Roman emperors and the Isiac Gods, Egyptian goods managed to penetrate in the interior of Thrace. We find again different kind of luxury products in the funerary context which were probably used not only for practical reasons but also in order to communicate certain beliefs.

Keywords: Egyptian Cults, Thrace and Egypt, Trade, Egyptian goods, Isiac gods, Ptolemies in Thrace

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