

Impact of National Interest on Diplomatic Policies: A Study of Ancient Relations between Athens, the Ionian Islands, and Egypt

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Greece and Egypt are two ancient nations that developed in Europe and Africa respectively. History reveals a long-lasting mutually beneficial relationship between these two nations. Significantly, both literary and archaeological evidence reveal strong relations between Egypt and selected Greek city-states, Athens and the Ionian islands. The primary aim of the research was to identify the factors that affected diplomatic policies and interactions between Athens, the Ionian Islands, and Egypt during ancient times. The research developed into understanding the nature and dynamics that nourished the significant diplomatic relations between two ancient nations from the 8th century BCE to the 4th century BCE. The research mainly followed a historical method in acquiring knowledge from primary sources, Herodotus and Thucydides, and adopted an analytical and eclectic research method under qualitative research methodology to extract the findings from the gathered information. The research recognized several significant grounds developed between Greece and Egypt that strengthened their bilateral relations. A close examination of the evidence revealed this diplomatic understanding was mainly built between Athens, the Ionian states, and Egypt as a result of national interest, the impact of necessity, geographical proximities, political and social practices, and cultural similarities of each party involved. The research identified an influential ‘Intellectual Triangle’ that developed between Athens, the Ionian states, and Egypt bridging these regions enabling the exchange of a vast amount of knowledge in areas such as philosophy, art and architecture, medicine, mythology, and religion that enriched the culture of Greece. Further, they shaped the socio-political and military dynamics of ancient Greece and Egypt. In conclusion, this diplomatic understanding has evolved up to the development of mutually beneficial diplomatic agreements signed between Greece and Egypt in the 21st century while continuously strengthening the alliance between these two nations among other countries in the Mediterranean basin.

Keywords: Athens, Diplomacy, Egypt, Intellectual Triangle, National Interest.