ABSTRACT

Intercultural relations and trade are important components of understanding of historical interrelationships between regions and cultures. One of the most interesting objects of trade is stone, because of the expense and difficulty of its transport. Thus, the source of marble used in the Nabatean city of Petra was investigated using established petrological, geochemical and isotopic analyses. Specifically, marble from Qasr al Bint and the Colonnaded Street baths were sampled and investigated. The results of these analyses show that the marbles came from sources in Asia Minora and Greece. The most likely sources of the marble are the quarries of Thasos, Penteli, Prokennesos and Dokimeion. The choice of marble followed the desired utilitarian and aesthetic function of the stone. These results show that active trade in stone was part of the cultural interaction of the period.

KEYWORDS: Classical period, Marble provenance, Nabateans, Petra, trade relations.