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## The importance of heritage roads on the development of Western Anatolia and Izmir

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### Abstract

Topographic corridor passing the heritage roads is one of the main factors of the social and economic development in Western part of Turkey. The grabens forming a lowlands named Buyukmenderes, Kucukmenderes and Gediz grabens provide the transportation easily east-west direction between coastal belt of the Aegean Sea and the inland part of the Anatolia. For example the Sardes State owes the existence of the Gediz graben naturally way extending between Gulf of Izmir and the inland part of the Anatolia. The gold obtained from the Menderes masse supported the richness of this state. In historical process Royal Road or King Road played an important role in this richness.

Indeed during the historical times the roads named Royal Road (King Road), Silk and Spices (baharat) roads passed along the mentioned grabens. The trade items had been transported via the caravans along the grabens. On the other hand, the depressed areas of the Aegean Sea also fit the natural harbors such as Izmir (Smyrna), Ephesus, Phokaia, Klozomenai and Cesme. These harbors are shelters areas protecting from the severe winds. The suitable situation of the grabens caused the railway construction between Izmir harbor and Aydın. The agricultural products obtained from the fertile agricultural lands in the grabens exported from the Izmir harbor. These trade activities have contributed the fast economic development of the Izmir Gulf and its hinterland. The Royal Road, Silk Road, Spice Road and railways connecting inland part of the Anatolia and the harbors along the Aegean Sea have contributed not only the trade developments but also the agricultural heritage of humanbeing in Izmir and in the Western Anatolia region. In this study, it is discussed these ways in terms of the development of the West Anatolia and Izmir. And it is emphasized that these roads should be evaluated as a tourism product in terms of heritage tourism.

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*Keywords:* West Anatolia, Izmir, Harbor, Royal Road or King Road, Silk Road, Spice Road, Railway.

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### 1. Introduction

Turkey which is located Alpin-Himalaian orogenic belt is very rugged country. And tectonic corridors such as Gediz (Hermos), Büyük (Big) and Küçük (Small) Meander grabens in Western Turkey extend between E-W directions and have been easily contributed the transportation activities in Anatolia.

The road systems extending west to the east direction in the grabens of the Western Anatolia provided access to the sea through the port of Izmir. Also these grabens serve as a natural gateway and favorable conditions for

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transportation which simplifies connection of Izmir with the interior of Anatolia [3, 8]. For that reason, the accessible natural road systems which can be expressed heritage roads have led to the establishing and developing some ancient kingdoms or civilizations in Anatolia. Transportation depending on mainly trade activities have exercised along the roads and travelling, shipments of military was also important [17, 32, 27]. For that reason these road systems very important in terms of heritage tourism.

## 2. The Development of Heritage Roads in the Historical Process

In Anatolia, one of the main factors in the establishment of ancient kingdom depends on the permanent development of highway system. Some of which have lost their importance elapsed time but some of did not. Namely, in ancient times, it has been noted that settlements were established in the edge of rivers, trade routes, ports, defensible areas against the enemy attacks. These settlements dominated in all periods of history.

The establishment and the development of Hittite Empire in Central Anatolia (BC 2<sup>nd</sup> century) were mostly related to the efficient road system. Some road systems were constructed not only by Hittite but also other kingdoms in western Anatolia. Because the fertile agricultural lands and harbors of the western part of Anatolia contributed and maintained the ancient kingdoms as well as Hittite and this region became cradle of the richest civilizations in history.

It is stated in cuneiform documents belonging to the Hittite king that Hittites invaded to the cities situated in the Western Anatolia such as Troy (Wilusa), Miletus (Milawanta) and Ephesus (Apasaş) [5, 7, 13]. Reliefs of Hittite gods are situated in Karabel, near Kemalpaşa in Izmir and reliefs of the mother goddess in Akpınar near by Manisa Spil Mountain on the routes located on the western Anatolia. These reliefs can be termed a witness of the roads of Hittites in Western Anatolia used in the second half of the millennium BC 2<sup>nd</sup> [32, 29, 13]. From the Hittite era to the period of Iranians (Persians), horse-cars were used in battle and various animals especially ox carts were used for the transportation of trade goods [3].

When talking about the heritage roads the first road that comes to mind is Royal Road (King Road) has used since the Persians and it must be a road used especially the Lydians for the commercial, political and military purposes. Historical Roads from central and southern Anatolia to the Aegean coast contributed the development of commercial activities in the towns of the Aegean such as Sardis (Sardis), Manisa (Magnesia), Kula/Gökçeören (Maionya) [35].

Phrygians lived in central Anatolia and the inner part of Aegean region have had a strategic position in terms of transportation and trade between Aegean and pre-Asia countries. Phrygian works reached to the harbor of the cities of Ionia and Aeolia through the caravan routes extending east to west. Archaeological and historical documents clearly referred to have the trade and cultural relations between Phrygia and the Greek city of western Anatolia [32] Lydians settled along the Royal Road and they had a great importance in terms of trade activities. Lydians were the world's first merchant according to Herodotus. And they pressed the hard-money to use in the exchange system and they serve a brand new scheme to the modern economy's foundations [33, 32].

From BC 7<sup>th</sup> century until the middle of 6<sup>th</sup> century, the cities of western Anatolia in Aeolia and Ionia Region were dominated by the Lydians. But this rule was based on mutual trade and culture, respectively rather than exploitative relationships. For example, the construction of the Temple of Artemis finished with the help of the Kroisos who was the king of the Lydia in the middle of the end of the BC 6<sup>th</sup> century (In the column with a relief in front of the Temple of Artemis at Ephesus, was a phrase written as "Preserved by King Kroisos" [4].

Marine transportation system was common in the Hellenic settlements in western Anatolia. Marine transportation in the western Anatolia led to the development of coastal cities such as Candarli (Pitane / Pitana), Birkitepe (Myrina), Dikili (Kyme), Foca (Phokaia), Urla (Klozomenai), Balat-Soke (Miletos), Ildiri (Erythrai), Sığacık (Theos), Urkmez (Lebedos), Selcuk (Ephesus) and Güllübahçe (Priene) (Fig. 3.). The wide harbors settlements in the Aegean coast contributed the transportation with heavy tonnage vessels. In addition these harbors situated suitable gulfs lee of the severe winds. This development was related to existence of the natural roads. However transportation played an important role for the negative and positive effects in the civilization such as Lycia, Caria, Ionia and Aeolia. For example Lycia, Caria, Ionia and Aeolia were destroyed by the Persians [3].

Parthian Kingdom that was founded in Iran conquered the Sardis which was the capital of the kingdom of Lydian's and destroyed it and soon became dominant in Anatolia. The dominance of Persian Kingdom on the natural road areas mainly prevented the trade activities continued between east and west countries. Persians aimed to expand

to the west and to have complete control over the Mediterranean ports and caravan routes in Anatolia. The Persians, in the west established an empire stretching on the east coast of the Aegean to India. Persians dominated 200-year due to the existence of road systems and regular road network known as Royal Road which constructed by Persians. Royal Road was the first regular, solid ground and secure road in Anatolia [18, 29, 32, 33]. The Royal Road some 2500 km long was mentioned in Herodotus book. The road reached the Red River known as Halys through the Lydia and Phrygia regions from the north of Anatolia over Sivas, Malatya and Euphrates River to Iran. This road was used for commercial and political purposes even before periods of domination of Persia and the ancient settlements.

Herodotus, while giving information about Royal Road, stated that this road which extended from the Ephesus and Sardis to the Susa city in Iran trade items might be reached about 93 days if one travels 150 stadia (27-28 km) one day. Herodotus also stated that there are post offices and there are 111 accommodation stations for security at regular intervals along the road between Sardis and Susa [2, 22, 30, 32].

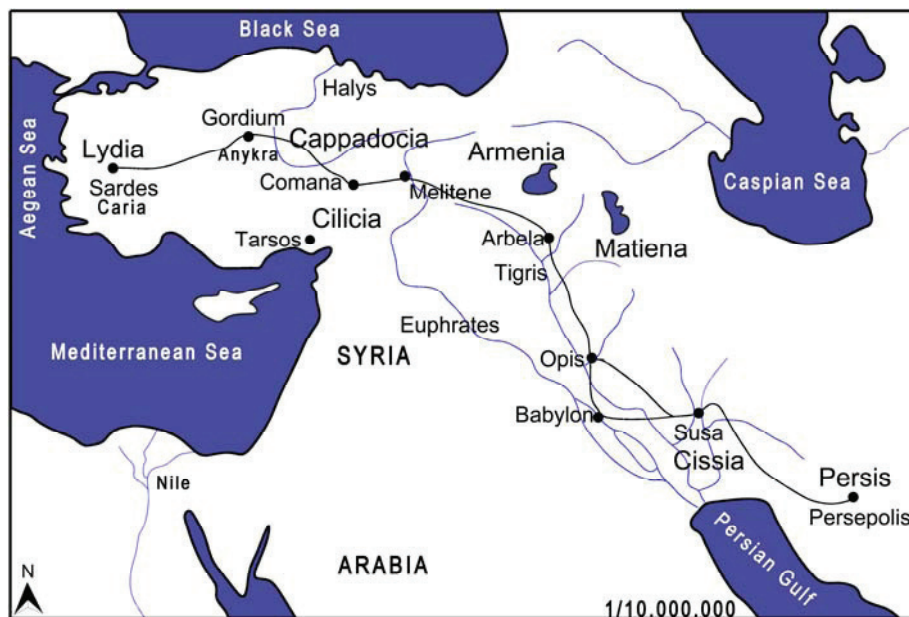


Fig. 1. Royal Road in Anatolia and Middle East

Ephesus (Ephesus) which was situated on the starting point of the Royal Road was one of the richest and the most populous port cities of the ancient times. This road starts from Efes and passes Torbalı (Metropolis) and then reaches the Sardis, the capital of the Lydian kingdom, and it passes through the Gulab Karabel pass in Kemalpaşa to the Hermos (Gediz) Valley. The Hittite relief near Karabel reflects the control of the state on this road in the period of Persians [1, 32]. The other road in connection with this road passes from Izmir (Smyrna), Manisa (Magnesia) and (Spil = Spylos Mountain from the north) to the Sardis, and on the road there is a figure belonging to the mother goddess Cybele (Cybele).

There are two routes from the Sardis to the east: one of them was extending from Gediz (Hermos), Katakemaumene valley (Kula-burn country), Themothyrai (Usak), Banaz and Afyon to the second Phrygian territory; and the second one pass the Philadelphia (Alaşehir), Laodikeia (Denizli), Apameia (Dinar) and reaches again Phrygian territory [32].

In this period many settlements such as Sardis-Philadelphia (Philadelphia), Denizli-Pamukkale (Hierapolis), Denizli - Goncalı (Laodicea), as well as other western Anatolian cities, were established and developed because of the existence of these ways and trade activities [29]. From east to the west, the road coming from Phrygia, and Dinar (Apameia) divided into two parts in Denizli (Laodicea). One road passes the Meander Basin Nazilli (Mastaura), Sultanhisar (Nysa), Aydin (Tralles), and reaches the port of Kusadasi (Scalanova), Milet (Miletus) and Efes (Ephesus). The second road reaches Sardis through Dinar (Apameia) and Philadelphia (Philadelphia). Besides, north-south artery connects the Sardis over Akhisar (Thyateira) to the North, Bergama (Pergamon) and Erdek (Kyzikos) to

this road. In Roman times, new roads were added to these main roads [35].

The famous geographer Strabo stated that Dinar (Apameia) was a major trade center of Asia Minor and this city was the second after Ephesus and Dinar as the general merchandise warehouse from both Italy and Greece [32, 34].

Xenophon in his work named Anabasis was cited that Royal Road to have passed from Dinar (Apameia), Akşehir (Phlioumelion), Iğın (Tyriaion) to the Konya city (İkonion) [21, 22, 32].

In Hellenistic period, after the death of the Great Alexander, many new cities and colonies were established and developed on the old route in western Anatolia. The construction of the network of roads combining the cities established during Seleucid kingdom in the Hellenistic period.

Road construction in good quality in Anatolia was started during the Roman period. In this period, developed old villages change into cities; and also new colony settlements were set up. Romanians not only repaired all roads and but also gave importance to the construction of new military roads in order to control the territory and to organize the trade [28].

The roads construction in Roman period in Anatolia was constructed toward the end of the second century BC. And firstly, the road called as “Via Sebaste” had constructed for contribution the communications and transportation among the Roman colony and West and East of Anatolia [32, 15].

The roads were decorated with large cobbles that were more durable for their needs in Roman period. In addition, there were mile stones showing distances among the cities on the Roman roads [14, 15]. Roman Empire would check their colony taking part away from the center with the highly developed road network and it would finance their military forces the trade on these roads. The people of the state supplied horses and cars for travelling of official passengers [15, 25].

There were also the accommodation stations which were established at 40-45 km intervals along the Roman roads. The accommodation stations were passed easily in some parts but the other parts were the transportation difficulties due to the rugged topography. For that reason the convoy trade on the routes transportation carried out more slowly.

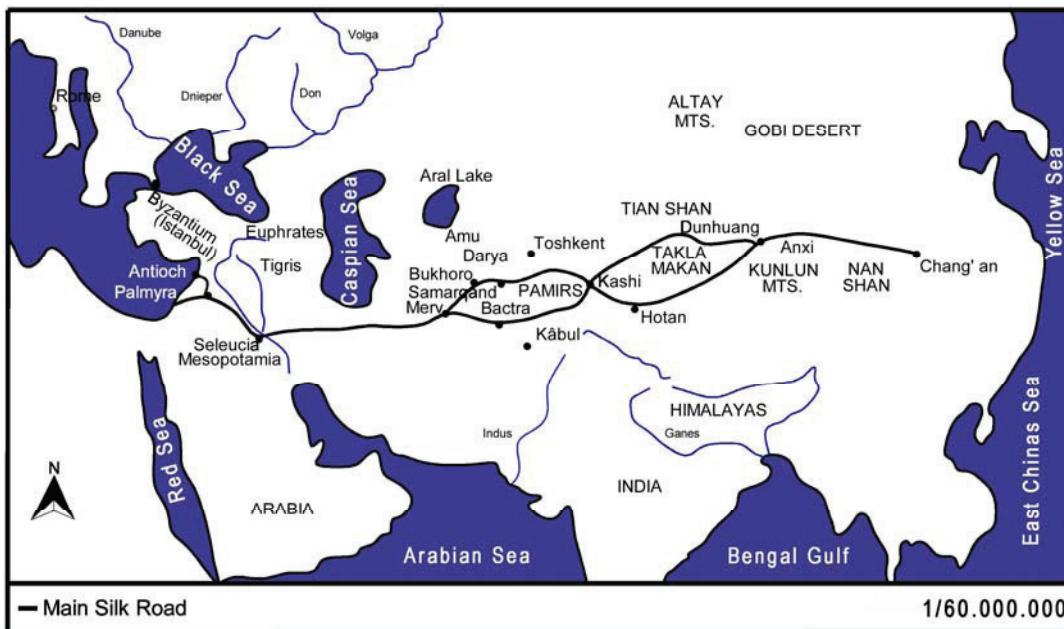


Fig. 2. Silk Road (Produced from (<http://img138.imageshack.us/i/ipekyolu6jb.jpg>)/2010).

In the period of Roman Empire, the roads passing from northwest to the southeast Anatolia gained considerable importance due to Izmit (Nicomedia) which was one of the most important centers. The route of this road extend from the Troy (Troy), Edremit (Adramytteion) and passed Izmir (Smyrna, Ephesus (Ephesus), then followed the valley of Cine Stream (Marsyas) to the Marmaris (Marmaris), Dalyan (Kaunos) and Fethiye (Telmessos) [22, 32].

In the Byzantine period, the changes of road system began when Izmit (Nicomedia) was announced as the capital of the east by the Diokletianus. Istanbul (Constantinople) was established in 330s and the roads connecting this region to the east, gained a special importance. Byzantine roads were completed during Justinian. Byzantine Empire dominated the Cilicia (Cilicia) region for a long time. The desire to visit Jerusalem as the result of the strengthened of Christianity enabled the development of the road (Hadji Road) extending from Istanbul (Constantinople) to Izmit (Nicomedia), Ankara (Angora), Aksaray (Garsaura) and Antioch (Antiokheia). And settlements establishing on this road were developed but settlements in the western and southwestern Anatolia lost their importance [32].

The Romans introduced the Iranian silk during the war of Rome and Iran (Part) in BC 1st century were engaged in silk trade after this time, and they endeavored to keep the silk trade during Roman Empire and Byzantine period. Thus Silk Road has a special importance due to the trade. During the Byzantine-Iranian wars, trade on the Anatolian roads was interrupted and the silk trade was directed to the route passing in the northern region [10, 20].

Seljuks constructed good and resistant roads to ensure the safety transportation activities in Anatolia like the Romans. Meanwhile, Izmir was the starting point of caravan route connecting the Anatolia and Mediterranean since the ancient times was became a commercial and cultural center with the support of the Genoese in the first half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Aydınoğulları dominated in the region in the second half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century and Kusadasi (Scalanova), Selcuk, Balat reputed as a trading centers.

Izmir Gulf, a natural harbor and the nearby Cesme, played a major role in the revival of trade providing a comfortable sea link with some ports such as Karaburun, Urla, Foca and with islands in the Aegean Sea. The favorable conditions for transportation facilities supplied rapid development in all aspects of Izmir.

During the Seljuk period, trade and caravan routes contributed to the development of the city, but as a result of descending the importance of these roads those cities lost their importance as well. Indeed, such settlements known quite advanced with the vibrant trade routes in Anatolia lost their importance and, in parallel, the settlements also got smaller because of the expeditions to India from the sea and Mongols seizing of these roads.

In the Ottoman period as well, resistant roads, beautiful and artful bridges were built up and so the transportation flourished. In 19<sup>th</sup> century, Izmir was the most important and largest city of the western Anatolia region with some 100,000 population.

Aydin, Manisa, Akhisar, Isparta, Mugla were other leading major cities were setting up ports intersection of the main caravan route surrounded by fertile agricultural land [6].

In the decline period of Ottoman Empire, the ancient route deteriorated soon and Anatolia lost their importance in terms of commercial and cultural bridge between east and west [9].

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century foreign railway enterprises belonging to English constructed railway following the grabens and roads. Transportation became cheaper, easy and safely after the beginning of the steam-operated ship. The rapid development led to the increase in agricultural production, and to develop of cities.

Railway enterprise was launched by the British in 1836 for the first time Ottoman Empire period but the first successful application was Alexandria-Cairo railway, its construction started in 1851 and started its in 1854. Izmir-Kasaba and Izmir- Aydin Railways was completed in 1866. After 1888 Germans interested in the railway construction because of the fact that Anatolia have many mineral deposits and agricultural products to be imported and to use industrial production [6]. According to the agreement signed between Ottoman and Germany governments the natural resources and agricultural lands within 20 km wide along the two parts of railway will be used by German Empire. Indeed along the railways fertile agriculture lands are found. The British distributed free seeds for cotton farming to the Turkish farmers. And agricultural products increased by 63 % between the years 1889 to 1911 in whole the country and 114 % in the railway region [6].

Ginneries were constructed on the railway lines due to the increasing in agricultural production. These factories contributed opportunities to employment. Railways led to the farming in the previously uncultivated areas. Refugees migrating from the Balkans during that period settled in these areas. Railway was a turning point of transportation. Western Anatolia was not suitable to transportation with the wheeled vehicles due to the rugged topography and river flooding. Therefore, transport was done with animals, and caravan trade was common. The damages of the goods were prevented by increasing the quality of railway transport. In addition, on the destination points of the caravan routes “station cafes” emerged [27]. Because of these coffee stations, railways became a social area of the railway station. So the railway transportation eliminated the caravan trade and exports started to increase.

Railways supported to the economic development of Anatolia and especially in Western Anatolia and Izmir in 19

<sup>th</sup> century. But it also led to some negative aspects. For example the British had opportunities for operating rights of sources taken place on 49 km distance on both sides of the railways and they sent the sources such as antimony, manganese, arsenic, lignite and mineral resources to abroad. So they did not contribute to the country [6].

Aydın Railway followed the route of the Eastern Commercial Road (Silk Road) in the Big Meander Plain. The Railway cut the caravan routes and after this time the agricultural products growing on the surrounding settlements were transported by train to Izmir. Thus, road transport came to a standstill and it could be restarted after 1950s in Anatolia.

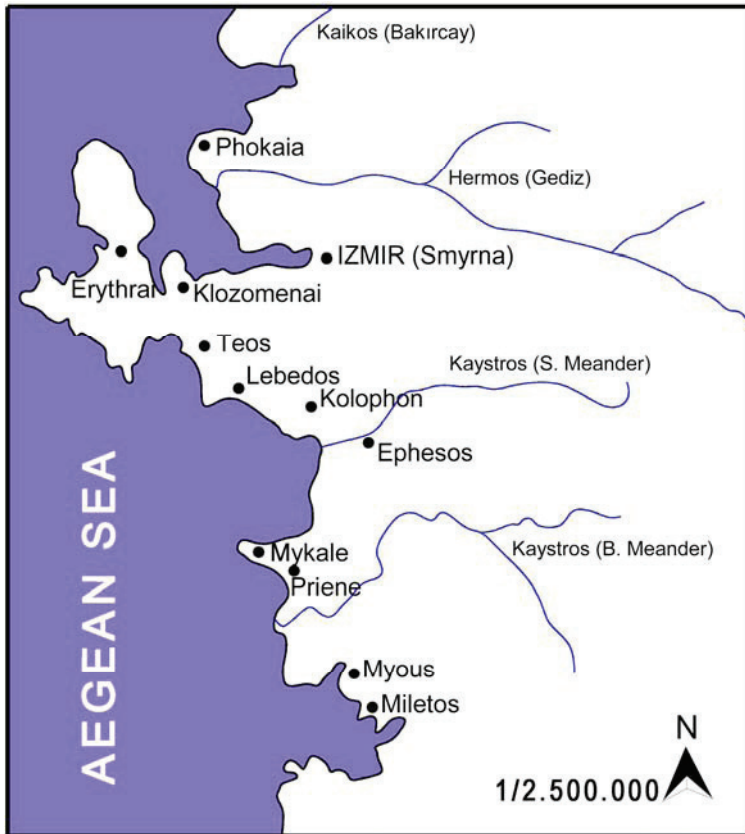


Fig. 3. The ancient cities in Western Anatolia

### 3. Conclusion and Recommendations

#### 3.1. Conclusion

Rich mineral deposits and fertile agricultural lands on which harvested cereals, fruits and industrial plants supported the establishing many states, empire and civilizations constructing east-west and on the natural roads in Anatolia.

In ancient times, animals such as horses, donkeys, mules and camels were used for transportation at first and later wheeled carts were used. Western Anatolian Region had been connected with the Central Anatolia from ancient times along the caravan routes which extending the Gediz (Hermos), Big and Small Meanders valleys as a bridge. The agricultural wealth and topographical structure of grabens in this area has been the most decisive factor for the development. So Aliaga (Elaia) one of the cities in the Aeolia region on the north of Izmir was famous for olives, thyme honey and Dikili (Kyme) famous for the high quality and fresh cabbage [23, 32, 2].

Grapes in high quality growing in Bozdag (Tmolos), Aydın Mountains (Mesogis) and Kula (Katakekaumene), Izmir (Smyrna), Efes (Ephesus), Theos, Torbalı (Metropolis) and in Ildırı (Erythrai) and yellow resin obtained from

red pine trees in the coastline of Gumuldur (Kolophon) were exported mostly (Fig. 1).

The plantation of the industrial plants such as olives, figs, fruit, cereals, as flax seeds were harvested in the Meander Plain [23, 24, 32].

Trade routes used from ancient times until Ottomans and even until present day with some changes in the region affected small cities and improved social and economic aspects of these settlements.

A security system was discovered by some researchers on the roads providing transportation. The construction groups such as fortress, castles, ruins and monasteries on the road indicate the exact location. Each of these structures was built at a distance to see the next one for well communication.

Izmir played an important role to transfer the trade goods from the eastern to the western countries. Izmir was always a developed city due to the favorable climatic and topographic conditions.

In the development of Izmir and western Anatolia, silk and spices roads had played an important role after 17<sup>th</sup> century. The Ottoman-Iran Wars occurred between the years 1588-1628 adversely affected the economy and the business of the Armenians dealing with the silk trade and they directed their business from Aleppo to the Izmir harbor. Thus the Silk Road extending from East to the West; Iran Kashan, Kum, Tehran, Qazvin, Tabriz, Yerevan, Kars, Erzurum, Tokat, Ankara, Afyon, Denizli (Laodicea), Nazilli (Mastaura), Sultanhisar (Nysa), Aydin (Tralleis), Menderes Magnesiası (Meander names of Magnesia), Selcuk (Ephesus) and Izmir started to gain importance in the transportation again. The railway route connecting Izmir with Selcuk (Ephesus), Menderes Magnesiası Meander valley and Dinar (Apameia) was the Spices and Silk Road route at the same time (Fig. 2).

The most important foreign trade port was Izmir in the Ottoman Empire in 19<sup>th</sup> century and most trade was carried out with Britain. The leading exported items were raisins, figs, madder, oak, opium, mohair, silk and wool [9].

At the end of the Ottoman period, the railway system considerably prevented the traditional transport. So the foreign trade increased, medium and large-scale cities revitalized, and the migration accelerated. The population who interested in trade led to the cosmopolite population structures in the West Anatolia and Izmir excessively foreign traders' constructed large mansions [26].

### 3.2. Recommendations

Heritage roads have played a very important role for the development of Western Anatolia and Izmir. These roads constitute the basis of the present day roads.

Therefore, these roads document for the history and are important as tourist products in terms of cultural tourism.

There are also some significant heritage resources surrounding the heritage roads such as castle, ruin and monastery are the prominent cultural values in tourism. Tours can be arranged to these routes in the context of cultural tourism. So tourists visiting the heritage roads had an opportunity to learn about the information on socio-economic structures of that period.

The nostalgic train trips can be arranged in the first railway line on. The ancient settlements at the route of nostalgia train can be visited.

The agricultural products that lead to establishment of the railways can be exhibited in the accommodation centers.

Visitors may obtain information about the changes of agricultural products from past to present.

Large-scale topographic maps could be prepared related to the inheritance roads (the ancient silk and spices road, harbors and railways) and models can be displayed in the center located on the route of train trip.

Today, the handmade products of people living in that region should be displayed as touristic products.

Before these applications, the public opinion of livings in the settlements on the route of the roads should be taken, and the possible and negative aspects should be considered after the application.

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