

An Overview of Land Routes in Byzantine Anatolia (ca. 4th-7th c. CE)

Bizans Anadolu'sunda Kara Rotalarına Genel Bir Bakış (MS 4-7. yy)

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Abstract

This paper¹ presents an overview of land routes in Byzantine Anatolia during the period between the fourth and seventh centuries CE and aims to explain the development of the routes in Byzantine Anatolia in a changing context. Understanding the emergence of routes, which expanded in Byzantine Anatolia, comes from the earlier-built Roman roads. The development and the use of routes during the period in question were largely shaped by the construction and use of Roman roads, both administratively and politically. Archaeological evidence indicates that the Romans restored the main roads until the early seventh century and maintained them during the Byzantine period. The use of routes was significantly impacted by the foundation of Constantinople as the new capital and the development of more 'centralized rule' in the Roman Empire in the fourth century. Rather than explaining and discussing all the routes of Anatolia in detail, this study aims to outline the ways in which major routes developed in Byzantine Anatolia.

Keywords: Routes, Anatolia, Byzantine Period, Development, Change

Öz


Bu makale, MS 4. ve 7. yüzyıllar arasındaki dönem boyunca Bizans Anadolu'sunda bulunan kara yolu rotalarına genel bir bakış sunmaktadır ve değişim bağlamında Bizans rotalarının gelişimini açıklamayı amaçlamaktadır. Bizans Anadolu'sunda gelişen rotaların ortaya çıkışını anlamak, daha önce inşa edilmiş Roma yollarını anlamayı gerektirir. Bizans döneminde rotaların gelişimi ve kullanımı, büyük ölçüde hem idari hem de politik olarak Roma yollarının yapımı ve bir gelişimi olarak şekillendi. Arkeolojik buluntular ve kanıtlar, Romalıların ana yolları 7. yüzyılın başlarına kadar inşa ve restore ettiklerini ve Bizans döneminde de söz konusu yol faaliyetlerini sürdürdüklerini, koruduklarını ve bakımlarını yaptıklarını göstermektedir. Yol güzergahları veya diğer bir deyişle rotaların kullanımı, başkent olarak henüz ilan edilmiş Konstantinopolis'in kuruluşundan ve 4. yüzyılda Roma İmparatorluğu'nda daha fazla 'merkezi yönetim'in yükselen bir idari sistem olarak zuhur etmesi ve geliştirilmesinden önemli ölçüde etkilenmiştir. Anadolu'nun tüm rotalarını ayrıntılı olarak açıklamak ve tartışmak yerine, bu çalışma, Bizans Anadolu'sunda ana rotaların gelişimine genel bir bakış sunmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Rotalar, Anadolu, Bizans Dönemi, Gelişim, Değişim

Introduction²

Routes, described as "any line of communication between pre-existing points"³ and a product of "organized labour in construction"⁴, in Byzantine Anatolia were well

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³ French, 1980, 703.

⁴ Earle, 1991, 11.

constructed and organized. The main routes that appeared and developed in the Byzantine period depended on the presence of Roman roads in this regard. They were known to have been used primarily for military and commercial purposes according to the convenience of topography and the primary locations. The use of main routes can be understood from the context of the political and administrative changes, which had an impact on urbanization and therefore how main routes were used⁵. Archaeological and textual evidence aids in the understanding of the development and use of major routes in Byzantine Anatolia.

Archaeological Evidence

Milestones⁶ (Fig. 1), which were erected near roads and give epigraphic information, dated primarily between the first and fourth centuries CE,⁷ and some of them until the second half of the sixth century CE⁸, are important to better understand how Byzantine routes developed over time. Since milestones indicate the distance between a given place and the point where the milestone was located, the length of the roads was thus calculated⁹. The inscriptions carved on milestones state clearly all the facts about administration of roads and displayed power and propaganda¹⁰. Hence, the milestones that can be found throughout Anatolia are extremely important in terms of both physically marking the *roadways* and holding administrative data. They help us understand the development of the Roman roads as a foundation and provide a basic framework for the use of main routes in Byzantine Anatolia¹¹.

Archaeological excavations provide information regarding urbanization in Byzantine Anatolia. Change in urban centres like building structures from the fourth century onwards show the transformation of urbanization. In the main urban centers, such as Aphrodisias (near Geyre), Sardis (Sart) and Ephesus (near Selçuk), the Roman residential quarters generally continued to be occupied, with alterations in the fifth and sixth centuries¹². The main urban centres established along the main routes help indicating change in the use of major routes in this regard.

⁵ Kaya, 2020, 83-239; Kaya, 2019b, 34-51.

⁶ David French's study of milestones in Asia Minor/Anatolia is specifically included in this paper's proposed outline of Byzantine routes. French meticulously recorded more than a thousand milestones found both on-site and in museums. See French, 2016; French, 2014a, French, 2014b; French, 2014c; French, 2013; French, 2012a; French, 2012b; French, 1998; French, 1993; French, 1992; French, 1986; French, 1981; French, 1980; French, 1974.

⁷ Only the *Via Sebaste* is dated to 6 BCE.

⁸ Belke, 2008, 296 and 305.

⁹ There were more than 10.000 kilometers of paved roads in Anatolia, according to the known milestones, which are spaced at intervals of roughly 1485 meters, French, 1992.

¹⁰ e.g. the name of the emperor, of an imperial official and a civic official if any, the record of the construction and restoration of the road if any, the name of the city and distance from *caput viae* to that city, and also dedication and acclamation. French, 1992, 7.

¹¹ French, 2016. Milestones were systematically recorded by David French. Following French's monographs on milestones, which were published between 2012 and 2016, newly discovered milestones were found in Termessos, Arslan – Tüner-Önen, 2023, 63-73; near Cibyra, Arslan *et al*, 2023, 227-236; in the village of Zurban, Tüner-Önen – Akçay, 2022, 327-346; in Komana/Hierapolis, Baz, 2020, 35-41; on the road from Caesarea to Melitena in Cappadocia; near Tios, Öztürk, 2016, 83-91, in eastern Bithynia, near Iuliopolis, Avcu, 2020, 165-172; Onur, 2020, 99-104, in northern Galatia; and at Osmaneli, Öztürk – Öztürk, 2019, 255, near Bilecik. The milestone found near Iuliopolis was thus appended to the milestones of the 'Pilgrim's Road'.

¹² Özgenel, 2007, 240. For discussion on the change and/or continuity of the construction activities, see Kaya, 2020, 92-116.

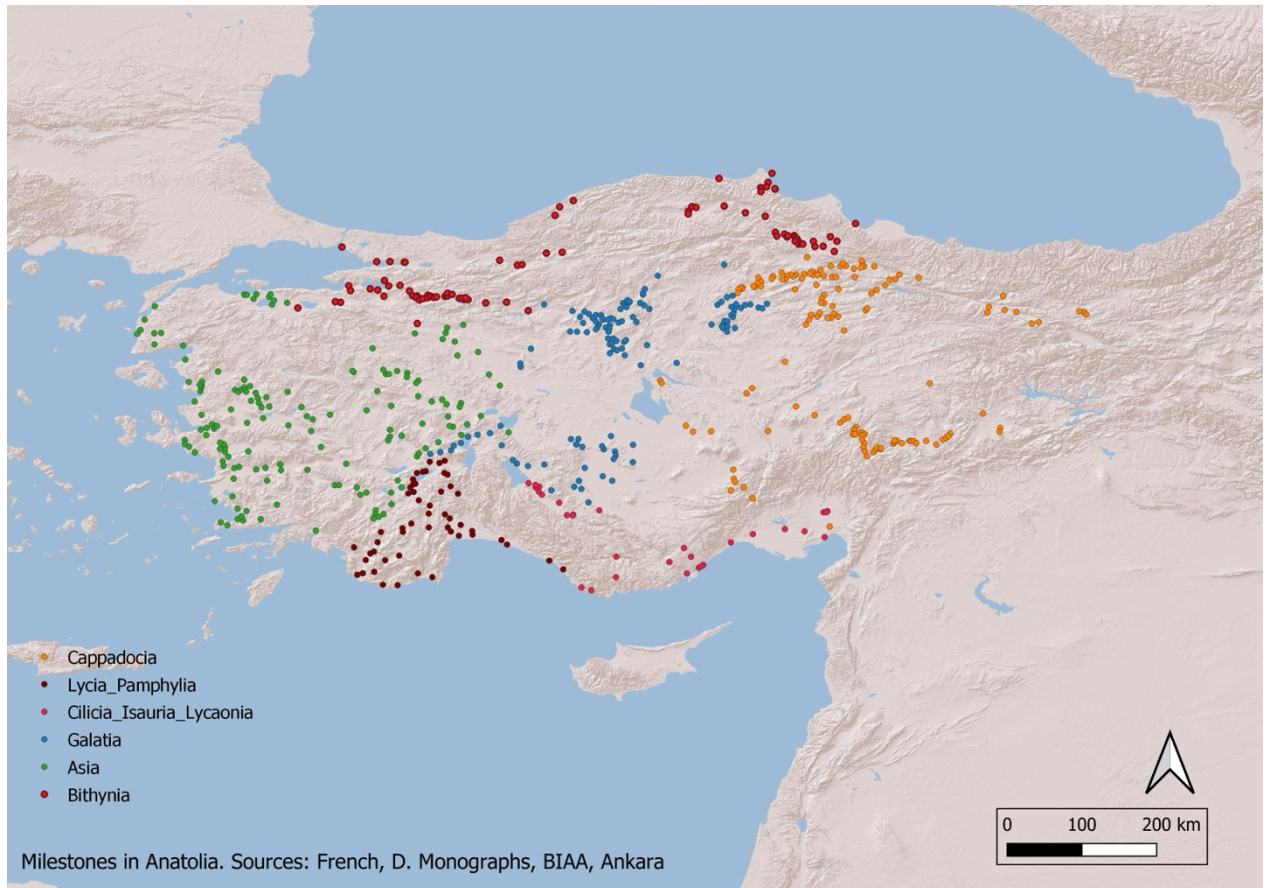


Fig. 1. Milestones in Anatolia

Textual Evidence

The ancient textual evidence¹³, including itineraries, the accounts of ancient historians, and cartographic sources, contributes to understanding the main routes. The most important of these, which are quite representative of the routes in Anatolia, are the itineraries, such as the Antonine Itinerary and the Jerusalem Itinerary. The Antonine Itinerary or *Itinerarium Provinciarum Antonini Augusti*, was written to show the distances between cities and towns of the Roman Empire as a list in the late third century CE. The Itinerary gives information about the Roman communication system in a geographical context¹⁴, that is, it gives the geographic names of the road network, such as from Constantinople to the Cilician Gates.

The Jerusalem Itinerary or *Itinerarium Burdigalense* was written in the fourth century. It gives information about a ‘Pilgrim’s Road’ from Western Europe to Jerusalem¹⁵. The Itinerary describes a single route from Burdigale (Bordeaux) to Jerusalem, which crossed Anatolia, and passed through Chalcedon (Kadıköy), Nicomedia (İzmit), Ancyra (Ankara), Tarsus (Tarsus), and Antiochia (Antakya)¹⁶. This

¹³ Although it is difficult to deduce very much from saints’ lives regarding routes, for example, St. Paul and St. Nicholas of Sion mention the routes they followed and the cities they stayed. St. Paul travelled from Lystra through the Phrygian and Galatian regions to Troas and returned to Antioch of Pisidia. Taşlıalan, 1991, 50. St. Nicholas travelled from Lycia thence to his monastery at Holy Sion (a hill in the southwest of Jerusalem). “St. Nicholas of Sion (45A.57)”.

¹⁴ Tozer, 1897, 307; Belke, 2008, 296; Ramsay, 1890, 198.

¹⁵ Ramsay, 1890, 198; Tozer, 1897, 309.

¹⁶ French, 2016, 15.

document mentions numerous minor stations; known as *mutationes* and *mansiones*¹⁷. “Itineraria Romana 1: Itineraria Antonini Augusti et Burdigalense (200-217, 572-581)”. These two sources offer a means of conceptualizing and analysing the routes and the cities in terms of spatial and cartographic knowledge.

Geographical information about the Byzantine Empire is found in *Synekdēmos* of Hieroclēs, a sixth century CE source prepared to give an official list of the cities along with the titles of their governors¹⁸ in the Eastern Roman Empire. “Hieroclēs *Synekdēmos* (658-706)”. Regarding the cartographic evidence, another well-known source that displays cities as well as land routes and their distances is the Peutinger Table or *Tabula Peutingeriana*¹⁹, thought to be a copy of a fifth century CE tourist map²⁰. “*Tabula Peutingeriana* (IX 5-X)”. While it describes roads in detail, the boundaries of countries and geographical features are highly abstract and do not refer to any modern geographical projection or perspective.

The accounts of historians provide information about the routes used by the armies. Well-known accounts of this sort from the Byzantine period (fourth – seventh centuries) are those of Ammianus Marcellinus, Eusebius, Zosimus, John Malalas and Procopius. Ammianus Marcellinus mentions the campaigns of the emperors, such as that of Julian (361-363 CE), as well as journeys undertaken by Jovian (363-364 CE) and Valens (364-378 CE). The routes followed by the emperors in question are from Bosphorus to Antiochia (Antakya), from Antiochia (Antakya) to Constantinople and from Pessinus (Ballıhisar) to the region of Lydia, respectively. “Ammianus Marcellinus (22.9, 25.10, 26.9)”. Eusebius gives information about religious building activities. “Eusebius (45.2-46, 47.4-49, 47.4-50)”. Zosimus indicates the preparations for the Persian war of the emperor Julian (361-363 CE) and that he went on from Byzantium to Antiochia (Antakya) for such a campaign. “Zosimus (III.11)”. Zosimus also mentions a revolt which broke out in the region of Phrygia and the emperor Valens (364-378 CE) met the rebel forces at Thyatira (Akhisar) and after the rebel was defeated, Valens moved to Sardis (Sart) and thence to Nacolea (Seyitgazi) in Phrygia. “Zosimus (IV.8)”.²¹ John Malalas deals with construction activities in the cities such as Constantinople and Antiochia (Antakya). Although Malalas does not provide direct information about the routes, his narratives concerning the state and the status of the cities are of importance during the period between the fourth and seventh centuries. “John Malalas (13.3, 13.7, 13.8, 13.10, 13.11, 13.17, 13.30, 13.39, 13.40, 13.44, 14.20, 14.24, 16.8, 16.17, 17.19, 18.17, 18.33)”. Procopius focuses on major public works such as the construction and maintenance of roads²², bridges, public

¹⁷ Ramsay, 1890, 66. *Mutatio/allage* refers to station for the change of transport facilities or changing stations for riding and pack animals, and *mansio/stathmos* refers to station or hostels for lodging and food. Kolb, 2018, 440; Külzer, 2023, 49.

¹⁸ *Synekdēmos* lists the 64 provinces and 923 cities in the Eastern Roman Empire. Edson, 2018, 719; Külzer, 2016, 281.

¹⁹ According to Ramsay, the *Tabula Peutingeriana* is a copy of a tourist map from the fourth century CE that was renamed in the fifth century CE. Ramsay, 1890, 96. Rathmann argues that the Peutinger Table could be traced to the Hellenistic era and was no longer in use during the Roman Imperial period; see Rathmann, 2016, 714-735.

²⁰ Kazhdan, 1991, 2004.

²¹ Zosimus narrates the Egyptians and the Persians met at Philadelphia (Alaşehir) in Lydia during the reign of Theodosius I (379-395 CE), but there is no information about the routes they followed. Additionally, the Goths attacked Phrygia, Lydia and Ionia in the period of Arcadius (395-408 CE); however, the chronicler does not provide information about the routes. The Gothic troops also attempted to invade the region of Pamphylia and came as far as Selga (Selge). Zosimus mentions that the roads were rough, marshy, and unsuitable for the cavalry so that the Goths could not escape and were surrounded by all the city dwellers between the Melas (Manavgat) and the Eurymedon (Köprüçay) rivers. “Zosimus (IV.30, V.15, V.16)”.

²² Evidence on the construction and maintenance of Roman roads can also be found in legal texts, such as the fifth-century *Codex Theodosianus*. MacKay states that the sixth century *Justinianic corpus* and

buildings, and churches in Anatolia. He mentions about the roads near Nicaea (İzник), the Dracon River (Kocaçay), and Antiochia (Antakya), by reporting that a wagon-road near the Dracon River (Kocaçay) and Antiochia (Antakya) were built, which enabled communication through the mountains and precipitous hills. The construction and restoration activities of bridges over the Dracon (Kocaçay), Siberis (Kirmir Çayı), Pyramus (Ceyhan), Sarus (Seyhan) and Cyndus (Berdan) rivers were also completed. Among the other works mentioned by him is the restoration of the aqueducts in Nicaea (İzник) and of public baths in Nicaea (İzник), Nicomedeia (İzmit), and in Cappadocia, as well as church construction and restoration in Constantinople, Ephesus (near Selçuk), Nicaea (İzник) and also near Galatia and Cappadocia. “Procopius (VII.V.ii.10-iii.4, VII.V.iii17-iv.5, VII.V.v.2-8, VII.V.v.8-14, VII.V.v.15-20)”.²³

Of the modern sources, the *Tabula Imperii Byzantini* (TIB) series is the most significant study on Byzantine routes in Anatolia. The TIB contributes to understanding the use of routes chronologically, which is the most important reference to the Byzantine routes, as the routes are presented and described in accordance with the archaeological and textual evidence. In the TIB, the Byzantine roads and routes are dealt with in three directions, which consist of the northwest-southeast diagonal, east-west and north-south routes in Anatolia²⁴.

Pre-Roman Routes

There were major routes in Anatolia before the Roman period. Routes were expanded especially during the fourteenth century BCE.²⁵ The Hittites had developed a road network in northern Anatolia that led from Hattusa to the western, northern and southern coasts of Anatolia. The communication network connected the capital of Hattusa (Hattuša/Boğazkale), founded in the Halys (Marassantiya/Kızılırmak) basin to its hinterland; to Amisus (Samsun) in the north, Sebastia (Sivas) in the east and Smyrna (İzmir) in the west²⁶. Among the cities that flourished significantly in the Hittite period and were connected *via* a road network are Tapigga (Maşat—a military garrison), Tahazimuna (Dazimon—near Tokat), Şapinuwa (Ortaköy—a garrison city), Anziliya (Zela—the religious centre of the Hittites), Hanhana (a cult centre about 20 km south of Gangra (Çankırı), Arinna (Alacahöyük), Karkemiş (Karkamish), Kumanni

the late 9th century *Basiliika* contain no new laws regarding roads and postal service. In this regard, the Theodosian Code seems to be a main source for the administrative mechanism of the Roman roads and posts. For discussion, see MacKay, 1999, 67.

²³ Further information on the later period can be found in the *Chronographia* of St. Theophanes Confessor, Byzantine monk and chronicler of the eighth-ninth century.

²⁴ The *Tabula Imperii Byzantini*, published by the Austrian Academy of Sciences (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften) in Vienna is a research project on the historical geography as well as routes (Die Strassen) of the Byzantine Empire, including all the regions of Anatolia as well as Syria. In each volume, the archaeological evidence is combined with written sources. Of the 18-volume Tabula, 10 are about Anatolia only 7 have been published to date. The TIB is a significant source for understanding the main arterial routes as well as the geography and climate, borders and territorial designations, administrative and church history and monasticism, economy and demographic trends in the Byzantine world from the beginning of the fourth to the middle of the fifteenth century CE. The region of Cappadocia was studied by Friedrich Hild and Marcell Restle, 1981, and the routes of Cappadocia by Friedrich Hild, 1977; Galatia and Lycaonia by Klaus Belke and Marcell Restle, 1981; Cilicia and Isauria by Friedrich Hild and Hansgerd Hellenkemper, 1990; Phrygia and Pisidia by Klaus Belke and Norbert Mersich, 1990; Lycia and Pamphylia by Friedrich Hild and Hansgerd Hellenkemper, 2004; Paphlagonia and Honorias by Klaus Belke, 1996, and Bithynia and Hellespont by Klaus Belke, 2020. Current sections under preparation are Western Anatolia: Lydia and Asia by Andreas Külzer, and Caria by Friedrich Hild and Andreas Külzer. Work on Pontos remains in preparation.

²⁵ Garstang, 1943, 35.

²⁶ Delaporte, 1936, 22-30.

(Komana/Şar in Cappadocia), Hupišna (Cybistra near Ereğli/Konya), Tuwanuwa (Tyana/Kemerhisar), Tarša (Tarsus), Adaniya (Adana), Alalah (Tel-Atchana), Tišmurna (Smyrna?) and Apaša (Ephesus?)²⁷. Of these settlements, Tyana, Smyrna and Ephesus continued to play an important role during the early Byzantine period.

Routes which led to Gordion (about 95 km southwest of Ankara), the capital of the Phrygians, gained importance when they established their rule in central Anatolia in the second half of the eighth century BCE.²⁸ The main routes, which were used for military and trade during the Phrygian period, were diverted to Gordion when the roads leading to Hattusas lost importance. Gordion became a commercial hub between east and Anatolia, and communication and transportation led to the capital of the Phrygians²⁹. Some of the cities that had flourished or gained prominence along this route in the same period were Tavium (Büyüknefes), Ancyra (Ankara), Pessinus (Ballıhisar), Orkistus (Ortaköy), Acmonia (Ahatköy), Satala (Sadak) and Sardis (Sart)³⁰, given their connection to the communication system in western and central Anatolia.

Inland Anatolia saw the development of several kingdoms between the eighth and sixth centuries, as well as Greek colonization. New cities were established, particularly along the Aegean and Mediterranean coasts. The expansion of Greek colonization in Anatolia between the ninth and sixth centuries BCE³¹ gave way to an increase in both commercial activities and the networks of communication. Connections between Greece and the coastal regions of Anatolia flourished especially during the late seventh century BCE with many cities gaining prominence as trade centres. The economically influential Greek settlements that are known from this period are Smyrna (İzmir), Phokaia (Foça), Miletus (Milet) and Knidos (Datça). Maritime trade in particular increased and operated between the cities of the Aegean coast and Athens, for which Ephesus and Byzantium served as the major market centers³². The Greeks who had settled in the southern coastal cities such as Aspendos (Serik/Antalya) and Side facilitated the trade between the Aegean world and the Levant, and also Egypt in this period³³. The Lycian coast and the city of Phaselis (north of Tekirova), located on the coastal route from Corycus (Kızkale) through Attalia (Antalya), are also known to have interacted with Athens in the fifth and fourth centuries BCE.³⁴

The Persian Empire, in the meantime, had completed a major road that ran to the Aegean in the fifth century BCE. This road was called the 'Royal Road' as it started in Susa (Shush) in Iran, the capital of the Empire, and went to Sardis (Sart). The 'Royal Road' stretched in the east-west direction and was used for political/administrative and commercial purposes, as Herodotus "Herodotus (5.52)" mentions³⁵.

In the pre-Roman period, new roads were built, and new routes came to prominence³⁶. One of the major routes established in this context was the 'Great

²⁷ Alp, 2005, 49-51.

²⁸ See Kaya, 2007.

²⁹ Young, 1963, 348-364.

³⁰ Ramsay, 1890, 29.

³¹ Harl, 2011, 753.

³² Reed, 2003, 21.

³³ Harl, 2011, 754.

³⁴ Ibid., 31, 69.

³⁵ Also See Anderson, 1897, 43; Charlesworth, 1924, 78; Starr, 1963, 163-64; Winfield, 1977, 152; Magie, 1950, 39. For the discussion of the 'Royal Road', see Bryer – Winfield, 1985, 20; and see French, 1998, 15-43.

³⁶ Charlesworth, 1924, 79.

Trade Route'. This was a southern route, and its presence is traced to the fifth century BCE.³⁷ It ran from the Aegean coast to the Cilician Gates and was used during the Persian period³⁸. "Strabo (XIV.2.29)". In the Hellenistic period between 300 BCE and 100 BCE, the 'Great Trade Route' must have been developed further and used actively with new cities such as Laodicia (Eskihisar/Denizli), Apamia (Dinar) and Nysa (Sultanhisar) founded along its direction by the Hellenistic Kings³⁹. In the third century BCE, when more new cities such as Philadelphia (Alaşehir) and Philomelium (Akşehir) were established by the kings of Pergamum (Bergama), they were made part of this line of communication. A new route known to have been established in this period was between Laodikeia ad Lycum (Eskihisar/Denizli) and Amisus (Samsun). In the Hellenistic period, Smyrna (İzmir) and Ephesus became the most important commercial centers and port cities of Anatolia and the Aegean. Some of the other cities which emerged in this period include Cyzicus (Erdek/Kapıdağ Peninsula), and Chalcedon (Kadıköy), and Heraclia Ponti (Ereğli/Zonguldak), Sinope (Sinop), Amisus (Samsun) and Trapezus (Trabzon) in the north of Anatolia. Thus, the newly established routes mentioned above and leading from western Anatolia to the Black Sea coasts connected Aegean and Pontus in the west-east and southwest-northeast axes. The main northern route between Bithynia and Pontus was used by the kings of Pontus and later by the Romans for military and administrative purposes, as shown by Ramsay⁴⁰. In the south Perge (Aksu/Antalya), Aspendus (Serik/Antalya), Side (Side) and Attalia (Antalya) are known as the prosperous cities⁴¹ located along the east-west coastal route in the Hellenistic period. The main routes in the Hellenistic period were thus the 'Great Trade Route' that ran between the Aegean coast and the Cilician Gates, and the route from Pergamum (Bergama) to Thyatira (Akhisar)⁴². Some of the cities⁴³ that were part of the main routes in Anatolia in the Hellenistic period continued to flourish under the Romans. A number of separately operated routes criss-crossed Anatolia but only under the Romans was a unified communication system established⁴⁴.

Roman Routes

The basis of the Byzantine routes depends on the roads constructed in the Roman imperial period. Therefore, understanding the Roman routes is essential to shed light on Byzantine routes in Anatolia between the ca. fourth and seventh centuries. Anatolia had a multitude of independently operated routes, but the 'connected' road system gained importance in the Roman period. The frequent changes in the balance of power among the Anatolian Kingdoms and the absence of a unified political media are two factors that might account for this absence⁴⁵. A

³⁷ Ramsay, 1890, 36.

³⁸ Also see Tozer, 1897, 305; Charlesworth, 1924, 79.

³⁹ Ramsay, 1890, 43.

⁴⁰ Ramsay, 1890, 29, 44.

⁴¹ Harl, 2011, 771.

⁴² Ramsay, 1890, 43-44. There was one other route from Nicomedia to Amasia, which connected Bithynia and Pontus; however, it was no great importance in this period, Ramsay emphasizes. *Ibid.*

⁴³ Cities like Laodicia (Eskihisar/Denizli), Apamia (Dinar), Antiochia (Antakya), Nysa (Sultanhisar), Seleucia (Silifke), Philadelphia (Alaşehir), Attalia (Antalya), Philomelium (Akşehir), Nicomedia (İzmir), and Prusa ad Olypnum (Bursa), founded in the Hellenistic period, must have continued to have local importance in the Roman period. Some of them such as Nicomedia and Philadelphia became significant as are Byzantium or Ephesus, since they were established on the main highway in the northwest-southeast and east-west directions respectively during the Byzantine period.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ Harl, 2011, 771.

systematic and extensive network of communication⁴⁶ was developed in Anatolia when the Roman Empire expanded its territories through the main routes that connected Europe to the Euphrates in the east and northern Africa in the south in the late first century CE.⁴⁷ By the middle of the second century CE⁴⁸, the network of roads had created the routes that were crucial to the development of administration and policy in Byzantine Anatolia⁴⁹. The Romans maintained and further developed the east-west routes which were in use in the third and second century BCE.⁵⁰ The Romans kept building roads and paved roads were established in the Imperial period in Anatolia⁵¹.

Physical aspects of the Roman routes or *highways*, as French classified⁵², were wider than 3.25 meters and planned for wheeled traffic⁵³. It is known that Manius Aquillius⁵⁴ built the first Roman roads in Anatolia⁵⁵ between the years 129 and 126

⁴⁶ Roads were administered by the *cursus publicus* or *demosios dromos*, the organization responsible for communication service and imperial post, and at the same time the maintenance of roads, bridges and hostels or way stations (*mansio* and *mutatio*) along the main routes. The officials, called *comes sacrarum largitionum*, and *comes rei privatae*, were the administrative authorities responsible for the organization of the transportation of goods. They were given official permission to use the horses and wagons of the postal services. Two distinct systems, *cursus clabularis* – the slow post and *cursus velox* – the fast service, were used in terms of transportation in the Roman Empire. Belke, 2008, 302; Avramea, 2002, 58; Kolb, 2001, 95. For more information about the function of *cursus publicus*, see Hyland, 1990, 250-252. For discussion on *cursus publicus*, see Lemcke, 2016.

⁴⁷ Talbert, 2012, 235.

⁴⁸ Kolb, 2019, 10; Maas – Ruths, 2012, 256.

⁴⁹ The infrastructure of the Roman roads is thoroughly explained by studies devoted to the archaeologically investigated roads, which typically involve the findings of milestones on site and road construction technology, such as physical aspects of the road in terms of engineering. See Laurence, 1999; Casado, 2013, 69-87; Kolb, 2019.

⁵⁰ The Romans defined roads in three contextual categories as public roads (*viae publicae*), strategic roads (*viae militares*), and local roads (*viae vicinales*). Berechman, 2003, 459. They used the terms *vicus* for flat streets, *clivus* for rippled roads, *semita* for paths, *angiportus* for small road or passageways found in the cities. The term *viae* was used for extra-urban roads. Staccioli, 2004, 11-12. The Roman roads consisted of paved (*viae munitae*) and unpaved (*viae terrenae*) roads, which were divided further into two as *viae silice stratae* (stone roads) and *viae glarea stratae* (gravel roads). Tilburg, 2007, 14-15. Külzer describes the minor roads as follows: cattle or herd paths are known as *agelodromia*, paths used for carting goods as *hamaxēgoi*, forest roads for the transportation of wood and tree trunks as *xylophorika*, narrow mule tracks for pedestrians, riding and pack animals as *monopatia*, partially paved mountain passes as *kleisourai*. Külzer, 2023, 47.

⁵¹ French suggested that the Roman roads in the Republican period were ‘unpaved’, that is, *trackways*. French, 1997, 183. The roads in the Republican period are demonstrated epigraphically from Pergamum to Laodicia and Side, from Ephesus to Pergamum and Lampsacus, from Ephesus to Sardis, and from Ephesus to Tralles and Laodicia. French, 1997, 180. Also see Külzer, 2019, 152.

⁵² Ancient Roman roads and routes in Anatolia are classified according to their physical aspects and named as highway, roadway, trackway, and pathway first by David French. According to French, highways and roadways are “the built, engineered paved and maintained lines of communication”. French, 1981, 128. A trackway, which is broad, and a pathway, which is narrow, on the other hand, are the two “constructed but not paved and regularly maintained lines of communication”. French, 1980, 703. Based on French’s study, Klaus Belke also classifies Roman roads as such: “highways are broad and paved for vehicles, roadways narrow and paved for pack animals, trackways broad, constructed but not paved, pathways narrow and not paved”. Belke, 2017, 28. In light of these classifications, it is reasonable to assume that the Roman highways in Anatolia include the ‘Pilgrim’s Road’, the route from Satala to Melitena, the *Via Sebaste*, and the route from Caesarea (Kayseri) to Melitena (Malatya) and so on. French, 1980, 13.

⁵³ French divided the main road into two sub-categories as such: 1) The road, with an average width of 6.50 meters in unsuitable terrain, and, narrowed to about 4.00 or 3.25 meters wide; 2) The road, with an average width of 6.50 meters in suitable terrain, narrowed to about 4.00-4.50 or 3.25 meters wide and without steps. For the physical aspects of a Roman road, see French, 1992, 11-13.

⁵⁴ The proconsul/governor of the province of Asia. French, 1992, 6; Külzer, 2019, 151.

⁵⁵ The Romans maintained and further developed the roads on east and west which were in use in the third and second centuries BCE.

BCE.⁵⁶ By degrees, parts of Anatolia came under the rule of the Romans throughout the first century BCE., and new roads were constructed. New routes also emerged in all the provinces of Anatolia for commercial and military purposes in the first century CE.⁵⁷ The northern routes, running from Chalcedon to the Cilician Gates via Ancyra or to the Euphrates via Caesarea, gained importance towards the end of the first and beginning of the second century CE.⁵⁸ Locally, new routes in the provinces of Bithynia, Pamphylia, Lycia, Galatia, Cilicia, Cappadocia, and Pontus were established as a result of the construction of new roads⁵⁹. The Romans prioritized work on building or repairing roads by considering which cities and settlements held the most military relevance. As a result, stations and garrisons were built along the routes that made it possible for military accessibility among the cities of Anatolia⁶⁰, which enabled the movement of both people and goods from provinces to the frontiers and political centres⁶¹.

The milestones found in Anatolia aid in understanding to some extent the existence of roads region by region⁶². The milestones show that approximately 33 per cent of them have been found in Cappadocia⁶³. Although it is challenging to assess the development and maintenance of roads using the available data, it is to some extent to see the road construction or maintenance. It can be suggested in light of the recorded milestones that significant new road construction activities were undertaken during the first century CE, excluding the *Via Sebaste*⁶⁴. The inscriptions *viam fecit* and *viam stravit* carved on the milestones show that both the major roads, such as Ephesus (near Selçuk) – Cyzicus (Erdek/Kapıdağ Peninsula) and Pergamum (Bergama) – Side (Side), and the minor ones were built during this period⁶⁵. In the light of the inscriptions, some other roads might have been built in this period which led from Corycus (Kızkale)⁶⁶ to Claudiopolis (Mut), from Seleucia (Silifke) to Claudiopolis (Mut), from Miletus (near Balat) to Didyma (Didim), from Prusa ad Olympum (Bursa) to Nicaea (İzmit), from Prusa ad Olympum (Bursa) to Cyzicus (Erdek/Kapıdağ Peninsula), from Nicomedia (İzmit) to Neocaesaria (Niksar), from Chalcedon (Kadıköy) to Trapezus (Trabzon), from Satala (Sadak) to Amasia (Amasya) thence to Ancyra (Ankara), from Satala (Sadak) to Melitena (Malatya), from Caesarea (Kayseri) to Tavium (Büyüknefes), from Sinope (Sinop) to Neocaesaria (Niksar)⁶⁷, from

⁵⁶ French, 1992, 6. French, 2014a, 18, explains that due to a scarcity of evidence, there are still certain unanswered questions for all provinces, such as who built the first Roman-era paved roads – local workers or army – how much funding came from local sources.

⁵⁷ Ramsay, 1890, 47.

⁵⁸ Belke, 2020b, 264.

⁵⁹ French, 1992, 6. Construction of roads was quite prevalent, particularly in the first century CE. Examples of these roads can be given as follows: Myra-Limyra, Şahin, 2014, 110, Ephesus-Lampsacus-Cyzicus, Laodicia-Hierapolis, Miletus-Didyma. French, 2014a, 321, Tarsus-Anemurium, French, 2014c, 71.

⁶⁰ Pompey established stations in the valleys of Lycus (a tributary of the Maeander) and the Halys River, and Augustus' colonies and garrisons were located in the regions of Lycia and Isauria, thereby providing connections also between cities and the sea. Ramsay, 1890, 45; Mitchell, 1993, 124. The west-east route running from Constantinople to Theodosiopolis already existed in the period of Pompey, and the colonies established along this road were Pompeiopolis, Neapolis, Magnopolis, Diospolis, and Nicopolis through Bithynia and Pontus. Bryer – Winfield, 1985, 21.

⁶¹ Haldon, 1999, 52.

⁶² There are more than 1200 recorded milestones found in Anatolia, including the provinces of Asia, Galatia, Cappadocia, Pontus-Bithynia, Lycia-Pamphylia, and Cilicia-Isauria-Lycaonia.

⁶³ French, 2012a.

⁶⁴ The *Via Sebaste* (6 BCE) is the first known paved main road in Anatolia. French, 1997, 183.

⁶⁵ French, 1997, 181.

⁶⁶ Additionally, there is evidence that the coastal road between Corycus (Kızkale) and Corasion (Susanoglu) was expanded in 521 CE. Hild – Hellenkemper, 1990, 130.

⁶⁷ French, 2014c, 71; French, 2013, 169-170; French, 2014b, 121; French, 2014a, 321-322; French, 2012b, 315.

Cotiaenum (Kütahya) to Philomelium (Akşehir), from Tarsus to Anemurium (Anamur) . It seems that the complete development of the main Roman road network in Anatolia had occurred until the fourth century CE. The pre-existing roads were also prioritized for maintenance by the Roman emperors, and the milestones are crucial for learning more about the restoration and repairs that took place from the first century CE all the way up to the fourth⁶⁸. Accordingly, the roads in the east-west, north-south, and northwest-southeast directions were refurbished⁶⁹. The restoration of roads, *vias restituit*, occurred along the roads from Ephesus (near Selçuk) to Cyzicus (Erdek/Kapıdağ Peninsula), Mylasa (Milas) to Tralles (Aydın) and to Telmessus (Fethiye), Pergamum (Bergama) to Sardis (Sart) and thence to (*Via Sebaste*)⁷⁰, Caesarea (Kayseri) to Melitena (Malatya)⁷¹, Apameia (1 km east of Mudanya) to Nicaea (İzmit)⁷² in the first century CE. It seems that the restoration and renovation activities continued in the second and third centuries as well. The roads from Mylasa (Milas) to Telmessus (Fethiye) and to Myndus (Gümüşlük) were renewed⁷³, and the roads which collapsed by time between Nicomedeia (İzmit) and Neocaesarea (Niksar) were refurbished⁷⁴. The road from Xanthus (Kınık) to Cibyra (Gölkhisar)⁷⁵ and from Prusa ad Olympum (Bursa) to Cyzicus (Erdek/Kapıdağ Peninsula)⁷⁶ was rebuilt and restored in the second-third centuries. The road from Chalcedon (Kadıköy) to Trapezus (Trabzon) was also refurbished at the end of the second and the beginning of the third centuries⁷⁷. The roads between Caesarea (Kayseri) and Iconium (Konya), Satala (Sadak) and Ancyra (Ankara), Caesarea (Kayseri) and Ancyra (Ankara), and Caesarea (Kayseri) and Melitena (Malatya) were repaired in the third century⁷⁸. The *Via Sebaste*, which was between 6 and 8 meters wide and hence suited for wheeled traffic and the movement of goods, is an example of one of these roads and serves as the greatest case analysis for the repair and rebuilding of Roman roads in Anatolia⁷⁹. Since they served administrative, political, economic, and religious purposes, the roads - which were extensively built and maintained between the first and second half of the fourth centuries - played a crucial role in the development of the Byzantine routes in Anatolia. The Romans constructed these highways diagonally in a northwest-southeast direction and used them throughout centuries. The route, which was already in use in the previous centuries and known as the 'Pilgrim's Road', continued to be used in later periods as a means of connecting the capital with the Holy Land.

Byzantine Routes: Rise to Power

The new roads constructed and refurbished or restored by the Romans between the first and fourth century CE presumably continued to be used locally throughout the period from the fourth to the early seventh century. It is possible to get information about the use of the existing roads from the road-building inscriptions carved on the milestones, which were found in all the provinces of Anatolia. The milestones show that the roads were maintained in the provinces of

⁶⁸ Belke notes that roads were renovated and repaired up to the sixth century. See Belke, 2017, 29.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ French 2014a, 321.

⁷¹ French, 2012b, 312.

⁷² Belke, 2020b, 278.

⁷³ French, 2014a, 322.

⁷⁴ French, 2013, 169.

⁷⁵ French, 2014b, 121.

⁷⁶ French, 2013, 169.

⁷⁷ French, 2013, 170.

⁷⁸ French, 2014c; French, 2013; French, 2014b; French, 2014a; French, 2012b.

⁷⁹ Mitchell, 2015.

Lycia, Pamphylia, Cappadocia, and Asia⁸⁰ through the fourth century, as well as the early fifth century⁸¹. According to French, milestones found alongside the roads/*roadways* from Bargylia (Boğaziçi) to Myndus (Gümüşlük)⁸² and from Ephesus (near Selçuk) to Pergamum (Bergama)⁸³ are dated to the sixth and early seventh centuries, respectively, and it provides evidence of continuity in their use in this regard⁸⁴. However, it should be kept in mind that according to French's study there are more than a hundred multi-inscribed milestones that were found in Anatolia, and the fourth century CE is the date assigned to the majority of the milestones with multiple inscriptions in the regions. In this regard, an excessive number of hardly or no visible inscriptions carved on milestones could alter the interpretation of the Anatolian Road network to some extent.

Milestones do not provide information as to which major routes gained prominence, and the information about the state of routes can only be found in textual evidence in the sixth century⁸⁵. For instance, the construction of wagon roads in Cilicia and the refurbishment of the road established between the provinces of Bithynia and Phrygia were conducted in the sixth century as it is understood from the account of Procopius. "Procopius (VII.V.iii.17-iv.5, VII.V.v.2-8, VII.V.v.8-14)". In this century, local routes were improved by connecting them with newly built bridges and channels, allowing for easy access to cities and settlements. Following attacks of the Persians on the eastern frontier, the sixth century witnessed the renovation of existing cities and construction works to strengthen their fortresses and add significant defensive structures such as city gates and also construction of new fortresses. Given that the state of warfare affected the use of roads and routes for military goals, it is certain that fortress construction and maintenance was undertaken. Therefore, a number of fortified cities, like Caesarea and Sebastia, to which the routes connected, would ensure the security of the main roads and routes. "Procopius (VII.III.iv.9-17, VII.III.iv.18-v.4, VII.V.iv.5-14, VII.V.iv.14-v.2)", "Theophanes ([AM5973, AD 480/I], [AM5974, AD 481/2], [AM5975, AD 482/3], [AM5976, AD483/4], [AM5997, AD504/5])".

Major routes were frequently used in long distance travel for military, religious, and commercial purposes, which helped the routes to develop and become more well-known. There are no milestones or inscriptions relating to road construction after the sixth century and maintenance mostly after the fourth century CE.⁸⁶ Therefore, the routes mentioned above as 'Roman Routes' might be explained by the administrative and religious changes in the fourth century Anatolia. Two essential changes that occurred in the Roman Empire can be suggested that they impacted on the situation and the priorities of the use of routes starting from the fourth century CE. The changes in question can be explained as:

⁸⁰ For discussion on the network of communication in Western Anatolia, see Külzer, 2018a, 83-95.

⁸¹ French, 2014a, 321-322; French, 2014b, 31-45, 46-52, 55, 58, 61-62, 64, 69-70, 72, 74-77, 78-80, 88-89, 90-93, 96-99, 121; French, 2014c, 34, 45, 53, 54-55, 56-60; French, 2013, 35-50, 79-110, 169-170; French, 2012b, 32-77, 80-95, 99, 123-124, 127, 137, 145-147, 156, 158, 160, 163, 172-173, 175-177, 184-185, 190, 198, 200-203, 206, 225, 231-232, 239-254, 261.

⁸² French, 2014a, 322.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ Since new discoveries in the future will alter our current body of knowledge, the information gathered from milestones and inscriptions is here taken into consideration only to a limited extent.

⁸⁵ Külzer discusses that up until the sixth century, the maintenance of roads and bridges was the responsibility of the imperial authority when local residents were also required to perform these duties. Due to a lack of financial resources to keep the roads in good condition, it was difficult to meet the demands in many places. Natural disaster-related damage was no longer repaired. There was a major reduction in the former density of accommodation and changing stations, and the distances between stations increased while the speed of movement decreased in the sixth century. See Külzer, 2023, 50.

⁸⁶ Belke, 2008, 296. For much discussion, see Belke, 2020a, 79-83.

1) Constantinople's inauguration in 330 CE and the subsequent rise of the Eastern Roman Empire⁸⁷ coincided with Constantinople becoming the new capital of the Roman Empire⁸⁸.

2) Recognition of Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Empire⁸⁹.

The foundation of Constantinople as the new capital of the Roman Empire made it a centre of authority and attraction thereby associating it with all the changing dynamics of routes in Anatolia. With the power of the empire rising and Constantinople becoming a symbol of this authority, the routes gradually began to serve the new capital⁹⁰. The cities which were already established close to the capital began to flourish as centres of religious, social and administrative action and interaction⁹¹. The cities located in the northern regions of Anatolia, such as Nicaea (İznik) and Ancyra (Ankara), developed more intense communications with Constantinople, and that is exactly why the diagonal routes⁹² that crossed central Anatolia became more operative in the transportation of goods and people, starting from about the fourth century onwards. This resulted in a system of roads that led to the capital and the main communication network of the empire enabled access to the major urban centres, which were established along the main routes between the fourth and the early seventh century CE. The use of diagonal routes that spanned central Anatolia as a result of the emergence of a more intense relationship with Constantinople became more frequent in the movement of goods and people in the fourth century. Roads, restored and refurbished up to the fourth century CE, seem to have been used until the beginning of the seventh century with slight modifications⁹³. It appears that the changes in the physical size of the highways did not modify their intended function as the 'Pilgrim's Road' gained importance and it became the most important highway passing through the inland of Anatolia⁹⁴.

It is possible to assert that the development of Christianity and the new administrative system went hand in hand. As described by Brown, the new official religion spread from Anatolia to every region and gave Constantinople the title "holy city". The emperor soon acquired a "holy identity" and became the main strong

⁸⁷ It is known that the "centralization" of the administrative structure started to rule the empire by the early fourth century. In this century, the "self-governing classical city-state" naturally lost out to the whole central power. For the detailed discussion on the system of imperial administration, see Hammond, 1974, 25; Bury, 1923, 5; Koder, 1986, 157; Brown, 1971, 42; Cameron, 1993, 53-60; Mitchell, 2015, 11.

⁸⁸ The diagonal routes were those that cut Anatolia along northwest-southeast direction and connected the capital cities (Nicomedia and then Constantinople) of the Eastern Roman Empire to the inland cities and southern coasts of Anatolia. When Nicomedia became the capital city of Diocletian in the third century, the route had two branches which led from Nicomedia and Claudiopolis to the Cilician Gates through Iconium and Tyana respectively. Winfield, 1977, 152. The new and more important capital of the empire, Constantinople, became the hub of attention along the same set of highways.

⁸⁹ Frede, 2010, 53; Cameron, 1993, 7; Mitchell, 2015, 337; Haldon, 2005, 16; Elton, 2015.

⁹⁰ Avramea, 2002, 74.; Kaya, 2020, 83-145; Kaya, 2019a, 259-278; for comparative discussion, see McMahan, 2022, 284-334.

⁹¹ Ramsay, 1890, 74.

⁹² Belke – Mersich, 1990, 139-148; Belke – Restle, 1984, 95-100; Hild, 1977, 33-63.

⁹³ Belke states that during the period of about three centuries – e.g. fourth, fifth and sixth centuries – many of the roads became narrower than the standard Roman roads, reducing the amount of wheeled traffic. Hence, the main roads or *highways* in Anatolia were transformed into *roadways* with an average width of 3,5m. But they continued to serve for the wheeled traffic as well as oxcarts during this period. See Belke, 2008, 298; Belke, 2017, 29; Belke, 2020a, 79-83.

⁹⁴ The distance of the route between Constantinople and Antiochia, which was the last destination of the 'Pilgrim's Road' in the lands of Anatolia, is given as approximately 754 miles, which equals to approximately 1112 kilometers, in the Antonine Itinerary whereas in the *Itinerarium Burdigalense* as 763 Roman miles, which is closer to the actual distance. "Itineraria Romana 1: Itineraria Antonini Augusti et Burdigalense (572-581)". Most recent research paper regarding the 'Pilgrim's Road' is in preparation by Özgenel and Kaya. Also see Whiting, 2022, 111-137.

supporter of religion⁹⁵. The rise of religion as a political tool in issues of urban and public management affected the urban fate, thereby demonstrating increasing personal influence and authority in matters concerning the functioning of cities and settlements⁹⁶. As soon as they got support from the emperor, Christian bishops transformed into administrative officials and implementers of Christianity dominated rule⁹⁷. A phenomenon that persisted throughout the sixth century was the apparent extensive construction of ecclesiastical infrastructure, which served as a sign of the new religious power that was effective in administration and policy⁹⁸. By the early fourth century, it is evident from the efforts that the emperors had previously supported and encouraged both the construction of churches and the maintenance of existing ones. “Eusebius (44-61.I, 44-45.I, 45.2-46)”. There was an increase in church construction, notably in the fifth and sixth centuries⁹⁹, which seemed to be a representation of Christianity, according to archaeological studies¹⁰⁰ and literary evidence. “Procopius (VII.I.ii.19-iii.5, VII.I.i.20-24, VII.I.iii.5-11, VII.I.iv.I-7, VII.I.iv.24-29, VII.I.xi.25-II.i.3)”. As a result, pilgrimage centres emerged, and Anatolia developed into a favoured destination for those who travelled for religious purposes along the main roads. While the building of churches moved quickly, pilgrimage developed rapidly in the sixth century, indicating a growing network of communication in

⁹⁵ Brown, 1971, 143.

⁹⁶ For detailed discussion, see Brown, 1971, 86-91; Cameron, 1993, 15-16, p. 58; Caseau, 2001, 39-52; Rapp, 2003, 155; Maxwell, 2012, 849-850.

⁹⁷ By the fourth century, Christianity was reconfirmed and strengthened the Roman supremacy as well as the superiority of the Roman values in a new way, as Inglebert states, Inglebert, 2012, 22-23. That Christianity became the religion of the state brought about involving the bishops in the elites in the ‘Christian Roman Empire’. Gillett states that a network of communication had developed between emperors and bishops as well as aristocrats and monks, and this can be defined as an ecclesiastical network of communication, along which theological ideas were exchanged, Gillett, 2012, 815-820. Without doubt, this resulted in the development of a cultural and religious network of communication. Mratschek discusses the topic that the bishops of Caesarea, Sasima, Podandus and Ancyra played a role in attaining a leadership power in Central Anatolia. Regional councils, such as the councils of Ancyra (314 CE), Neocaesaria (314 and 325 CE), Gangra (325 and 381 CE), Antiochia (341 CE), and Laodicia (343 and 381 CE) can be given as examples for the network of communication taking place among the bishops, who discussed issues concerning Church discipline. For much discussion, see Mratschek, 2019, 149-155. By the fifth century, the leadership of the bishops as it is understood from the important church councils held in Ephesus (449 CE) and Chalcedon (451 CE) where the Church was asserted by giving it an official status and the union of the state and the bishops between Rome and Constantinople was consolidated. It seems that not only regional but also inter-regional this type of communication was thus officially supported, thereby making Christianity and the Christian Church become a significant part of the culture of the Roman Empire, that is, the Byzantine Empire from now on. For detailed information regarding religious changes and its impact on social and political life of the empire, see Cameron, 1993, 22, 66, 79-80; Caseau, 2001, 39; Brown, 1971, 8, 143.

⁹⁸ Rapp, 2003, 149.

⁹⁹ Cameron, 1993, 58; Caseau, 2001, 39.

¹⁰⁰ According to the archaeological excavations, new churches were built in Olympos, Perge, Side, and Patara in the fifth-sixth century, Parman, 2002, 137-145. The Panagia Church and St. Mamas Church at Caesarea of Cappadocia, the Churches of St. Plato and St. Novatians in Ancyra, the church in Anazarbus, the church of Akören, and the church near Flaviopolis in Cilicia, and the church built in the Gulf of Ceramus are the examples of fifth-sixth century religious structures, Ötügen, 1983, 93; Cooper and Decker, 2012, 30; Foss, 1977, 61; Sayar *et al.*, 1994, 140; Elton, 2019, 96. For the transformations of ancient Roman structures into churches in Anatolia, see Ruggieri, 1999, 225-226; Parrish, 2018, 139; İzmirligil, 1983, 291-297; İzmirligil – Günay, 2001, 336, Köroğlu, 2016, 463-477; Topçu, 1981, 49; Waelkens, 1990, 216; Waelkens – Hoffman, 1995, 373-419; Ladstätter, 2011, 15; İdil, 1993, 117-118; İdil – Kadioğlu, 2005, 392-393; İdil – Kadioğlu, 2007, 647-671. For the discussion on the transformation of building activity, which impacted on the development of routes in Byzantine Anatolia, see Kaya, 2020, 88-116.

religious activities¹⁰¹ that provided pilgrims with local routes of travel¹⁰². And during this time, the 'Pilgrim's Road' leading from Constantinople to the Cilician Gates *via* Ancyra (Ankara), also known as the 'Pilgrim's Road' and is well-known from the Peutinger Table and the Antonine Itinerary but more accurately from the Jerusalem Itinerary, as well as from milestones, became the main travel route for pilgrims¹⁰³. The prominence of the 'Pilgrim's Road', which runs from Bordeaux to Jerusalem, increased as a result of the two aforementioned changes. Pilgrims favoured the route since it offered the most practical and affordable land travel option¹⁰⁴.

The major cities of the 'Pilgrim's Road' and resting places, which were constructed along it and continuously maintained during the Byzantine period, were significantly responsible for its vitality and existence. The churches, constructed in the fourth, fifth and sixth centuries¹⁰⁵ in Nicaea (İzmit), Iuliopolis (near Çayırhan), Ancyra (Ankara), Tyana (Kemerhisar) and Antiochia (Antakya), for example, were special holy centres where travellers might worship while traveling to the Holy Lands. It is known from the narrative sources that the 'Pilgrim's Road' was used by political bodies as well because it led to Constantinople according to Julian's journey to Antiochia in 362¹⁰⁶. The authorities and messengers began using the 'Pilgrim's Road'

¹⁰¹ Cameron, 1993, 77. Pilgrimage constituted a great major of travellers. The archaeological research indicates that Ephesus, Euchäita, Germia, Myra were the significant pilgrimage centres in Anatolia. Ladstätter, 2011, 15; Sewing, 2019, 79; Haldon, 2005, 95; Vardar, 2008, 460; Niewöhner, 2011, 49; Ötügen, 1994, 370. The roads leading to these cities must have continued to be used for pilgrimage.

¹⁰² For detailed information and discussion on pilgrimage centres and pathways, see Külzer, 2018b, 163-166.

¹⁰³ According to the milestones, the route passed through Chalcedon-Nicaea-Iuliopolis-Ancyra-Colonia Archelaïs-Tyana-*Via* Tauri-Tarsus, and thence Antiochia. French, 2012a, 20. Milestones demonstrate that the northern section of the Pilgrim's Road was built as early as the first century CE and restored in the second and third centuries CE. Belke, 2020b, 265; French, 2013, 169.

¹⁰⁴ Ramsay, 1890, 242. The fact that stations like *mutationes* and *mansiones* enabled comfortable travel and made the route appropriate for both state officials and private travellers in addition to the convenience of the route. *Mutationes* were places to change horses and rest, Foss, no date, p. 3, and *mansiones* were large rectangle building structures, located right next to highways. For detailed information about *mansio*, see Mitchell, 2020, 231-248.

¹⁰⁵ The Church of St. Sophia at Nicaea in the second half of the fifth century, Peschlow, 2017, 209; the church of Iuliopolis in the fifth-sixth centuries, Sağır *et al*, 2018, 60; the Church of St. Plato at Ancyra in the fifth century, Bennett, 2003,10; a church nearby Tyana in the fourth-sixth centuries, Rosada, 2005, 160; the Golden Octagon of Antiochia in the fourth century, Metzger, 1948, 83; were the important church construction activities in these urban centres along the 'Pilgrim's Road'. Being one of the episcopal meeting places, Nicaea attested the continuing importance for the bishops, who discussed the religious issues at councils, thereby providing an episcopal network of communication in this regard.

¹⁰⁶ Belke, 2020a, 81.

once the connection between Constantinople and the Cilician Gates was established¹⁰⁷, and it was probably used until the Arab raids¹⁰⁸.

Conclusion

Land routes in Anatolia were systematically constructed in the Roman imperial period and more developed during the Byzantine period (Fig. 2). The Roman roads are known from the milestones and inscriptions carved on them, which are scattered in all the provinces of Anatolia. They were extensively built and restored between the first and fourth centuries CE and continued to be refurbished in the fifth and sixth centuries CE, and even in the seventh century, as demonstrated by the last milestone, which was dated to 693 and discovered at Kazıkbağları in the province of Asia¹⁰⁹. By the fourth century, two major changes occurred in the Roman Empire: first, the official religion became Christianity; second, Constantinople became the capital of the Roman Empire. The use of roads was impacted by these administrative and religious changes, the 'Pilgrim's Road', which was used in the previous centuries, maintained its significance and served the requirements of travellers and pilgrims between the fourth and seventh centuries. A mutual reading of the archaeological data and historical texts is essential to comprehend the use of the routes in Anatolia in the Byzantine era. The textual evidence provides information about the routes used for religious, trade or military purposes to some extent while the archaeological data like milestones demonstrate the presence of Roman and Byzantine routes.

¹⁰⁷ Belke, 2020a, 83. Regional routes might be significant locally. Although it is difficult to demonstrate as to which local routes gained importance between the fourth and seventh centuries, continuity in urbanisation and cities as nodal points established along the main land routes can shed light on their use. In Cappadocia, the routes in northwest-southeast and east-west directions passed through the cities of Caesarea, Sebastia and Melitena. Hild, 1977, 35. The cities in question were strengthened for military operations, which served as military camps in the sixth century. In Cilicia and Isauria natural roads were in use, and the region of Cilicia is known to have been a central mediator as well as a transit region for transportation. Hild – Hellenkemper state that the route in the north-south axis, passing through the highland along Calycadnos which is known from ancient times, was used for trade. It seems that the coastal route between Corycus and Corasion expanded in the sixth century. Hild – Hellenkemper, 1990, 128-129. It can be suggested that a route from Side to Seleucia Pierias also developed in Cilicia and the north-south connections through the Taurus and anti-Taurus gained importance locally. Hild – Hellenkemper, 1990, 130. As in Cilicia and Isauria, routes in Lycia and Pamphylia took their forms based on the terrain. Known from the Roman period, the route from Pergamum to Side as well as *Via Sebaste* continued to function but there is no evidence whether the routes were maintained for military or commercial purposes during the period in question. Hellenkemper – Hild, 2004, 246 mention the mountain road from Myra to Chora was passable for pack animals. In Pontus, the main means of communication along the coast was the sea as Bryer – Winfield state, and the rugged nature of the region made communications difficult along the coastal route. Bryer – Winfield, 1985, 41. While the routes in the coastal regions served commercial activities, those of inland regions must have been used for military operations. The Nicaea-Ancyra-Tavium route, for example, served as the first line of military supply of the Euphrates frontier in the Roman period. Ancyra took the key position along this line of communication; however, there is no literary evidence about the use of the route between the fourth and seventh centuries, Belke – Restle, 1984, 95-98. An army route in Paphlagonia that passed through Nicomedia, Claudiopolis and Ancyra was known to have been used by troops, including a route between Heraclia and Neoclaudiopolis, and Cratia and Ancyra, as Belke mentions. Belke, 1996, 122. There is no textual evidence about their military or commercial uses in the period between the fourth and seventh centuries.

¹⁰⁸ It is known that in the period of Justinian I, the northern section of the road around the valley of the Dracon River was replaced by a new route, which was suitable for wagons. Belke, 2020, 266. And Justinian built a bridge over the Siberis Stream (Girmir Çayı). Belke – Restle, 1984, 95. Our knowledge about the 'Pilgrim's Road' after the sixth century, i.e. during the period of Arab raids, is limited.

¹⁰⁹ French, 2014a.

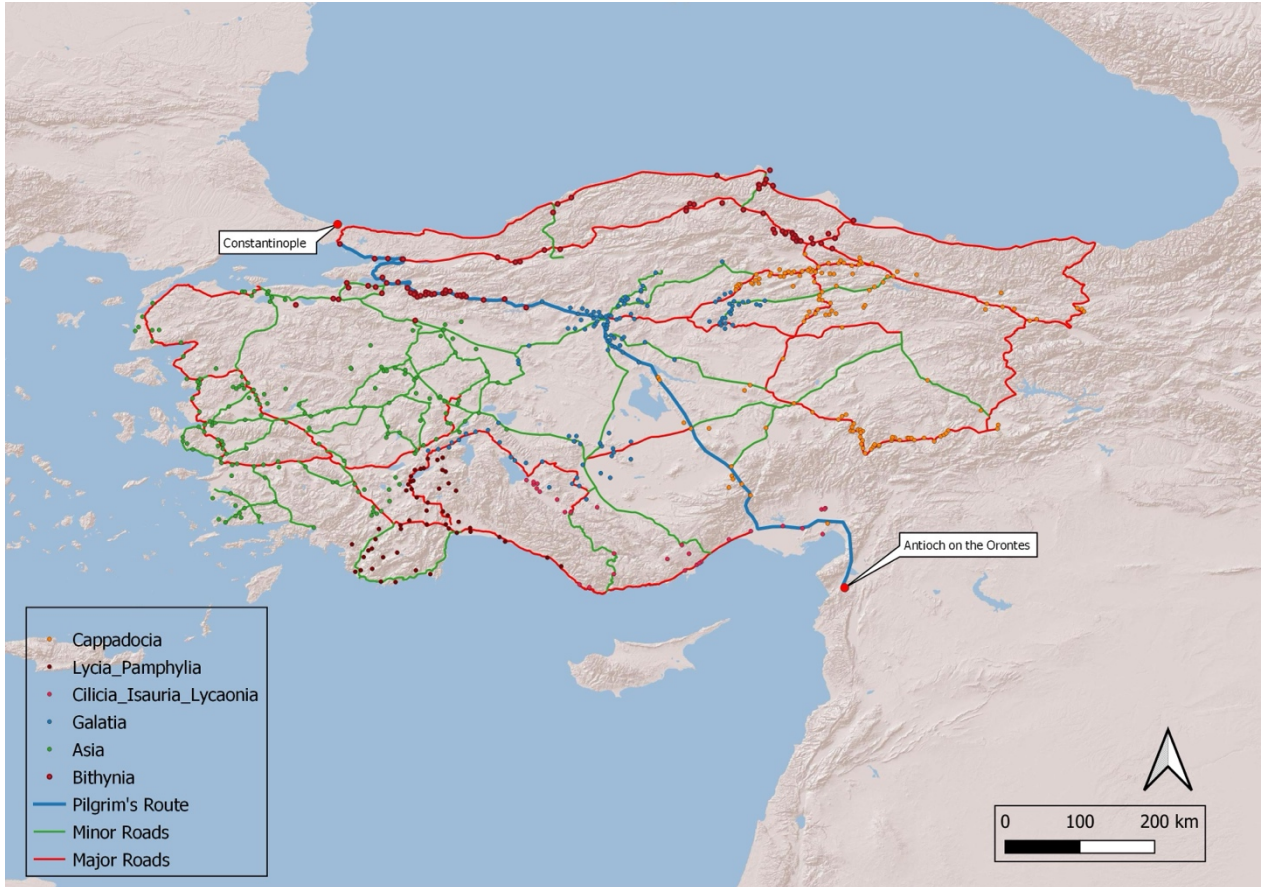


Fig. 2. Land Routes in Anatolia

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