

# AENEAS IN THE TROAS AND LATIUM REGIONS

## *Mythology and Archaeology*

“On the Steps of Aeneas: a common cultural heritage between Italy and Turkey” was funded by the European Union in collaboration with the Turkish Ministry of Tourism and Culture.

The project, developed by the Aeneas Route Association, in partnership with the Sapienza University of Rome and the Municipality of Edremit (Türkiye), as part of the Common Cultural Heritage between the European Union and Turkey (IPA-II), constitutes one of the many international collaboration activities promoted and coordinated by the Association.

In the belief that culture plays a fundamental role in promoting dialogue and cooperation, it integrates two main objectives: the dialogue between civil society and institutions and the enhancement of a common European culture. The project activities include the creation of an interactive digital platform called ARISTE (Aeneas Route Information System for Tourism and Education) on the theme of the journey of the Trojan hero.

One of the main components of the project was the International Conference held in Edremit (Turkey) on October 26, 2021, “Aeneas in the Troad and Lazio: mythology and archeology”: the proceedings are published in this volume. The summary of the conference results will be also available in an informative form through the ARISTE platform for dissemination to a larger audience and to schools.



The Conference participants at Troy excavation

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This project is funded by the European Union  
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(TR2016/DG/03/A2-03-EuropeAid/167523/ID/ACT/TR)  
“On the Steps of Aeneas: A Common Cultural Heritage  
Between Italy and Turkey”

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edited by Sandra Gatti



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“On the Steps of Aeneas: A Common Cultural Heritage Between Italy and Türkiye”

## **Aeneas in the Troas and Latium Regions: Mythology and Archaeology**

Proceedings of the International Symposium  
Edremit, 26 October 2021

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*Following the certification of the Aeneas Route as Cultural Route of the Council of Europe, the Aeneas Route Association promoted the project ‘On the Steps of Aeneas: A Common Cultural Heritage Between Italy and Türkiye’, in partnership with Edremit Municipality and Sapienza University of Rome. This project seeks to promote and further develop common cultural heritage activities jointly implemented by Turkish and EU Institutions. The overall objective of this grant scheme is to further improve civil society dialogue through culture, arts and cultural heritage as well as international cooperation for cultural heritage and to promote cultural values and assets in Türkiye.*

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**ON THE STEPS OF AENEAS:  
A COMMON CULTURAL HERITAGE BETWEEN  
ITALY AND TURKEY**

*Farewell speeches to the Edremit Symposium, 26 October 2021*

**Mr. Selman Hasan Arslan**  
*Mayor of Edremit*

Dear guests,

We are at an important stage of a special project financed by the EU. Today local administrations, science and civil society gather together under a common sense of collaboration and synergy. This wonderful achievement adds an immense value to our region, our country and our world.

Particularly our Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the Governor of Balıkesir gave a great strength to this important effort.

Not only the Municipality of Edremit, but also the Metropolitan Municipality of Balıkesir and the Municipality of Çanakkale gave significant contributions. I would like to express my gratitude to the esteemed mayors and teams of both municipalities. Here, I would like to express my sincere thanks especially to our Governorate of Balıkesir and our esteemed Governor, Mr. Hasan Şildak.

Our esteemed governor's sensitivity and care are indescribably valuable. His presence today is particularly significant, he is honouring us with his contribution and his presence. It gives us pride and happiness that institutions and organizations adopt the project and become a partner. All these efforts are commendable not only locally, but also nationally and even globally. It is a great contribution to our country. I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to our esteemed Governor once again.



The cooperation of Edremit Municipality with Aeneas Route Association and Sapienza University bears fruit again today. I would like to thank these three institutions that are the stakeholders of this high and respected collaboration which is solid, such as the Mountains of Ida.

It is a great pleasure to listen to academicians from Sapienza, Siena, Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart and Aegean Universities.

It is an indescribable chance to listen to the chairman, members and managers of the excavation committee from Troy, Antandros and the Colosseum Archaeological Park. The information they will give, if the analogy is correct, is as valuable as our local production of olives and olive oil. I would like to thank each of our academicians in advance for the information they will provide.

The Municipality of Edremit, on the light of the masterpiece of Virgil and the ancient resources of Homer and many other writers, had the dream to bring together the harbour cities mentioned in the journey of Aeneas.

In 2018, we again established cooperation with local governments at the international level. Afterwards, we had important meetings and meetings. In order not to tire you, I will not go into more details. For the last 3 years, we have never dropped the issue from our agenda. We followed the traces of the continuous journey. We have shaped our project according to the principles of peace, intercultural dialogue and international brotherhood. We have prepared a full project of more 272 pages.

Finally, we ensured that the Aeneas Cultural Route project was declared as a certified Cultural Route of the European Council in France, Strasbourg, on 29 April 2021.

Here, I would like to thank my Vice President, Mr. Tümdeniz Çelebi, my Human Resources and Education Manager, Mrs. Tamer Acar, and our Foreign Relations Office Responsible, Ms. Elisa Falcini. Their efforts are meaningful; their efforts will not be forgotten today and in the future.

As inhabitants of this territory, we are excited to know that we live in the same land of Prince Aeneas, son of Aphrodite and cousin of Hector. We experience indescribable feelings when we read that his grandchildren founded Rome. His path connects 5 countries, including Turkey, Greece, Albania, Italy and Tunisia.

It connects not only countries, but also archaeological sites, rural and natural areas listed in the UNESCO World Heritage List. We are very, very lucky in this respect considering this immense historical and cultural

bond, touristic, scientific, economic resources. It is undoubtedly valuable and special in terms of relationships. This bridge between Rome and Edremit is a historical chance. The intersection of common cultural motifs and the past is a giant opportunity to open new doors and get closer. Today Aeneas Route is the first sea route of the Council of Europe starting from Turkey. It is the first archaeological cultural route starting from Turkey among 40 registered cultural routes.

Our project was selected in the first place among 17 different project applications from all Europe during the evaluation period 2021/2022 and it has been selected as the most successful, and increases the prestige of the region.

We are confident that we will make a great contribution to the promotion of Balıkesir with this effort. We believe that we will be among the most prestigious touristic destinations.

We want to benefit from the special funds and resources of the European Union on the subject. We want to ensure the international visibility and awareness of our region. We seek to increase the economic well-being of our people. In terms of sustainable tourism, I am sure that with this network of relations, we will provide new advantages and open new horizons.

As the name of Aeneas is mentioned in the epic of the Iliad, we will always keep the place of Aeneas' route in our agenda. Like the floor mosaics of Antandros, we will carefully and beautifully lay the ground for it.

From Antandros to Lazio, we will build bridges in many areas, just like the bridge built with Aeneas. We took our ships out of the harbour and filled our sails with the wind of history and archaeology. Our compass and course are clear. We will finally reach the goal. This will happen with your efforts and contributions. Roman history speaks of Aeneas. I'm sure the history to be written in the future will tell about the efforts of all of us on this issue.

I sincerely believe that in our meeting today, which is composed of 2 sessions, with 10 presentations and subsequent discussions, will add unique information to us and open an incredible horizon. Finally, the interaction here will be warm like our thermal waters, the level to be reached will be beneficial like our thermal waters. I would like to thank everyone who contributed, especially our esteemed governor, individually and once again.



Just like the hero Aeneas, who founded the European civilization carrying his young son and his elderly father on his shoulders while fleeing from Troy, we will walk together towards peace, brotherhood and new horizons of development, keeping our history on our backs and our future in our hands.

With these feelings, I offer my sincere respect and love, thank you.

**Tamer Acar**

*Director of Human Resources and Education Department  
of Edremit Municipality;  
Vice President of the Aeneas Route Association*

The project “On the Steps of Aeneas: A common cultural heritage between Turkey and Italy” has been developed in the frame of the “Common Cultural Heritage: Conservation and Dialogue Between Turkey and the EU-II” grant program carried out by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Turkey was developed by the Municipality of Edremit, Aeneas Route Association and the Sapienza University of Rome, Italy, within the scope of the call for proposals.

The aim of the grant program in question is the development of international cooperation on cultural heritage and the promotion of cultural values in our country promoting civil society dialogue through culture, art and cultural heritage. In this context, the programme is aimed to encourage cross-border cooperation and to support networks in the field of culture and arts, including the creative sectors and cultural heritage, between non-governmental organizations from Turkey and the EU.

After the official application for this grant call, published in December 2019, that was submitted in February 2020, we learned that our project was entitled to be financed in December 2020. After receiving the project training given by the CFCU - Central Finance and Contracts Unit, which is the implementing institution of the program, we started to work on the activities and the calendar of the project since April/May 2021.

The project “On the Steps of Aeneas: a Common Cultural Heritage

between Turkey and Italy", is aimed to digitize this cultural heritage in order to facilitate the circulation of cultural artefacts and especially common educational materials that can help new generations in learning the common cultural heritage embodied by the legend of Aeneas in Turkey and Italy.

In addition, "digitisation" techniques and methods play the most important and critical role among the most effective and innovative policies for the protection of cultural heritage. According to the information sources in the 2018 Cultural Heritage Action Plan Framework for the future of Europe developed in the protection of cultural heritage, only 10% of the cultural heritage of Europe and the Mediterranean region has a digital dimension. Considering this low rate, it appears very clear how critical and urgent is the need to develop studies and policies for "digitisation of cultural heritage".

Antandros in Turkey and Lavinium Ancient City in Italy, which are connected to the Aeneas Culture Route and which represent the starting and arrival point of Aeneas's legendary journey, are two historical sites that have not yet been brought into a digital dimension, although they are little-known archaeological sites. According to the Virgil epic, after Aeneas escaped from the city of Troy, he came to the harbour of Antandros and set out to establish a new Troy by building 21 ships. Lavinum, on the other hand, is the settlement that became the new Troy according to the prophecies of the gods, and it is an archaeological site with the *heroon* of Aeneas.

On the A.R.I.S.T.E. (Aeneas Route IT System for Tourism and Education) digital platform, developed in the frame of project, augmented reality tours will be available through 360-degree camera footage at Antandros and Lavinium excavations. And such "digital visits" will make a very meaningful and permanent contribution to protect our historical and cultural memory for new generations by digitizing the archaeological data while increasing the visibility of these two ruins.

In addition, it is essential to complete such innovative materials with an academic narrative together with digital visuals in order to raise awareness about this common cultural heritage in civil society and especially among younger generations.

For this, valuable archaeologists and academics from Turkey and Italy, who came together for the International Archaeological Symposium held

in Edremit today, will share with us their valuable researches on the figure of Aeneas, which bring the Troas and Latium regions together, in order to create awareness increasing and educative materials that will be uploaded on the digital platform for educational purposes.

According to the agenda of the project's activities, after the "Good Practice Exchange Seminar" to be organized under the coordination of Sapienza University in Rome, Italy on January 2022, A.R.I.S.T.E platform will be shared with civil society and young students of our region along with its digital platform and short promotional video during the Closing Meeting to be held in Edremit in June 2022.

### **Giovanni Cafiero**

*President of the Aeneas Route Association*

Let me start by welcoming the institutions here today. And by thanking both the Municipality of Edremit for its fundamental contribution to the project, and our distinguished speakers. Special thanks also go to the Parco del Colosseo and its Director Dr. Alfonsina Russo, and to Prof. Rüstem Aslan, members of the Association's Scientific Committee, who were also protagonists of a beautiful symposium organised by the Association in Rome in December 2019 with the Superintendence of the City's Metropolitan Area, to celebrate the encounter between ancient Troy, Ilion or Ilusa in the Hittite language, and the new Troy, the city of Rome.

I would like to thank Professor Alessandro Maria Jaia, also a member of our Scientific Committee, and the other distinguished scholars present.

Finally, I would like to thank Dr. Sandra Gatti, who, together with Dr. Elisa Falcini, has organised this wonderful symposium, which also marks the resumption of our in-person international activities, which the Association intends to extend and develop in the course of 2022 in all the countries of the Aeneas Route.

I would also like to welcome the representatives of Turkey's cultural institutions whom I had already met online during the pandemic, such as

Dr. Ridvan Gölcük, director of the Troy Museum, and the other representatives I will have the pleasure of meeting today.

As you know, the Aeneas Route Association obtained certification as a Council of Europe Cultural Route in May 2021. It is the first certified cultural itinerary that departs from Turkey and it is a strategic itinerary for affirming the central role played by the Mediterranean roots of European culture formed from the rise and blending of great civilisations.

The 'On the steps of Aeneas' project is an important step for promoting this shared heritage that has its roots in the ancient world. It belongs to all communities bordering the Mediterranean.

The civilisation and culture of the Mediterranean and the lands surrounding it have become the heritage of all mankind through their myths - from the Homeric poems to the Aeneid and a vast literature - and the many cultural and artistic manifestations they have inspired over the centuries, from figurative arts to music. They have also been confirmed by the many archaeological discoveries, and their traces are still visible in our everyday culture, especially our food and our friendly, open approach to life.

Our task is to rediscover and enhance this common identity by promoting its knowledge and dissemination both in the field of tourism and in the field of education, both for the younger generation and for the generations of their parents and elders.

This is the main purpose of the **A.R.I.S.T.E.** platform, an acronym for **Aeneas Route Information System for Tourism and Education**, one of the project outputs.

The platform will include: the panoramic virtual tours that are currently being created in Italy (in particular in Lavinium and in some symbolic places in Rome and Lazio) and in Turkey (in particular in Antandros and Mount Ida); video and photographic material aimed at promoting an experiential tourism by sea and land that can contribute to the tourist development of the sites of Aeneas' Route; educational contents to promote and spread knowledge of the myth of Aeneas through literature, art, and archaeology to a wider population.

It is important to mention that the On the Steps of Aeneas project is funded under the Civil Society Dialogue programme, which integrates two important objectives: the dialogue between civil society and institutions and the promotion of a common European culture.

Civil Society Dialogue (CSD) is in fact a programme that brings together civil society organisations from Turkey and the EU, focusing on common themes to promote the exchange of knowledge and experience and to build strong cooperation between organisations. The dialogue with the civil society helps to shape public opinion and promote understanding and cooperation in various fields. The dissemination of this programme in the field of cultural heritage encourages civil society to be involved in decision-making processes at local level and to strengthen the dialogue at European level.

The Steps of Aeneas project is based on the idea that culture plays a key role in promoting dialogue and cooperation and was funded under the Grant Scheme for Common Cultural Heritage: Preservation and dialogue between Turkey and the EU-II (CCH-II).

The 3 project partners effectively represent the spirit and substance of the programmes mentioned:

1. The Aeneas Route Association, based in Rome, is the non-profit entity that includes all the partners of the international network. It proposed and obtained the certification of the new cultural itinerary by the Council of Europe based on the sharing of the Mediterranean cultural heritage and common values of peace and dialogue;
2. The Municipality of Edremit, in Turkey, is a founding member of the Aeneas Route Association, which developed an intense local and international cooperation activity with the Association to obtain the Council of Europe certification and is now committed to an ever-wider dissemination and promotion of the Project in Turkey and the Mediterranean.
3. The Sapienza University, one of the largest and oldest universities in Europe, supports the project by providing its advanced scientific expertise in the humanities and social communication and research.

Finally, on behalf of the entire Aeneas Route Association, let me emphasise how proud and happy we are to share the prestigious recognition of the Council of Europe with the institutions and civil society of Turkey. I would like to thank everyone for their kind attention and am pleased to invite you to delve into the myth, values and archaeological heritage of the Aeneas Route cultural itinerary.